

Alcohol and drug policy checklist

Alcohol and other drug policies: What should they contain?

A robust alcohol and other drug policy will help workplaces mitigate risks and reduce the liability associated with use in the workplace (including after-hours consumption, where it impacts the work environment). A well communicated and meaningful policy will also help the organisation to meet its' duty of care obligations under the *Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011* to provide a working environment that is without risk to the health and safety of its workers.

An effective policy provides management strategies that will assist in preventing alcohol and other drug related problems from occurring and provide guidance to help to deal with difficult situations if and when they arise.

Tips to help get you started

An alcohol and other drug policy should be tailored to meet the specific needs of your workplace. The following areas can be used as a guide when developing your policy.

Establish the principles of your policy including:

- What is the purpose and objectives of the policy?
- Who does the policy apply to? Consider contractors, consultants and guests to your workplace.

Provide guidelines related to all factors of alcohol in the workplace such as:

- What is impairment?
- What is the policy on drinking while at work?
- What is the policy on drinking at work-related functions and events?
- What is the policy on driving for work purposes?
- What education and training is made available to employees?

Incident management:

- How do you identify if someone is impaired by alcohol or other drugs?
- What are the responsibilities of staff if they suspect someone is impaired by alcohol or other drugs?

“One of the most effective ways employers can address alcohol in the workplace is by implementing an alcohol policy”.¹

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- Who should intervene and how should they manage the employee suspected to be impaired?
- Detail how incidents should be reported and who should be informed of the situation
- What processes and actions can employees expect to face if they violate the policy?

Testing guidelines for alcohol or other drugs:

- What is the rationale for testing?
- Under what authority (Australian standard) will the testing be carried out?
- What is the method of testing and what is involved?
- What action should be taken upon positive test results?

Workplace events:

- How will alcohol be managed at events?
- What action will be taken to manage intoxicated employees?
- What is the expected behaviour of all employees?

Supporting Information:

- Is an employee assistance program available and what is their contact information?
- What other resources are available to staff?

¹Pidd, K., Barry, J., Harrison, J., Roche, A., Driscoll, T., & Newson, R. (2006). *Alcohol and work: Patterns of use, workplace culture and safety*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

Further information



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