

Families Fighting for Justice and O.L.L.Y

(Our Lost Love Years)

Drug and Alcohol Policy

POLICY AIM

OLLY is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment and to promote the health and safety, and well-being of all its employees. The drug and alcohol policy are designed to ensure that all employees are aware of the health risks associated with drug/alcohol misuse, outline the help and support available for these issues and set out the consequences for those who are found to be using drugs or alcohol at work.

The inappropriate use of alcohol and drugs can damage the health and well-being of employees and have reaching effects on their personal and working lives. At work alcohol and drug misuse can lead to reduced level of attendance, sub-standard work performance and increased health and safety risks.

OLLY/FFFJ treats drug and alcohol dependency as a health problem that requires special help rather than a disciplinary matter although OLLY reserves the right to take disciplinary action to deal with the problem if this is inappropriate.

This policy covers the misuse of intoxicating substances, which include alcohol, substances, legal and illegal drugs, prescription and over the counter medicines and other substances that could adversely affect work performance and/or health and safety.

This policy also positively discourages the drinking of alcohol during the working day and no alcohol is to be consumed 12 hours prior to the start of your working day.

This policy aims to:

- Raise staff awareness to the risks and the potential harm to health associated with the misuse of intoxicating substances.
- Set out the support available to employees who may be misusing drugs or alcohol and encourage them to seek help.
- Set out rules regarding the use of intoxicating substances in the workplace so that employees are aware of the likely consequences for their employment of misusing them.
- Provide a framework to enable instances of substance misuse by employees in the workplace to be handled in an appropriate, fair, and consistent manner.
- Achieve a balance between supporting employees who come forward with a problem, and the legal requirements to preserve: the health, safety and welfare of employees and others who encounter them, the delivery of high quality and effective services and OLLY's reputation.

This policy is not intended to penalise those taking legitimate medication which may have unforeseen side effects affecting their performance.

Health risks associated with the misuse of intoxicating substances.

While drinking within the governments suggested guidelines has minimal detrimental effect on health, there is several health risks associated with drinking too much alcohol. These include anxiety, sexual difficulties such as impotence, slowed breathing and heartbeat and impaired judgement leading to accidents and injuries. If alcohol is drunk during pregnancy, it can pass through the placenta and damage the foetus. Drinking heavily can also lead to an increased risk of a variety of cancers. Consuming large amounts of alcohol increases blood pressure. This puts a strain on blood vessels and is a major risk for a stroke. Other health risks include osteoporosis (thinning of the bones,) pancreatitis (inflammation of the pancreas), stomach ulcers, heart disease, dementia, and other brain damage. Alcohol is frequently associated with mental health problems.

Further information about the health risks of drinking too much can be found at www.drinkaware.co.uk

DRUGS

Health risks depend on what drugs are taken and can include:

- Increased risks of developing certain cancer.
- Depression and more severe mental health problems.
- Brain damage.
- Vascular disease.

More information can be found on FRANK (www.talktofrank.com)

Responsibilities of Management and Employees

THE ROLE OF THE MANAGER IS:

Drinking alcohol is an accepted part of social life for many people and can be hard for managers to draw a line between acceptable social drinking and alcohol abuse. Similarly recognising the signs of drug abuse can be difficult. It is emphasised that managers are not expected to be experts in this area. Employees with a drunk and/or drug problem may have higher absence levels than their colleagues but this is not always the case. Similarly, performance may not always be adversely affected. Managers therefore have a twofold role in dealing with these issues:

- Where appropriate, to highlight the effect on performance, conduct or attendance.
- To encourage the individual to seek help with their dependence and offer appropriate support.

Advice can be sought before speaking to the individual on a confidential basis.

EMPLOYEES RESPONSIBILITY

- Familiarise themselves with the policy and comply with its provisions.

- Present a professional, courteous, and efficient image to those who they encounter. Therefore, you have a personal responsibility to adopt a responsible attitude towards drinking and taking prescribed and over the counter drugs.
- Where appropriate, co-operate with any arrangements for help and support offered by OLLY/FFFJ to address any drug or alcohol problems you may have.

No employee is under any obligation to accept help and support if it is not appropriate to their circumstances.

CONFIDENTIALITY

OLLY will treat issues relating to dependence, or misuse of, alcohol or drugs in confidence, within limits of what is practicable within the law. To provide effective support and help it may be necessary, for example, for information to be shared with others.

HELP AND SUPPORT

Employees are strongly encouraged to seek help if they have concerns regarding their alcohol and drug consumption.

Where an employee has disclosed, they have a drug and alcohol problem OLLY will always adopt a constructive and supportive approach to assist them and address it.

OUTSIDE WORKING HOURS

- Employees are discouraged from consuming intoxicating substances 12 hours before their working day starts.
- Remember intoxicating substances such as alcohol stay in the system for some time.

CONTROLLED DRUGS

Employees are not permitted to possess, store, trade or sell controlled drugs on OLLY premises or bring OLLY into disrepute by engaging in such activities outside work. Where evidence warrants, OLLY will inform the police of illegal drug use or any activity or behaviour related to drugs or alcohol over where there are concerns of their legality.

Possible Indicators of alcohol or drug misuse:

- Erratic performance
- Unusual irritability or aggression
- Dilated pupils
- Hand tremor
- Increase of risks of accident or near misses.
- Overconfidence
- Inappropriate behaviour
- Sudden mood changes
- Reduced response time
- A tendency to become confused.

- Reduced productivity
- Absenteeism
- Poor timekeeping
- Deterioration in relationships
- Dishonesty and theft
- Financial irregularities

Agencies and Support Mechanisms

- Samaritans – www.samaritans.org
- Cocaine anonymous – www.cauk.org.uk
- Narcotic anonymous – www.ukna.org
- Drinkaware – www.drinkaware.co.uk
- Action on addiction – www.actiononaddiction.org.uk