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## **Substance Abuse**

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### **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

- 1. PURPOSE**
  - 2. SCOPE**
  - 3. POLICY STATEMENT**
  - 4. DEFINITIONS**
  - 5. ALCOHOL**
  - 6. ILLEGAL DRUGS**
  - 7. SOLVENTS**
  - 8. MEDICATION**
  - 9. SUBSTANCE ABUSE IDENTIFICATION**
  - 10. SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCY**
  - 11. SUBSTANCE INTOXICATION**
  - 12. RECORD KEEPING**
  - 13. VISITORS, LIBRARY USERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**
  - 14. RESPONSIBILITY**
- APPENDIX I - USEFUL CONTACTS**

## 1. PURPOSE

To provide appropriate arrangements, rules, procedures and guidance on substance abuse in the workplace. This policy takes into account the requirements of the Health and Safety at Work, etc. Act 1974, the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and all other relevant Acts and Regulations.

Other policies which are relevant include the Discipline and Formal Warnings policies.

## 2. SCOPE

The policy will apply to all those using or visiting the Library's buildings including staff, readers, visitors, members of the public and contractors.

## 3. POLICY STATEMENT

The Library has a responsibility towards its members of staff to provide a safe and healthy working environment and recognises that this may be jeopardised by those who misuse alcohol, drugs or solvents at work.

The Library also aims to ensure that its business, commercial interests and reputation are not jeopardised as a consequence of any such misuse. This policy details the action that the Library will take to protect all members of staff's health, safety and welfare, Library property and the efficiency, success and good name of its business against substance abuse.

The Library will also endeavour to provide appropriate sympathetic support to members of staff who have a substance abuse problem. A list of organisations which provide help and guidance to those with substance abuse issues can be found at Appendix I and/or sought through the Employee Assistance Programme.

## 4. DEFINITIONS

Substance abuse is a term which describes any of the following:-

- physical or psychological dependence on alcohol;
- excessive consumption of alcohol;
- taking or possession of illegal drugs;
- use of prescribed drugs in a way other than intended by the prescriber;
- solvent abuse (glues or gases).

**Substance dependency** is indicated by the physical and/or psychological effects produced by the habitual taking of certain substances and characterised by a compulsion to continue taking the substance.

**Substance intoxication** is the condition of an artificially altered emotional state resulting from the excessive consumption of alcohol, use of illegal drugs or solvent abuse and which may result in irresponsible behaviour. Substance

intoxication is not necessarily related to either a physical or psychological dependence.

## **5. ALCOHOL**

All members of staff and contractors should be fully able to perform their duties whilst at work and should not consume alcohol to an extent that would adversely affect their work performance. Staff who operate machinery or who have a Security role must not drink alcohol during working hours (including work meal breaks). Breach of this rule will result in disciplinary action.

The Library considers it unprofessional and undesirable for any employee to smell of alcoholic drink when dealing with the public

On occasions when the Library provides alcohol at work - for example, social occasions - non-alcoholic drinks will also be provided. Staff are expected to behave in a safe and responsible manner at all times and to have made appropriate transport arrangements for getting home after the consumption of alcohol.

## **6. ILLEGAL DRUGS**

The possession or taking of illegal drugs is a criminal offence and as such is viewed seriously by the Library. The possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs within the working environment is strictly prohibited. Breach of this rule is a disciplinary offence and the disciplinary procedure will be invoked and could result in dismissal.

## **7. SOLVENTS**

The misuse of solvents on Library premises is strictly prohibited. Breach of this rule is a disciplinary offence and the Discipline Policy will be invoked and could result in dismissal.

## **8. MEDICATION**

Many medicines, obtained with or without a prescription, can affect performance at work. Staff who are prescribed medicines which could affect their work performance should take advice from their pharmacist or doctor. If any member of staff is taking medication that they know could cause safety or performance problems they are required to inform their line manager immediately. The individual may be required to take a leave of absence or comply with other appropriate action determined by the Library.

Attendance at work under the influence of any substance (including medication if a staff member does not reasonably notify the Library as stated in the above paragraph) which is known by the member of staff to impair performance or affect health and safety at work is considered a disciplinary offence which may result in dismissal.

Further reference to the use of medication in the workplace can be found in the Library's Health & Safety policy.

## **9. SUBSTANCE ABUSE IDENTIFICATION**

Line managers should endeavour to recognise the early signs of substance abuse. One, or more usually a combination of the following factors should alert line managers that substance misuse may be an issue:-

- lateness and absenteeism
- poor work performance, output and accuracy
- unreliability
- poor relations with colleagues and personality change
- impaired concentration, memory and judgement
- frequent accidents
- physical signs such as smelling of alcohol, loss of appetite, unkempt appearance.

Where a member of staff begins to display one or more of these traits, his/her line manager should conduct a confidential meeting to try to ascertain if he/she is developing a problem, and if that problem is related to substance use.

## **10. SUBSTANCE DEPENDENCY**

Initially, the Library will view substance dependency as a health or medical problem. Staff who believe that they may be dependent on alcohol or drugs, or are developing a dependency, are encouraged to talk to their line manager in order to obtain assistance. The line manager will encourage them to seek advice from either their GP, the Library's Employee Assistance Programme, or refer them to the Library's Occupational Health Advisors as appropriate, in order to help them deal with their dependency. Similarly, this action will be taken if the line manager or another colleague identifies that a member of staff may already be suffering from the effects of substance abuse.

A programme of support will be discussed and agreed with a member of staff who volunteers to enter into a rehabilitation programme. This support may include paid time off for treatment and counselling if required and appropriate. This support will normally only be offered by the Library for one period of rehabilitation for a member of staff. However, should rehabilitation not succeed and the individual's work performance, conduct or attendance still not be of the required standard then action will be taken in line with the Capability or Discipline Policy, as appropriate.

This would also be the case if the staff member did not recognise and/or is not prepared to admit that they have a substance dependency, and/or is not prepared to take such steps as required by the Library to rectify the problem.

## **11. SUBSTANCE INTOXICATION**

If a staff member is intoxicated - or is suspected of being intoxicated - during working hours to the extent that their work, conduct or safety is affected, the Library reserves the right to request the member of staff to leave the premises or to escort the member of staff from the premises immediately, irrespective of whether they are on duty or not. Formal action may be taken subsequently when he/she has recovered from the intoxication and according to the Library's Disciplinary Policy. The individual's line manager shall also consider if the intoxication is indicative of a larger substance dependency problem and implement the support programme outlined in the preceding paragraph.

## **12. RECORD KEEPING**

Written notes will be retained on the personal file where a substance abuse issue is discussed with a member of staff, but the Library acknowledges its obligation to maintain medical confidentiality. A copy of any such notes will be made available to the individual concerned on request.

Where the Warnings Procedure has been invoked, the records retained will be in accordance with the Library's Disciplinary Policy.

## **13. VISITORS, LIBRARY USERS AND MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

If a visitor, library user or member of the public is intoxicated, or is suspected of being intoxicated, to the extent that their conduct or safety is affected, the Library reserves the right to request that they leave or be escorted off the premises. If a visitor is suspected of being in possession of illegal substances, the Library reserves the right to escort the individual from the premises and may contact the police. Visitors, library users or members of the public who do not comply with this policy may be refused further access to Library premises or reading rooms.

## **14. RESPONSIBILITY**

All those persons referred to within the scope of this policy are required to be familiar with the terms of this policy.

### **Members of staff:**

Members of staff must observe the following:-

- a. do not bring illegal drugs onto Library premises;
- b. behave safely and responsibly at any on-site occasion where alcohol has been provided;
- c. request advice from your doctor/pharmacist for possible side-effects of prescribed medication e.g. drowsiness/impaired reflexes;
- d. do not drive or operate machinery if under the influence of a substance which might adversely affect you;

- e. If you believe you have or are developing a substance dependency problem you should inform your line manager and seek appropriate assistance; If you are unable to attend work the absence reporting procedure must be followed.
- f. be alert to substance abuse symptoms - it is a fallacy that "turning a blind eye" will protect a colleague. Your silence may cause them more harm.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, which requires you to take reasonable care of yourself and others who may be affected by your acts or omissions at work.

**Line Managers:**

Line managers are responsible for the sympathetic application of this policy whilst having to consider the safety of other members of staff and the long term business needs of the Library.

Individual managers are required to keep within the spirit and intent of the policy in their own area. Any queries on the application or interpretation of this policy should be discussed with the Human Resources Directorate prior to any action being taken.

Any health and safety related issues within the scope of this policy will be considered by the Health and Safety Committee.

The Human Resources Directorate has the responsibility for ensuring the maintenance, regular review and updating of this policy. Proposed changes to the policy will follow the process as described in [Section A: Introduction: paragraph 1.1 of this Staff handbook](#).

## APPENDIX I - OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS

(These are Headquarters, please call for local details)

<p>Addaction 67-69 Cowcross Street London EC1M 6PU Tel: 020 7251 5860 <a href="http://www.addaction.org.uk">www.addaction.org.uk</a></p>	<p>Gives details on individual projects, research and development, training courses and access to networks.</p>
<p>Narcotics Anonymous 202 City Road London EC1V 2PH Helpline: 0300 999 1212 <a href="http://www.ukna.org">www.ukna.org</a></p>	<p>In the UK gives information on the fellowship, details of meetings nationwide, and access to the helpline and discussion forum.</p>
<p>Talk to Frank 0300 123 6600 <a href="http://www.talktofrank.com">www.talktofrank.com</a></p>	<p>Gives information and advice in confidence, to anyone in the UK concerned about drugs. This includes drug users, their families, friends and people who work with them.</p>
<p>Release 124-128 City Road London EC1V 2NJ Helpline: 020 7324 2989 <a href="http://www.release.org.uk">www.release.org.uk</a></p>	<p>The national legal and drugs advice service. Release provides a range of services dedicated to meeting the health, welfare and legal needs of drugs users and those who live and work with them.</p>
<p>Someone to Talk To PO Box 245 St Albans Herts AL3 5YW Email: <a href="mailto:advice@someonetotalkto.co.uk">advice@someonetotalkto.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.someonetotalkto.co.uk">www.someonetotalkto.co.uk</a></p>	<p>The organisation provides counselling by e-mail. This is ideal for those who cannot or do not feel able to visit a counsellor in person. They can offer help and support in all areas of personal problems.</p>

<p>ADFAM National 25 Corsham Street London N1 6DR Tel: 020 7553 7640 <a href="http://www.adfam.org.uk">www.adfam.org.uk</a></p>	<p>In many areas, family members concerned about drug use come together to form self-help groups. ADFAM National can provide details of such groups.</p>
<p>CiC 23 Kensington Square London W8 5HN Tel: 020 7937 6224 <a href="http://www.cic-eap.co.uk">www.cic-eap.co.uk</a></p>	<p>CiC is a company that is completely independent from The British Library. It has been contracted by the Library to provide an Employee Assistance Programme that can help and support you with many of the issues or difficulties you may face.</p>
<p>Samaritans The Upper Mill Kingston Road Ewell Surrey KT17 2AF Tel: 020 8394 8300 <a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a></p>	<p>Samaritans is available 24 hours a day to provide confidential emotional support for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which may lead to suicide.</p>
<p>Al-Anon Family Groups UK &amp; Eire 57B Great Suffolk Street London SE1 0BB Helpline: 020 7403 0888 <a href="http://www.al-anonuk.org.uk">www.al-anonuk.org.uk</a></p>	<p>Al-Anon offers understanding and support for families and friends of problem drinkers, whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not. Alateen, a part of Al-Anon, is for young people aged 12-20 who have been affected by someone else's drinking, usually that of a parent.</p>
<p>Alcoholics Anonymous PO Box 1 10 Toft Green York YO1 7NJ Helpline: 0800 9177 650 <a href="http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk">www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk</a></p>	<p>Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.</p>