

Drug and Alcohol Policy (Substance Misuse)

This page outlines the Ministry's Drug and Alcohol (Substance Misuse) Policy.

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Objective

The Ministry of Social Development (Ministry) is committed to the principles of being a good employer and to protecting the health, safety and well being of its employees.

The Ministry recognises that the misuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances can affect the ability of a person to perform their role effectively. The Drug and Alcohol (Substance Misuse) Policy aims to provide a clear understanding of the Ministry's expectations with regard to substance misuse to foster a safe and healthy workplace. It applies to all employees, contractors, clients and visitors who enter Ministry premises.

How can substances be misused?

Substance misuse on Ministry property during ordinary work hours can refer to the:

possession of alcohol, solvents or illicit substances

use of alcohol, solvents or illicit substances.

The use of or addiction to alcohol, solvents or illicit substances (either during or outside of work), which results in the impairment of work performance can also be classified as misuse.

Note: This does not include instances where an employee brings alcohol into the workplace during the day to take home or to staff functions as referred to in the policy objective.

Substance misuse by an employee is detrimental to the workplace and can seriously affect the employee, their peers and clients. Misuse can also bring the Ministry and its employees into disrepute. Such misuse can impair:

productivity/ work performance

attendance

reliability

judgment and/or physical responses

safety

morale

organisational reputation.

Examples of substances that can be misused

Substance misuse that may impair performance can include, but are not limited to:

alcohol

solvents eg. adhesives

illicit drugs eg. cannabis, methamphetamines

prescribed medication.

Responsibilities

Employees must:

- take personal responsibility for ensuring their own safety in the workplace
- ensure their actions do not cause harm to others while at work
- not consume alcohol on Ministry premises at any time (including after work hours) without the express permission of the immediate manager
- not consume substances that impair their performance and in the process compromise the safety of themselves and others:
 - during work hours, or
 - prior to work where it affects the employee's performance during work hours
- not use alcohol or any substance at any time where that use is against the law and/or has the potential to bring the Ministry into disrepute

- not bring substances that may impair their performance onto Ministry premises at any time [1]
- not operate a Ministry vehicle while under the influence of alcohol and drugs[2]
- inform their manager immediately when they are taking prescribed pharmaceuticals, which may impair their work performance, so that:
 - provisions can be made to ensure that their safety and that of others is not compromised
 - processes can be implemented (in the interests of the employee) to ensure that the quality of work is maintained.

[1] Subject to the note within the “How can substances be misused” clause

[2] Refer to Finance and Human Resources Policies: B07 - Asset Management for more information on use of Ministry vehicles

Managers must

- take all practicable steps to provide a safe and healthy workplace for all their employees, contractors, clients and visitors and ensure that they are aware of and comply with this Policy
- recognise and discretely deal with any staff who have job performance problems that may be related to alcohol and/or drugs
- check with the HR Consultants about developing, where possible, a suitable rehabilitation plan, where treatment is required for a substance-related illness or addiction
- ensure that their staff know how to handle unsafe or threatening situations including dealing with clients who are intoxicated or under the influence of substances [3] .

[3] Clients and visitors who are intoxicated and/or under the influence of substances are not permitted onto Ministry premises

Mental Health Condition:

It is important that where a mental health condition may be a factor, managers read the Ministry’s guidance on managing performance issues which may result from the mental health condition.

Prior to any action being taken, such as talking to, meeting with or writing to an employee, managers must seek advice from the HR Consultancy team.

[Mental Health Guidelines](#) (PDF 351.34KB) [<http://doogle/documents/resources/helping-staff/forms-templates/hr/mental-health-guidance-gmhr.pdf>]

Staff who wish to address substance misuse

Where a staff member recognises that they have a substance-related illness or addiction they wish to address, the Ministry supports the use of confidential counselling through the Employee Assistance Programme.

[Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) [<http://doogle/working-here/keeping-healthy-and-safe/wellbeing-at-msd/eap-benestar/index.html>]

Further information on support can be found through websites such as: [ALAC](http://www.alac.org.nz/) [<http://www.alac.org.nz/>], and [Drug Foundation](http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz/) [<http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz/>].

[ALAC](http://www.alcohol.org.nz/) [<http://www.alcohol.org.nz/>]

[Drug Foundation](http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz/) [<http://www.drugfoundation.org.nz/>]

Drug and alcohol (substance misuse) procedures

More detailed procedures on:

how to manage employees who do not comply with this policy, and

clients and visitors who are intoxicated and/or under the influence is provided in the Drug and Alcohol (Substance Misuse) Procedures

[Drug and alcohol \(substance misuse\) procedures](http://doogle/resources/helping-staff/procedures-manuals/health-safety-security/drug-and-alcohol-substance-misuse-procedures.html) [<http://doogle/resources/helping-staff/procedures-manuals/health-safety-security/drug-and-alcohol-substance-misuse-procedures.html>]