



The supply line to the automotive industry

## **DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY**

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

The company endeavours to ensure that employees' use of either drugs or alcohol does not impair the safe and efficient running of the organization and aims to safeguard the health of its employees.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **I. Establishing the Problem**

Supervisors and managers should be aware that the misuse of drugs or alcohol by employees may come to light in various ways. The following characteristics, especially when arising in combinations may indicate the presence of an alcohol or drug-related problem.

##### **Absenteeism**

- instances of unauthorised leave
- frequent Friday and/or Monday absences
- leaving work early
- *lateness (especially on returning from lunch)*
- excessive level of sickness absence
- strange and increasingly suspicious reasons for absence
- unusually high level of sickness for colds, flu, stomach upsets
- unscheduled short-term absences, with or without explanation

##### **High accident level**

- at work
- elsewhere, e.g. driving, at home.

##### **Work performance**

- difficulty in concentration
- work requires increased effort
- individual tasks take more time
- problems with remembering instructions or own mistakes
- colleagues/customers may notice a smell of alcohol

## **Mood swings**

- irritability
- depression
- general confusion.

## **Misconduct**

An employee's alcohol or drug problem may come to light as a mitigating factor in a disciplinary interview. It should be treated as a mitigating factor for certain "less serious" disciplinary offences, such as poor timekeeping or lateness, provided the person is prepared to undergo treatment.

## **Self-referral**

*In some instances, employees may seek help and advice themselves.*

## **2. Intervention**

Supervisors and managers who feel an employee's unsatisfactory performance may be drug or alcohol-related should arrange to hold a meeting with the employee.

Supervisors/managers who feel an employee's unsatisfactory performance may be drug or alcohol related should inform the site manager to discuss the matter. If thought necessary, the site manager should arrange for a meeting with the employee.

At the meeting the individual should have his or her unsatisfactory performance/conduct and "indicators" discussed.

The site manager should restate the company's required standards, making sure the employee understands what is expected of him or her, and try to establish the cause of the problem.

The employee should be reminded or informed of the assistance the company is prepared to give employees who are trying to overcome a drink or drugs problem and should be informed of outside agencies where help can be obtained,

The employee should be informed that the company require his or her performance to be improved to an acceptable standard and that failure to achieve this may result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal. The site manager should agree with the employee what follow-up action is to be taken. Where it is suspected that alcohol or drugs is or could be the problem, independent medical advice will be sought.

If the employee denies that either alcohol or drugs are the cause of the problem, he or she should be treated as for any disciplinary/capability problem, whichever is judged as appropriate by the employer.

However, if there are strong signs that the employee's unsatisfactory performance is drug or alcohol-related and he or she will not admit or acknowledge this, further encouragement should be given at all stages of the disciplinary/capability procedure to face up to the true underlying problem.

### **3. Treatment**

Where employees acknowledge that they have a problem and are given help and treatment this will be on the understanding that:

- whilst they are undergoing treatment, they will be on sick leave and will be entitled to the usual company sick pay benefits
- every effort should be made to ensure that on completion of the recovery programme employees are able to return to the same or equivalent work.

However, where such a return would jeopardise either a satisfactory level of job performance or the employee's recovery, the line manager will review the full circumstances surrounding the case and agree a course of action to be taken. This may include the offer of suitable alternative employment, or dismissal. (Before a decision on dismissal is made, it should be discussed with the employee and an up-to-date medical opinion obtained)

### **4. Relapse**

Where an employee, having received treatment, suffers a relapse, the company will consider the case on its individual merits. Medical advice will be sought in an attempt to ascertain how much more treatment/rehabilitation time is likely to be required for a full recovery. At the company's discretion, more treatment or rehabilitation time may be given in order to help the employee to recover fully.

### **5. Recovery unlikely**

If, after employees have received treatment, recovery seems unlikely, the company may be unable to wait for the employee any longer due to the needs of the business. In such cases, dismissal may result but in these cases a clear warning will be given to the employee beforehand, and a full medical investigation will have been undertaken.

### **6. Serious Misconduct caused by Alcohol or Drugs**

#### **Intoxicated employees**

If an employee is known to be, or strongly suspected of being intoxicated by alcohol or drugs during working hours, arrangements will be made for the employee to be escorted from the company premises immediately. The employee should not be allowed to drive a Company vehicle in this situation, and must be advised against

driving their own vehicle. Disciplinary action will take place when the employee has had time to become sober.

### **Consumption of alcohol on the premises**

Employees are expressly forbidden consume alcohol when at work or to bring alcohol onto company premises with the intention of consuming it at work. Any breach of this rule will result in disciplinary action being taken which is likely to result in summary dismissal.

### **Drug Abuse on the Premises**

*Employees who take drugs which have not been prescribed on medical grounds will, in the absence of mitigating circumstances, be deemed to be committing an act of gross misconduct and will thus render themselves likely to be summarily dismissed as will any employee believed to be buying or selling drugs, or in possession of unlawful (i.e. unprescribed) drugs.*

### **7. Training**

All staff will be made aware of the effects of alcohol and drug misuse via Company policies. They will be encouraged not to cover up for employees with a drink or drug problem but to recognise that collusion represents a false sense of loyalty and will in the longer term damage those employees.

### **8. Incidents at work and drug/alcohol testing**

If an employee has an accident or near-miss whilst at work, where impaired judgement could potentially be a contributory factor (for example, a driving accident), or when an employee is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the Company reserves the right to administer drug and/or alcohol tests on the employee. The testing will take place by way of either blood or urine tests.

In the event that the test proves positive, there will be automatic consequences. The Company reserves the right to advise the relevant authorities and to take disciplinary action which may result in dismissal from employment.

Reporting for duty with drugs or alcohol in the system is considered to be gross misconduct within the Company disciplinary policy.