



Alcohol & Substance Misuse Policy

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Policy Author:	Kenny Stocks (EVH Model Policy)
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Scottish Housing Regulator Standard:	5
Scottish Housing Regulator Guidance:	5.2

ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

Ardenglen Housing Association can provide this procedure on request, in large print, in Braille, on tape or in other non-written format, and in a variety of languages.

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy has been devised to assist Ardenglen Housing Association (Ardenglen) in the management of alcohol and substance misuse problems affecting the working environment. Ardenglen has a duty to provide high standards of customer care at all times and it is acknowledged that alcohol and substance misuse is likely to have an adverse effect on this.

This policy will set out Ardenglen standards and expectations in relation to alcohol and substance abuse and the level of support that will be when problems arise.

2. AIMS OF THE POLICY

- Clarify Ardenglen's position on drinking and/or substance abuse at work.
- Explain Ardenglen's position on illegal activity concerning drugs and/or alcohol
- Provide guidance and boundaries on appropriate assistance and support to employees with issues relating to alcohol or substance misuse.
- Adhere to the legal obligations of Ardenglen as set out under Health & Safety legislation.
- Clarify the circumstances in which disciplinary procedures will be instigated.
- Provide guidance for managers to manage alcohol and substance misuse issues.
- Monitor and evaluate training and employee awareness.
- Clarify the distinction between dependent and non dependent misuse of alcohol or substances.

3. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definitions apply:

Alcohol Abuse: where a person feels that they are unable to function without alcohol, and the consumption of alcohol becomes an important, or sometimes the most important, factor in their life. (www.nhs.co.uk)

Substance Abuse: Intoxication by/or regular excessive consumption of and/or dependence on psychoactive substances, leading to social,

psychological, physical or legal problems. It includes problematic use of both legal and illegal drugs (including alcohol when used in combination with other substances) www.nice.org.uk

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

Employees with alcohol or substance abuse problems who are referred for treatment whether voluntary or mandatory will be dealt with in the strictest confidence

5. DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

In circumstances where Ardenglen's disciplinary procedures are instigated in relation to this policy, the outcome may include dismissal.

6. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

7. HEALTH & SAFETY

Ardenglen recognises its duty under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure as far as is reasonably practical the physical and psychological health and safety of all employees. If it is felt that an individual poses a risk to the health and safety of themselves or anyone else as a result of alcohol or substances, immediate action will be taken to remove the individual from the environment, most likely by sending the individual home. If it is not safe for the individual to make their own way home alternative travel arrangements must be made.

All employees have a responsibility to ensure the health and safety of others is not put at risk. If an employee has reason to believe that a colleague is misusing alcohol or drugs they must inform their line manager immediately.

8. ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

Ardenglen respects an individual's right to a private life, however Ardenglen works within the community with a purpose of improving the lives of those who live there. As a result Ardenglen will not tolerate any instances of illegal activity concerning drugs or substances. Any employee found to be involved or connected to illegal activity will be managed under Ardenglen's disciplinary procedure which will likely result in dismissal.

9. DRINKING AT WORK

The consumption of alcohol at work is not normally permitted. However, at special events where the employee is not driving and only with the approval of the Board alcohol may be permitted.

10. DRIVING AT WORK

Drinking alcohol can affect people in different ways. As a result, Ardenglen takes the view that the only safe level of alcohol is no alcohol. Should an employee drink alcohol and then undertake any occupational driving this will be deemed as breach of conduct and will be dealt with under our Disciplinary Policy.

Before any driving at work takes place a risk assessment should be conducted. This should be completed by the driver and should include any alcohol intake. This is particularly relevant 'the morning after the night before'. If an employee is in any doubt as to whether they are safe to drive they should not do it.

If an employee suspects another staff member has consumed alcohol or they have reason to believe the person may not be safe to drive the morning after, they have a responsibility to report this immediately to a manager. Should malicious allegations be made this will be treated very seriously and will be subject to formal disciplinary action.

Alternatively, a call can be made directly to the police.

11. MANAGING ALCOHOL ABUSE

Ardenglen will manage alcohol misuse depending on its nature. Alcohol misuse will be dealt with under the following categories:

- 1) Alcohol overindulgence
- 2) Alcohol dependence

Where an issue arises concerning alcohol overindulgence that results in socially unacceptable or dangerous behaviour but which is not related to a physical or psychological dependence. This will be treated as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under the organisation's disciplinary procedures.

Where an issue arises concerning alcohol dependency and interferes with an employee's work, this will initially be considered as an ill-health issue and managed in accordance with the appropriate procedures.

However, where there is no improvement, support is not accepted, programme not completed or no dependence is diagnosed Ardenglen will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

12. MANAGING SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Legal Substances: Where an issue arises concerning the recreational use or overindulgence in legally obtained legal substances which results in socially unacceptable or dangerous behaviour. This will be treated as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under the organisations disciplinary procedures.

Where an issue arises concerning legal substance dependency which has been obtained legally and interferes with an employee's work, this will initially be managed as an ill-health issue and managed in accordance with the appropriate procedures. However, where there is no improvement, support is not accepted, programme completed or no dependence is diagnosed Ardenglen will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

Illegal Substance Misuse: Ardenglen will not tolerate the consumption or possession of illegal drugs in any circumstances. This will always be considered to represent gross misconduct.

Illegally Obtained Legal Substances: Ardenglen will not tolerate illegal activity concerning legal substances. Any employee who is suspected of being involved in any such activity will be dealt with in accordance with Ardenglen's disciplinary procedures as gross misconduct.

13. GENERAL ILLEGAL ACTIVITY

Any employee suspected to be involved in illegal activity concerning substances will also be reported to the police.

14. POLICE INVOLVEMENT

In circumstances where the police are involved in an investigation concerning any employee, Ardenglen will continue with their own investigation and act on this accordingly regardless.

15. MANAGING DEPENDANCY PROBLEMS

In circumstances where an employee is suspected of having an alcohol or legal substance dependency Ardenglen will provide reasonable support. In the first instance the line manager will have a meeting with the employee and make a management referral to the Employee Counselling Service (or other employee support organisation). The

manager will then have follow up meetings on an appropriate and regular timescale to determine the progress the individual is making.

Where there are performance issues relating to the dependence appropriate performance plans will be put in place in accordance with Ardenglen's under performance procedures as detailed in the disciplinary procedures. Where the improvement is not adequate or support via the Employee Counselling Service (or other employee support organisation) is not adhered to, normal disciplinary procedures will be instigated which may result in dismissal.

16. SUPPORTING AGENCIES

Glasgow Council on Alcohol
Tel: 0141 353 1800
web: www.glasgowcouncilonalcohol.org
7th Floor Newton House,
457 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3LG

Employee Counselling Service
Tel: 0141 332 9833
web: empcs.org.uk
8th Floor, Savoy Tower,
77 Renfrew Street, Glasgow G2 3BZ

National Drugs Helpline
Tel: 0800 77 66 00 (Freephone number)

17. TRAINING AND EVALUATION

The Association through its Internal Management Plan is committed to training and developing staff and committee members to their full potential in order to deliver a high quality of service in all areas of its business.

The Ardenglen induction programme includes an overview of this policy, including responsibilities for the promotion and delivery of openness and confidentiality as relevant to their job descriptions. Committee and staff members will receive updates on these issues and specific training as required.

Ardenglen will monitor and evaluate its training to ensure that managers understand the policy and are confident in its implementation. This will take the form of briefings and informal discussions.

Staff awareness will be monitored by means of an online survey with follow up discussions and briefings to ensure that all staff are aware of the policy and where to locate it.

18. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY

This policy will be implemented in line with our Equality and Diversity Policy and is subject to an Equality Impact Assessment to assess the likely or actual effects of the policy to our customers in respect of their disability, age, gender, race, religion/belief, sexual orientation or gender identity to ensure equal and fair access for all.

19. MONITORING AND REPORTING

The Association will use appeals, complaints, comments or suggestions from users of this policy to monitor its effectiveness. These will also be used to prompt a review of the policy where necessary.

20. REVIEW

This Policy will be approved by the Board. It will be reviewed every three years unless amendment is prompted by a change in legislation, or monitoring and reporting reveals that a change in Policy is required sooner.

21. DISTRIBUTION

This policy will be made available to every employee and committee member and will be made freely available to any tenant or interested party.

22. LEGAL FRAMEWORK

- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974
- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971

23. RELATED POLICIES

- Terms and Conditions of Employment

--- END OF POLICY ---