



Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy and Procedure

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EFFECTIVE ELECTRIC

ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY

1. Introduction

All employees should be aware that under Section 7 of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 “it shall be the duty of every employee while at work to take reasonable care for the health and safety of himself/herself and of other persons who may be affected by his/her acts or omissions at work”

Effective Electric (the “Company”) is committed to prevent alcohol and substance misuse by education, training and raising the awareness of employees to the dangers of misuse and the framework for the procedure.

2. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to all employees employed by the Company.

Although this policy does not apply directly to external contractors whilst on the Company’s premises, they will be expected to abide by the Company’s guidelines on alcohol and substance misuse. Any external contractor suspected to be under the influence of alcohol or substances may be reported to their employer and, where appropriate, removed from the premises.

3. Alcohol at Work

Alcohol will not be consumed during working hours, including lunch breaks and other rest periods. There will no exceptions to this rule. This includes any special functions organised as part of work or on a social basis on work premises.

Anyone who attends a special function e.g. Christmas lunch should ensure that they do not return to work that day if they consume alcohol and should also bear in mind drink driving legislation.

Employees also need to be aware of the effects of drinking alcohol before they start work/a shift.

Employees should not consume alcohol when they are on-call.

4. Definition of Alcohol or Substance related problems or difficulties

The substances referred to in this policy are those with mind altering or psycho-active properties which are not prescribed to the individual for medicinal purposes.

Problems or difficulties can arise from intoxication, regular use, harmful use or dependence. Misuse of alcohol and/or other substances frequently leads to the development of problems, which affect an employee's health, safety and social functioning and/or impair their work capability.

An employment definition of alcohol or substance related work problems or difficulties is

“any use of alcohol or other substances which interferes with a person's health and social functioning and/or work capability or conduct”.

5. Aims of the Policy

To promote the general well being of all employees by avoiding unnecessary illness, absences, accidents or job losses.

To provide a working environment which ensures, as far as possible, the health and safety of all employees, service users, visitors and others on the Company's premises.

6. Objectives of the Policy

To prevent alcohol and substance misuse related problems which may affect an employee's health, work performance and safety and which may also put others at risk.

To increase employee awareness of the effects of alcohol and substance misuse on health.

To create an environment that encourages all employees to seek appropriate help.

To provide a sensitive and confidential procedure which enables managers to initiate an appropriate response to employees who either request help or who are identified as having, or potentially having, alcohol or substance misuse problems.

7. Outcomes of the Policy

Employees with an alcohol or substance misuse problem will be treated in strictest confidence.

Managers will be able to deal with problems quickly and effectively using the framework of the procedure.

8. Alcohol and Substance Misuse Procedure

Procedure

The Company has a responsibility to ensure that standards of work and conduct are maintained in the workplace. The Company will support and help employees identified as having alcohol or substance misuse problems wherever possible, but the Company will be obliged to deal with the following situations in accordance with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure:

- a) unlawful dealing in drugs by a member of staff on the premises or other designated work areas will be classed as gross misconduct and the member of staff will be liable to summary dismissal and the circumstances will be referred to the police
- b) where offers of help and support have been rejected by the individual and where an employee's conduct and/or standards of work performance continues to be unacceptable
- c) where the manager considers that an employee may be putting themselves, other employees, patients/clients or members of the public at risk
- d) where excessive consumption on isolated or random occasions leads to unacceptable behaviour with regard to appropriate standards of safety and conduct
- e) where an employee reports for work after having consumed alcohol/drugs/illegal substances and is considered to be a threat to health, safety or professional standards.

Every attempt should be made to help an employee whose work problems are related to alcohol or substance misuse. Wherever possible managers should ensure that an employee retains their present job with no detriment to promotion

opportunities or other benefits. In cases where it is not considered feasible for the employee to retain their present job and where doing so might undermine the employee's rehabilitation, the Company will make every effort, where appropriate, to find suitable alternative employment on a temporary or permanent basis.

Disciplinary action for alcohol or substance misuse problems should be seen as a last resort.

Identification by the Employee

- a) Employees who suspect or know that they have an alcohol or substance related problem are encouraged to seek assistance voluntarily either via their manager, Occupational Health or trade union/professional representative or through any agency of the employee's own choice. A list of organisations and agencies can be found in Appendix 1 of the policy.

Identification by the Manager

- a) It may be very difficult for employees to admit to themselves or others that their alcohol/substance misuse problem is out of control. Employees need to know that any problems will be treated as a health problem rather than a cause for immediate disciplinary action (see 8.1). Managers should consider the following summary checklist:
 - find out if there is a problem
 - make a list of who you need to contact or consult with
 - look at how you can make sure the employee is contacted and offered help.
- b) A manager may suspect the presence of a drinking or drug problem on the basis of poor work performance, uncharacteristic and unacceptable behaviour, increased absence or accidents at work or becoming aware of the smell of alcohol. It is important that any manager is aware that they are not responsible for the diagnosis of the problem. This should be either identified by employees themselves or through the Occupational Health Department. Any interview should be undertaken in the context of trying to rectify work-related difficulties and the exploration of potential reasons for this.
- c) As soon as a manager becomes aware or is made aware that an employee may have an alcohol/substance misuse problem, the manager should after sensitive discussion with the individual, encourage them to seek voluntary help by contacting the Occupational Health Department or another appropriate source of help (see Appendix 1) rather than automatically referring the individual to the Occupational Health Department. All requests for help will be dealt with in strictest confidence

and will not jeopardise an individual's current position or promotional opportunities. A manager can also seek support and advice from the Human Resources Department.

- d) It is the responsibility of the employee to decide whether or not to receive specialised counselling and/or treatment. Employees will not be required to comply with a treatment programme, which they do not want.
- e) In cases where an employee is or wishes to receive specialised counselling and treatment they may be granted sick leave under the Company's sick pay scheme. It should be appreciated that treatment interventions in the management of problems are rarely time related and it is usual for an individual to need a period of intensive counselling and support, followed by a period of probationary or gradual return to work. The individual may need to attend sessions of counselling or follow-up care. This approach ensures that an individual may return to work as quickly as possible as well as continuing to receive support during the first few months after the problem has been identified, which is when the chances of a relapse are the highest.
- f) In the event of a relapse after treatment a further opportunity of help and treatment will be offered in cases where the employee's circumstances indicate that this is likely to be successful. Advice from Occupational Health should be sought at this stage.
- g) If an employee denies having an alcohol/substance problem and gives no reason or explanation for their poor performance, any issues will be dealt with under the Capability Procedure or, as a last resort, the Disciplinary Procedure. As part of this process managers should refer the individual to Occupational Health and seek advice from the Human Resources Department.

Identification by a Colleague

- a) In the first instance the colleague should discuss the identified problem with the individual if the circumstances permit and suggest sources of help (see Appendix 1).
- b) If the colleague is unable to do this in the first instance or is reluctant to do this, they should discuss the matter with their manager. Alternatively they can contact the Human Resources Department or the Occupational Health Department.
- c) With regard to issues of confidentiality and an employee's duty of care, a colleague should not take sole responsibility for deciding whether the problem is serious or not.

- d) All discussions with a colleague who has identified a problem should be dealt with in strictest confidence.

9. Role of the Occupational Health Department

To accept self-referral from employees who are worried about their own alcohol/substance abuse and to advise them of appropriate sources of help.

To accept management referral for employees who are suspected of having an alcohol/substance problem.

To assess self-referred or referred employees under the policy in strict confidence.

To advise management and the Human Resources Department in all matters relating to the continued care of an employee at work, while maintaining confidentiality.

During a period of intervention agreed by Occupational Health the employee will be entitled to certificated sick leave, time off work and redeployment if possible and appropriate.

Occupational Health is responsible for monitoring the health and welfare of an employee during this period and will arrange with the manager concerned the necessary leave of absence. Occupational Health will also co-operate with offering other types of support and assistance in the workplace as required.

10. The Role of Trade Union Representatives

The Company encourages trade union representatives to:

- inform the workforce of the principles and procedures of the policy and encourage employees who may have an alcohol/substance misuse problem to seek help voluntarily
- represent members, if requested by them to do so, at any stage of the procedure
- provide support and follow-up in appropriate cases to assist in the rehabilitation of any of their members within the framework of this

procedure and in conjunction with the Return to Work Plan as outlined in the Sickness Absence Policy.

11. Monitoring of the Policy

This policy will be monitored by the Human Resources Department on an annual basis.

SOURCES OF HELP

Alcoholics Anonymous

General Service Office
Unit 2, Block C
Santry Business Park
Swords Road
Dublin 9
Ireland

Contact:

Tel: 353 1 8420700

Fax: 353 1 8420703

Email: gso@alcoholicsanonymous.ie

Europe against Drugs (EURAD)

Kilcullen House, 1 Haigh Terrace, Dun Laoghaire.

Ph: 01-2841164

Email: eurad@iol.ie

Web: www.eurad.net

The Drugs HIV Helpline

1800 459 459 (10am - 5pm)

Crosscare Drug Awareness Programme

The Red House

Clonliffe College

Drumcondra

Dublin 3.

The Hanly Centre

The Mews, Eblana Avenue,

Dun Laoghaire.

Ph: 01-2809795

A confidential information and counselling service for those whose lives have been affected by a drinking or drugs problem.

Email: info@thehanlycentre.com

Web: www.thehanlycentre.com

Nar-Anon

Family support - Ph: 01-8748431

Narcotics Anonymous

Ph: 086 8629308

Gamblers Anonymous

Cluain Mhuire Family Centre
Newtownpark Avenue
Blackrock
Ph: 01-2833766

Alano Club of Ireland

21 Patrick St.
Dún Laoghaire
Ph: 2805402
Social meeting for recovering alcoholics and drug addicts.