

Policy H23 Drug and Alcohol

Purpose

At Prospect Community Early Education and Care, we are committed to providing a safe, healthy and secure environment for all our children and employees.

The quality of the care we provide will not be compromised by the presence of employees under the influence of alcohol, non-prescribed drugs or over the prescribed dose of prescription medication, in the workplace.

This policy is designed to eliminate the risks inherent in the use or abuse of drugs, alcohol or other substances in the workplaces and its impact on our service and the broader community. This policy applies to all direct employees, agency and sub-contract employees whilst at the Centre and centre visitors.

Basic Requirements

The essential requirements of the policy are that:

- Employees must always be in a fit state to carry out their duties when at work. They must not possess, consume or be under the influence of alcohol or other impairing substances.
- Prospect Community Early Education and Care has a 'zero tolerance' to drugs and alcohol in the workplace. Employees are not permitted to work while under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- Anyone suspected of being impaired due to alcohol or substance abuse or taking of drugs, legal or illegal, must immediately be removed from the workplace.
- Prospect Community Early Education and Care will carry out screening for alcohol and drugs. Testing may be carried out on reasonable suspicion or following an accident or incident. Prospect Community Early Education and Care also reserves the right to introduce random testing where it is considered appropriate.
- Provide assistance through a range of preventative, educational and rehabilitative measures to overcome drug and alcohol problems that could impair an employee's ability to work safely.
- Encourage our employees to maintain good health and wellbeing through a suitable lifestyle balance. An employee / contractor has a responsibility to take prescription and pharmacy drugs in accordance with the instructions of their medical practitioner and normal directions relating to use of the drugs.

In the instance that prescription medication could potentially affect the ability of the employee to perform their normal work duties safely; the employee must notify their immediate supervisor so that corrective control strategies can be implemented. Failure to advise may constitute misconduct.

In the event that drugs or alcohol are found on the premises, actions may include an investigation of the matter to attempt to determine who is responsible for the drugs or alcohol, or requiring workplace participants to undergo a drug or alcohol test.

Alcohol and Drug Testing and Disciplinary Process

We will carry out screening for alcohol and drugs.

Testing may be carried out on reasonable suspicion or following an accident or incident.

We also reserve the right to carry out random testing where it is considered appropriate.

The disciplinary process will be invoked, and may lead to summary dismissal, in the case of any direct employee who:

- is removed from a workplace due to impairment or suspicion of impairment caused by substance abuse, drugs or alcohol consumption
- tests positive for illegal drugs
- is found to have a blood alcohol level greater than 0.00 or the equivalent in urine or breath samples.
- refuses to undertake a screening test for alcohol or drugs, or
- Is found supplying illegal drugs or is charged with a drug or alcohol related offence.

Persons found to be exhibiting the effects of drugs or alcohol may be required to have an appropriate test conducted. If a positive drug and alcohol reading is recorded at any time, the employee will be subject to disciplinary action, possibly including suspension or termination.

An employee found to be exhibiting the effects of drugs or alcohol, or returning a positive drug or alcohol reading, or refusing to participate in testing, will be required to cease work immediately and leave the workplace.

- As part of our commitment to maintaining safe work practices, Prospect Community Early Education and Care is unable to allow employees to resume work until such time as they undertake testing and a negative result is obtained.
- Employees sent home or to a medical examination must report to the approved provider or nominated supervisor the following working day or when they are no longer under the influence of drugs or alcohol to discuss the incident.
- Employees who return a positive result or refuse testing will not be paid for this time off work until a negative drug test is returned.

Requests for Help

Prospect Community Early Education and Care will treat any requests for assistance from any employee who volunteers the information that they have a drink or drug related problem sympathetically. A request of this nature will not be accepted subsequent to or immediately prior to testing for alcohol and drugs. During any regime of treatment the individual would remain subject to the requirements of this policy whilst at work.

Drug and Alcohol Management Strategies

- Prospect Community Early Education and Care will ensure that where there is a risk to health and safety from drug or alcohol misuse, effective control strategies will be implemented.
- Such control strategies will focus on job performance and safety and will be implemented in conjunction with appropriate counselling.
- The Drug and Alcohol Policy will be explained to all new employees at induction.
- Workers are encouraged to report drug and alcohol problems that could present safety risks.
- Suitable training will be provided, if needed, so that workers will know how to deal with drug and alcohol misuse appropriately.
- Interventions in the case of safety-related drug and alcohol problems will be monitored and evaluated and followed up with further action if required.

Employee Responsibilities

Employees, within the scope of their authority, are responsible for ensuring that:

- The objectives of this policy are integrated into work practices.
- Effective action is taken to prevent accidents, incidents or injuries, which could result from drug or alcohol misuse.
- Risks arising from drug or alcohol misuse are identified, assessed and controlled.

Confidentiality

When addressing issues relating to alcohol and drug misuse, all parties should be sensitive to the individual's right to confidentiality, privacy and dignity. If the employee is aged less than eighteen years, the parent/guardian may also need to be involved.

Ratified by Management Committee

To be reviewed