



"Offering our community more than a home"

Alcohol and Substance Abuse Policy

Housing Services Sub-Committee submission:	22 January 2019
Last Approved:	30 August 2016
Date Approved:	
Next Review date:	January 2022

CHA Objectives:

- To provide quality, affordable housing that meets the changing needs of our customers and to ensure fair access to housing within our area.
- To manage the houses provided, in a professional and cost effective manner, for the benefit of our local community and the environment.
- To provide a first class maintenance service which offers value for money and ensures the comfort and safety of our residents while achieving high levels of satisfaction

Regulatory Standards:

- The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
- The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these objectives.
- The RSL manages its resources to ensure its financial well-being and economic effectiveness.
- The governing body bases its decision on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.

This policy can be made available on request in a variety of different formats, such as on tape, in large print and translated into other languages.

Introduction

This policy has been devised to assist Clydebank Housing Association in the management of alcohol and substance misuse problems affecting the working environment. Clydebank Housing Association 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 Clydebank Housing Association's standards and expectations in relation to alcohol and substance abuse and the level of support that will be when problems arise.

Policy Aims:

- Clarify Clydebank Housing Association's position on drinking and/or substance abuse at work.
- Explain Clydebank Housing Association'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 Clydebank Housing Association 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.
- Clarify the distinction between dependent and non dependent misuse of alcohol or substances.

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

Confidentiality

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

Disciplinary Procedures

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

Legal Framework

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

Health and Safety

Clydebank Housing Association 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.

Illegal Activity

Clydebank Housing Association respects an individual's right to a private life; however Clydebank Housing Association works within the community with a purpose of improving the lives of those who live there. As a result Clydebank Housing Association 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 Clydebank Housing Association's disciplinary procedure which will likely result in dismissal.

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 Governing Body alcohol may be permitted.

Driving at Work

Drinking alcohol can affect people in different ways. As a result, Clydebank Housing Association 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 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.

Managing Alcohol Misuse

Clydebank Housing Association 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 Clydebank Housing Association will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

Managing Substance Misuse

Legal Substances

Where an issue arises concerning the recreational use or overindulgence in legally obtained substances which results in socially unacceptable or dangerous behaviour. This will be treated as a conduct issue and will be dealt with under the organisation's 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 Clydebank Housing Association will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

- **Illegal Substance Misuse**

Clydebank Housing Association 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**

Clydebank Housing Association 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 Clydebank Housing Association's disciplinary procedures as gross misconduct.

General Illegal Activity

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

Police Involvement

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

Managing Dependency Problems

In circumstances where an employee is suspected of having an alcohol or legal substance dependency Clydebank Housing Association 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 Clydebank Housing Association'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.

Equality and Diversity

Our commitment to equal opportunities and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as race, sex, disability, age, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES

- **Glasgow Council on Alcohol**

Tel: 0141 353 1800

web: www.glasgowcouncilonalcohol.org

7th Floor Newton House, 457 Sauchiehall Street, Glasgow, G2 3LG

- **National Drugs Helpline**

Tel: 0800 77 66 00 (Freephone number)

For Office Use Only – Actions required/completed

Customer/Staff Consultation Required/Arranged	No
Intranet Update	Yes
F Drive Update	Yes
Website Update	No
Leaflet change required?	No
Newsletter Promotion?	No
Other information updated, e.g. posters, automatic email responses, post cards, answering machine messages, etc.	No
Equality Impact Assessment completed	Yes