



enews

INFORMATION SHEET

Alcohol and other drugs in the workplace

Alcohol and other drug related problems can occur in any workplace. Being under the influence of alcohol and other drugs in the workplace can put people at risk and lead to serious injuries.

The first step for a business in dealing constructively with an alcohol or other drug related hazards in the workplace is to develop a policy in consultation with employees.

Comprehensive workplace alcohol and other drug policies apply to all workers and include prevention, education, counselling and rehabilitation arrangements.

The policy is designed to eliminate the risks, so far as is reasonably practicable, of serious injury or death arising from workers being impaired by drugs and alcohol while on the job.

Workers also have an important role in providing a healthy and safe place of work. If a worker is taking medicine, they should check with their doctor or pharmacist about the possible effects – for example drowsiness – it may have on them. If appropriate, they should discuss the effects with their manager and may need to be put on restricted duties while they are taking the medication.

Workers should look out for their workmates. If a worker suspects someone is under the influence of alcohol or other drugs at work, they should raise their concerns with their manager or work health and safety representative. Do not approach the person directly unless it is to prevent an immediate risk.

Remember that signs of possible drug or alcohol abuse may be due to other reasons, such as fatigue, heat exhaustion or other health related issues - do not jump to conclusions.

If a worker raises a concern about suspected alcohol or other drugs abuse, they are looking out for them and everyone else at work. Covering for them may put everyone at risk.

DISCLAIMER - The above is intended to provide general information in summary form. The contents do not constitute specific advice and should not be relied upon as such. Formal specific advice should be sought by members with respect to particular matters before taking action.

phone 1300 650 620 | fax 1300 655 953 | enquiries@hia.com.au | hia.com.au

If a worker is worried about raising issues of alcohol or other drugs abuse in the workplace to their manager or safety representative, or if they do not get an appropriate response from them, they can contact WorkCover directly on 13 10 50 or email contact@workcover.nsw.gov.au and remain anonymous if they wish.

WorkCover has developed a guide for businesses, managers, supervisors, employees, unions and employer organisations on how to establish a policy for managing the misuse of alcohol and other drugs in the workplace. The guide, *Alcohol and other drugs in the workplace* (Catalogue No. WC01359) can be downloaded from the WorkCover website www.workcover.nsw.gov.au or by calling 13 10 50.

A WorkCover inspector or business advisory officer can also visit a workplace and provide guidance and advice, including helping them develop an alcohol and other drugs policy for their workplace.