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## **Drugs & Alcohol Policy**

January 2023

### **INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE**

EP Ecology Ltd. (“EP Ecology” / “the Company”) has a duty to fully meet its legal responsibilities in relation to the use of alcohol and drugs amongst all its staff. The abuse of alcohol and drugs is known to increase the likelihood of accidents, to damage health and to impair work performance.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- create an organisational culture where the effects of the use of alcohol and drugs on safety, customer service and efficiency at work are recognised;
- create a working environment where the safety of EP Ecology employees, subcontractors, and others who may be affected by their actions, such as customers or members of the public, are protected from the risks arising from the use of alcohol or drugs;
- detail the rules that apply in relation to alcohol and drugs and the Company's response to breaches of the policy; and
- encourage those who have a problem to seek help and advise them of the support available.

The EP Ecology drugs and alcohol policy represents the company minimum standard, and applies to all EP Ecology employees, subcontractors, and third parties operating within the Workplace. More stringent variations, imposed by the client or through legal/other requirements, shall be determined by the relevant business unit and implemented locally, where appropriate.

Contractors are responsible for ensuring that their own employees, agency workers, and subcontractors are aware of, and fulfil, the requirements documented within this policy.

The remainder of this document provides guidance on the interpretation and application of the policy.

### **DEFINITIONS**

Within this document the following definitions apply:

- Abuse - the use of alcohol or drugs in such a manner that they adversely influence the employee's behaviour or are likely to damage the employee's health or to lead to deterioration of the safety of the work place.
- Alcohol - any intoxicant consumed by drinking.
- Alcohol intoxication - defined within this policy as an alcohol level at or above the UK legal limit for driving, currently 80mg of alcohol per 100ml of blood. It must be recognised that there is no failsafe guide as to how to stay under the legal limit for

driving. It depends on: weight, sex, age metabolism, stress levels, empty stomach, and the amount and type of alcohol. The safest, and recommended approach, is not to drink.

- Drugs - any controlled chemical substance that produces physical, mental, emotional or behavioural changes in the user.
- Planned events - includes activities that have been organised with an agreed purpose and which has been pre-authorised by an EP Ecology Ltd Director such as client entertainment or a staff social event.
- Premises - company premises in the context of this document includes, but is not limited to, all offices, surrounding grounds, vehicles, temporary site accommodation and vessels owned, leased or rented to the Company and any other premises at which the employee is located as a representative of the Company.
- Substance - includes alcohol and drugs as defined above
- Workplace - includes Premises owned, leased or otherwise operated by EP Ecology and/or the Client/other Third Party. Premises or locations being used for Planned Events are excluded from this definition in the context of this Policy.

## POLICY RULES

EP Ecology requires all employees to comply with the drugs and alcohol policy. Breaches of the following policy rules will be treated as gross misconduct and dealt with under the appropriate Company disciplinary procedure.

The consumption of alcohol in the Workplace is not permitted other than at a Planned Event. In addition the possession, use, storage, transportation, promotion, and/or sale of illegal drugs or related paraphernalia (other than over the counter medicines or prescribed medicines) is strictly prohibited during working time and within the workplace.

Employees shall not be intoxicated by alcohol whilst at work and should not undertake safety or quality critical activities (i.e. operate machinery, produce test results, or communicate information to a client either through email or report production) if intoxicated.

Employees shall not operate vehicles (whether company owned, hired, or private), plant, or equipment on Company business whilst over the relevant national legal alcohol limit or whilst under the influence of drugs. Company vehicles used for non-work purposes shall also not be operated under such circumstances.

Where rules are laid down by Clients relating to the consumption or possession of Drugs or Alcohol on their premises and exceed those of the Company, then they shall be fully adhered to by all employees.

Additional requirements, outlined below, shall also be met:

All employees are under an obligation to declare any problem that they have relating to substance abuse which could influence their safety or that of their colleagues or the performance of their work duties. If an employee comes forward voluntarily and seeks help for a drugs or alcohol problem, the company will help and support them as appropriate.

Employees who are aware of a colleague with a drug / alcohol problem should encourage them to seek help and should avoid taking any action to cover up for them.

Employees who have reason to believe that any individual(s) (employees, subcontractors, or visitors) are operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs must immediately stop work and advise their immediate superior (i.e. site supervisor, line manager, or office director). All individuals (employee or otherwise) identified as being under such influence shall be immediately escorted from the premises or where appropriate, to a safe and secure area. Employers of non-EP Ecology employees shall be immediately advised of the action that has been taken.

Any employee who is — or who is thought to be — seriously incapacitated by the use of alcohol and/or drugs may be suspended from work or dismissed in accordance with the company's disciplinary procedures. Subsequent action will only take place when the employee is in a fit and proper state to participate in the process.

Employees are, under normal circumstances, expressly forbidden to bring or consume alcohol in the Workplace. There are, however, certain occasions when a director will make an exception for a Planned Event. At such times, employees will still be expected to behave in a responsible manner. (in accordance with the relevant provisions of this policy).

Employees must be mindful of alcohol consumption whilst not at work to be sure of complying with this policy on return to work as any alcohol may remain in their system - for some hours. It is an offence under the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 to possess, supply or produce controlled drugs without authority or unless prescribed by an authorised person.

Since it is also an offence for an individual knowingly to allow such drugs to be supplied, offered for supply, produced or used on premises for which he or she is responsible, the EP Ecology Management cannot ignore finding drugs on its premises.

The company has a legal responsibility to call in the Police if drugs, as defined above (unless prescribed or retail) are discovered on its premises.

Employees shall be aware that:

- Over the counter and prescription drugs (for example sleeping tablets and anti-depressants) can have potentially dangerous side effects. Cold cures and hay fever drugs can cause drowsiness and affect reaction times. These effects can increase dramatically if these drugs are combined with alcohol.
- Any person taking any medicine should check with their doctor or pharmacist whether it is safe to drive or to operate machinery and follow their advice.
- All employees should notify the office director (if necessary, in confidence) when they are taking a medicine that may adversely affect their performance.

## **DRUG OR ALCOHOL TESTING**

Although the Company does not carry out random testing for drugs or alcohol abuse, several clients require random tests, normally of "designated personnel" which may include the Company's employees. In such cases, all employees are required to co-operate fully in meeting the clients' requirements.

The Company reserves the right to request any employee at the discretion of the CEO or his designate to undergo testing where they have reasonable grounds for suspecting that an employee may be adversely affected by substance abuse (i.e. physical appearance or behaviour patterns) or in the event of an accident or dangerous occurrence.

A positive test result or failure to submit oneself to such tests may lead to an employee's replacement at the workplace and action may be taken under the company's disciplinary procedures.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE**

Whilst the Company views as essential the rules laid down under this policy, it also recognises the problems which can be caused by dependency or addiction.

EP Ecology are committed to providing employees with general information regarding the effect of drugs and alcohol, whilst also providing managers with information on training on identifying employees who may be misusing substances.

Any employee who recognises that he/she has an addiction to or dependency upon drugs or alcohol that may impair the safety of the workplace or work performance should approach the

SHEQ Director, HR Director, or his/her Line Manager. All such approaches will be recorded, treated in strict confidence (subject to the provisions of law), and shall recognise the following:

- Absence for treatment and rehabilitation shall be regarded as normal sickness;
- Pensions, benefits and employment rights will be unaffected; and
- That relapses may occur which may require additional support provided these are reported by the employee.

Additional assistance provided to the employee may include local advisory services, NHS or specialist helplines, counselling services, or the use of an occupational health advisor. The level of support offered shall depend on the circumstances.

Employees that have declared that they have a substance misuse problem are also encouraged to voluntarily seek help through their GP.

Disciplinary action may be taken where help is refused and impaired performance continues. Line Managers who feel that an employee's unsatisfactory performance may be drug or alcohol related should contact the HR department in the first instance to seek advice on addressing their concerns with the employee.

The EP Ecology Drugs and Alcohol Policy may be subject to periodic audit, and shall be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure its continued effectiveness.



Erik Paterson,  
Director,  
**EP Ecology Ltd.**

**Date of review:** 18 January 2023

**Date of next review:** on or before 31 January 2024