



Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board

EMPLOYEE DRUG and ALCOHOL PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

Purpose

The employees of the Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board are our most valuable resource, and for that reason, their health and safety is of paramount concern. Employees under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job can pose serious health and safety risks to themselves, their students and their fellow colleagues. To help ensure a safe and healthy workplace, Huron-Superior Catholic District School Board reserves the right to prohibit certain items and substances from being brought on to or present on board property. The board has adopted this policy to communicate its expectations and guidelines surrounding drug and alcohol consumption, distribution and/ or impairment.

This employee drug and alcohol policy with accompanying procedural guidelines is intended to:

- maintain a healthy and safe workplace environment;
- identify prohibited substances that must not be brought on to or present on board property;
- provide opportunities for employees to develop the skills necessary to identify and access appropriate interventions, when necessary, and
- provide the required accommodations for employees on prescribed medications.

Definitions:

Alcohol: A beverage containing any quantity of alcohol, including, beer, wine, and distilled spirits.

Drug: Any substance which can change or adversely affect the way a person thinks or feels, whether obtained legally or illegally. This could include recreational cannabis (in any form), cocaine, opiates, and amphetamines.

Drug paraphernalia: Material or equipment used or intended for use in injecting, ingesting, inhaling, or otherwise introducing a drug, illegal or controlled, into the human body.

Impairment: The inability of an employee to work safely, competently or with reasonable effectiveness and safety due to the use of drugs or alcohol.

Medication: Includes a drug obtained legally, either over the counter or through a prescription issued by an authorized medical practitioner. For this policy, medications of concern are those that inhibit a worker's ability to perform their job safely and productively.

Substance Abuse: The use of illegal drugs, inappropriate use of alcohol or cannabis, or the misuse of prescription or over-the-counter drugs that causes physical and/or mental harm.

Implementation Process

- I. It is the responsibility of the board administration to implement this policy and procedural guidelines.
- II. On a regular basis, all employees will be informed about this board policy and procedural guidelines.
- III. A copy of the policy will be posted on the board's website so that employees may review the policy when needed.
- IV. All staff will be oriented to the content of the policy and procedural guidelines.

Expectations

The following expectations apply to employees and management alike while conducting work on behalf of the board, whether on or off board property:

- Employees are expected to arrive to work on time, fit for duty and able to perform their duties safely and to standard according to Occupational Health and Safety Act (OHSA);
- Use, possession, distribution, or sale of drugs, drug paraphernalia or alcohol during work hours, including during paid and unpaid breaks, is strictly prohibited;
- Employees are prohibited from reporting to work while under the influence of recreational cannabis (whether ingested or used topically) and any other non-prescribed substances;
- Use and possession of medically prescribed drugs is permitted during working hours, subject to the terms and conditions of the board's policies and all applicable legislation;
- Employees on medically approved medication must communicate to their supervisor any potential risk, limitation, or restriction requiring modification of duties or temporary reassignment; and,
- Employees are expected to abide by all governing legislation pertaining to the possession and use of drugs and alcohol.

Roles and Responsibilities

The board will clearly communicate all expectations surrounding drug and alcohol use, misuse, and abuse. To help enforce this policy, administration and employees are expected to adhere to the following:

Administration/Management will:

- attend training and awareness programs as directed by the board;
- ensure employees are fit for work, including documenting evidence of alcohol or drug use and/or impairment. Examples of behaviour or signs that may give rise to reasonable cause to believe that an employee is impaired/unfit for work and may be unable to perform their job safely include but are not limited to:
 - slurred speech;
 - glassy eyes;
 - flushed face or neck;
 - disorientation, unsteadiness, or lack of coordination;
 - smell of alcohol or drugs (on breath, or clothing, or in the air surrounding the employee);
 - uncharacteristic or abnormal behavior (e.g., frequent or rapid mood swings, excitement, confusion, irritability, aggressiveness, remoteness, euphoria);

- diminished performance (e.g., sporadic work pace, neglect of duty, increase in mistakes, difficulty communicating or recalling instructions), and/or
- memory problems.
- take immediate action to remove from the job an employee appearing to be impaired and ensure safe transportation from work (i.e. contact a spouse, family member or other individual to transport the employee home);
- investigate the allegations of impairment or substance abuse;
- ensure that any employee who asks for help due to a drug or alcohol dependency is provided with the appropriate support and is not disciplined for doing so, and
- maintain confidentiality and employee privacy.

Employees will:

- report to work free from substances that negatively impact work performance and their safety, as well as the safety of others;
- abide by the provisions of the *Employee Drug and Alcohol Policy and Procedural Guidelines* and be aware of their responsibilities under it;
- arrive to work fit for duty, and remain so for the duration of their shift;
- perform work safely in accordance with established safe work practices;
- avoid the consumption, possession, sale, or distribution of drugs or alcohol on board property and during working hours even if off board property;
- avoid the consumption, possession, sale, or distribution of drugs or alcohol while on a board approved extended fieldtrip;
- when attending a training / professional development, appearing at an event as a representative for the board and when attending a board or staff function, use alcohol responsibly and ensure that they are not impaired;
- in cases where an employee has been given a prescription for medication and this medication may affect their ability to work skillfully and safely, discuss the matter with their immediate supervisor or a member of the Human Resources Department;
- where applicable, provide a medical certificate from their health care practitioner when seeking accommodation to support a disability-related need for use of prescription medication for medical purposes;
- be encouraged to report unfit co-workers to their immediate supervisor;
- advise their immediate supervisor if they believe that a third party provider including, but not limited to, transportation providers has a substance use disorder or is impaired while conducting business at a board site. Where the employee believes that the third party is in a position of trust/care of students, the report should be made as soon as it is safe to do so; and if needed police should be contacted;
- seek advice and appropriate treatment, where required; and
- follow the after-care program, where established.

Investigation Process

1. In the event that an employee is suspected to be under the influence, is displaying impaired behaviour, and/or if impaired behaviour has been reported, these steps shall be followed by the immediate supervisor. The steps are not to be considered harassing in nature and are to be carried out in the best interests of the school board, while maintaining the employee's confidentiality and dignity:
 - if possible, immediate supervisor will first seek another supervisor's opinion to confirm the suspicion of impairment;
 - intervene with the employee and escort to a confidential area to discuss suspicions and/or document evidence of impairment/use;
 - advise the employee of his/her right to contact a union or association representative;
 - investigate employee's ability to perform duties. Suspicions of an employee's ability to function safely may be based on specific personal observations. If the employee exhibits unusual behaviour including but not limited to slurred speech, difficulty with balance, watery or red eyes, or dilated pupils, or if there is an odour of alcohol, the employee should not be permitted to return to their assigned duties in order to ensure their safety and the safety of other employees or visitors to the workplace;
 - if deemed unfit to work, support employee by finding support / transportation off board property (i.e. home, hospital if required);
 - inform the Superintendent of Education as well as the Manager of Human Resources or designate, and
 - arrange a follow up meeting for a safe return to work.
2. Where necessary, as determined by the Superintendent and/or Manager of Human Resources or designate, the board may further investigate the allegations of impairment or substance abuse. This may involve the assignment of the employee home until the completion of the investigation. Such assignment will be made at the sole discretion of the Director of Education.
3. When an employee has been sent home due to substance use, a suspicion thereof, or for further investigation, the board may request that medical documentation be provided deeming the individual is drug and/or alcohol free prior to their return to work.
4. No employee with an alcohol, drug or prescription medication problem will be disciplined or involuntarily terminated for voluntarily requesting assistance in overcoming the problem. However, involvement in a rehabilitative program or seeking assistance after an incident has occurred or after a request for the employee to undergo reasonable suspicion investigation under the board's policy will not prevent an employee from being disciplined.

Disciplinary Action

The Education Act, as well as the Safe Schools Act, 2000, prohibits the use of alcohol, recreational cannabis or illicit drugs by employees while on board and school property or at events sponsored by the board and its schools.

1. Employees who violate the provisions of the *Employee Drug and Alcohol Policy and/or Procedural Guidelines* are subject to the appropriate disciplinary measures, up to and including dismissal from employment in alignment with the Progressive Discipline of Employees Board Policy (#6002).
2. Where applicable, the disciplinary action will follow the employee's respective collective agreement.

3. Possession of or dealing illegal drugs on board property will, without exception, be reported to the police.

The goal of the Employee Drug and Alcohol Policy is to clearly communicate the board's expectations regarding employees under the influence of drugs or alcohol on the job. Compliance with this policy is designed to protect the health and safety of all employees.