

Title of Document	Substance Misuse Policy
Name of Department	People Team

What type of document is this?	Policy	
Which Helping Hands POL/SOP/W.I does this document relate to?		Reference number of POL/SOP/W.I

Which Operational Priority/Priorities does this document link to?	Governance Framework	People, Performance & Culture		

Custodian of document	Chief People Officer	Committee/Group responsible for this document	Policy Committee
Approval date and committee chairperson signature	25.03.25	When is its next scheduled review?	25.03.28

Who does it apply to?	All Helping Hands staff					
	Does it apply to bank workers?	Yes	Does it apply to agency staff?	Yes	Does it apply to third party contractors?	Yes

Purpose of the Policy	We are committed to providing a safe, healthy, and productive working environment. This includes ensuring that all employees are fit to carry out their roles safely and effectively in an environment which is free from alcohol or drug misuse.
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ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Role	Responsibility
Chief People Officer	Is responsible for reviewing and updating this policy and ensuring that the policy is communicated across the company through the Senior Management Team(s).
Helping Hands Managers	Is responsible for implementing and embedding this policy within all teams across the company.
Helping Hands Employees	Is responsible for adhering to this policy as directed by line managers.

1. Policy summary

We have a duty to take care of the health and safety of all our employees and others affected by our activities. It is important for us to ensure that staff behave in an appropriate, professional and responsible manner at work and that alcohol or drug misuse does not create a health and safety risk. At the same time, we genuinely care about the health and wellbeing of our workforce and are invested in creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

We recognise that alcohol or drug dependence is a medical condition. If you disclose, or we suspect, that you have an alcohol or drug problem, we will take a non-judgmental and supportive approach to ensure that you get the help that you need.

We will not accept employees arriving at work under the influence of alcohol or drugs and/or whose ability to work is impaired in any way by reason of the consumption of alcohol or drugs, or who consume alcohol or take drugs (other than prescription or over the counter medication, as directed) on our premises.

Any concerns raised regarding use of drugs and alcohol whilst at work, will be processed in line with the Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

This policy covers all employees, officers, consultants, contractors, casual workers, and agency workers.

This policy does not form part of any employee's contract of employment, and we may amend it at any time.

2. Confidentiality

We aim to ensure that the confidentiality of any employee experiencing alcohol or drug problems are maintained appropriately. However, it needs to be recognised that, in supporting them, some degree of information sharing is likely to be necessary.

If an employee seeks help with an alcohol or drug-related problem directly from the People Team (hrhub@helpinghands.co.uk) there will be a need to disclose this to the employee's line manager, as a duty of care. In those circumstances the People Team will encourage the employee to discuss with their manager, at the earliest opportunity.

3. What is substance misuse

Substance misuse is when an individual drinks alcohol, or takes illegal drugs, medicines, or substances such as solvents, in a way that is harmful.

Early warning signs of potential alcohol or drug misuse include:

- Unexplained or frequent absences.
- A change in behaviour.
- Behaving in an aggressive or reckless way.
- Unexplained dips in productivity.
- Accidents or near misses.
- Performance or conduct issues.
- Sudden changes of mood; or
- Breakdown in relationships with employees.

If an employee notices obvious signs of alcohol or drug misuse in an employee, they should report the observations and/or suspicions to their line manager or the People team (hrhub@helpinghands.co.uk).

4. Conduct at work

We have a duty of care to ensure a safe working environment and not to expose employees and others affected by our activities to any unnecessary risk.

For this reason, it is strictly prohibited to:

- Drink alcohol or take drugs that are likely to render you unfit or unsafe for work during any period that you are working.
- Work, or report for work, while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- Supply others with alcohol or non-prescribed drugs during working hours or in the workplace.
- Store alcohol or drugs at the workplace such as in lockers and desk drawers; or (live in carers)
- Be over the legal drink-drive alcohol limit if you need to drive for work reasons.

If we suspect that any employee is unfit or unsafe to undertake work because they are under the influence of alcohol or drugs, they may be suspended from duties until the matter is investigated.

Where a manager considers that a deterioration in work performance and/or changes in patterns of behaviour may be due to alcohol or drug misuse they should seek advice and assistance from the People Team.

5. Searches

We reserve the right to conduct searches for alcohol or drugs on our premises, including, but not limited to, searches of lockers, filing cabinets, desks, bags, vehicle, clothing, packages and personal items in customer's homes.

Any alcohol or drugs found as a result of a search may result in action being taken under our Disciplinary Policy.

6. Drug screening

We do reserve the right to conduct random drug testing on all employees.

We will operate a rolling programme of random drug testing where it is felt to be necessary to support our employees through difficult times.

An external provider will conduct drug screening. Arrangements will be discussed with affected employees at the start of each screening programme. If a positive result or any breach of this policy is found it will be addressed following the disciplinary process, although we will always consider the circumstances of any case, including whether the employee is receiving support for a drug or alcohol-related problem, before deciding on the appropriate action.

7. Providing support

Alcohol and drug-related problems may develop for a variety of reasons and over a considerable period of time. We are committed, as far as is reasonable, to treating these problems in a similar way to other health issues. We will provide support where possible with a view to a return to full duties. We may refer you to occupational health so that they can advise on the type of support that may be appropriate. Occupational health may also signpost you to external sources of help and advice.

This may include:

- Referral to appropriate treatment providers, where necessary in conjunction with the individuals GP.
- Time off work to attend treatment.
- Adjusting duties or other support during treatment and for an agreed period thereafter, subject to operational requirements and feasibility.
- Offer random Drug/ Alcohol testing.

If the employee refuses to attend Occupational Health appointments or does not finish a programme of treatment, or their recovery and return to work does not go as planned, their Line Manager will meet with them to decide what further action if any should be taken.

8. Employee assistance programme

Help and support is also available through our employee assistance programme (EAP).

Employees can use our EAP to speak to an independent adviser on a confidential basis about any issue that is troubling them.

Employees can access the EAP by visiting www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk and entering these details:

Username: HH

Password: employee

9. Performance and disciplinary issues

If an employee can demonstrate that they are undertaking appropriate treatment and/or rehabilitation for an acknowledged alcohol or drug related problem, we may decide to suspend any ongoing disciplinary action against them for related misconduct or poor performance, pending the outcome of the treatment.

10. Data protection

When dealing with substance misuse we will process any personal data collected in accordance with our data protection policy (Privacy Information Policy which can be found on the company website). In particular, we will record only the personal information required and keep the information only for as long as necessary.

11. Illegal drugs

If you are found in possession of illegal drugs during your working hours, or at a work-related event, we will have no option but to report the matter to the police.

TRAINING

Is training required?	No
Details of training	N/A

COMPLIANCE

How is compliance with the POL going to be monitored	Monitoring and potential review of the policy will be guided by Employment Law and Company changes. Internal checks will be made to ensure that staff have followed the policy by the subject specialists.
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EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND PROCEDURAL INFORMATION

	Positive / Negative / N/A	Comments
Does the document have a positive or negative impact on one group of people over another on the basis of their:		
• age?	N/A	
• disability?	N/A	
• gender reassignment?	N/A	
• pregnancy and maternity (which includes breastfeeding)?	N/A	
• race (including nationality, ethnic or national origins or colour)?	N/A	
• marriage or civil partnership?	N/A	
• religion or belief?	N/A	
• sex?	N/A	
• sexual orientation?	N/A	
If you have identified any potential impact (including any positive impact which may result in more favourable treatment for one particular group of people over another), are any exceptions valid, legal and/or justifiable?	N/A	
If the impact on one of the above groups is likely to be negative:		
• Can the impact be avoided?	N/A	
• What alternatives are there to achieving the document's aim without the impact?	N/A	
• Can the impact be reduced by taking different action?	N/A	
• Is there an impact on staff, client or someone else's privacy?	N/A	<i>If yes, privacy impact assessment required</i>

What was the previous version number of this document?	04
Changes since previous version	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the Policy Summary removed unnecessary wording which is detailed further on in the policy. Amended section 4 'conduct at work' – related to duty of care and safe environment. Added the right to search a car in section 5.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amended section 7 'providing support' to included referral to Occupational Health and other external bodies. Added section 11 related to reporting the Police where illegal drugs are found 	
Who was involved in developing/reviewing /amending the POL?	People Services Director	
How confidential is this document?	Restricted	Can be shared freely within Helping Hands but NOT outside

References	
Associated Documents	