



POLICY

ALCOHOL & SUBSTANCE MISUSE

REVIEWED POLICY MARCH 2023

Wellhouse - The Place To Be

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1. Vision and values

Wellhouse – the Place to Be.

This simple statement is our vision of Wellhouse as an attractive place where people feel happy and safe, benefit from having a good home and an attractive environment and feel proud to be part of a vibrant community.

We believe that our values of **Trust, Honesty and Integrity, Excellence, Accountability and Sustainability** supported by a comprehensive policy framework will help make our vision a reality.

2. Governance

Wellhouse HA is a community controlled registered social landlord and is managed by a group of local people who are elected onto the Management Committee. Their role is to make sure that the Association is well run, meets the needs of the local area and is responsive to what is important to local people.

The Management Committee appoints senior staff, agrees all the Association's policies and takes all the key decisions. The Director and the senior team support the Committee in these responsibilities.

3. Policy Aims

- Clarify Wellhouse Housing Associations position on drinking and/or substance abuse at work
- Explain Wellhouse Housing Associations 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 Wellhouse 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.

4. Equal Opportunities Statement

We aim to ensure that all services, including the delivery of this policy, provide equality of opportunity.

We will respond to the different needs and service requirements of individuals. We will not discriminate against any individual for any reason, including age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage, civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, or other status.

5. Introduction

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

6. The Policy

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 Wellhouse Housing Associations 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

Wellhouse 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

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

Alcohol and the Workplace

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, Wellhouse 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 not 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

Wellhouse 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 Wellhouse 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 organisations 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 Wellhouse Housing Association will instigate the disciplinary procedure.

- **Illegal Substance Misuse**

Wellhouse Housing Association will not tolerate the consumption or possession of illegal drugs in any circumstances. This will always be considered to represent gross misconduct.

Wellhouse 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 Wellhouse Housing Associations disciplinary procedures as gross misconduct.

General Illegal Activity

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

Police Involvement

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

Managing Dependency Problems

In circumstances where an employee is suspected of having an alcohol or legal substance dependency Wellhouse 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, Time for Talking. 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 Wellhouse Housing Association under performance procedures as detailed in the disciplinary procedures. Where the improvement is not adequate or support via the Employee Counselling Service, Time for Talking is not adhered to, normal disciplinary procedures will be instigated which may result in dismissal.

Confidentiality & General Data Protection Regulations

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

The organisation will treat your personal data in line with our obligations under the current data protection regulations. Information regarding how your data will be used and the basis for processing your data is provided in Wellhouse HA's employee privacy notice.

SUPPORTING AGENCIES

- **Glasgow Council on Alcohol**

Tel: 0141 353 1800

web: www.glasgowcouncilonalcohol.org

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

- **Employee Counselling Service – Time for Talking**

Tel: 0800 970 3980

- **National Drugs Helpline**

Tel: 0800 77 66 00 (Freephone number)