


Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy		
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Policy Statement

Gloucestershire Nightstop recognises that Alcohol and Substance Misuse issues may affect all employees, volunteers and young people who use the services provided by Gloucestershire Nightstop.

Gloucestershire Nightstop is committed to providing a safe, healthy and effective workplace and recognises the duty of care to all employees, volunteers and young people with whom we work. This includes ensuring that employees are fit to carry out their job effectively, in an environment that is free from alcohol and substances.

Gloucestershire Nightstop is committed to providing safe placements for young people and hosts and drivers free from alcohol and substance misuse.

All employees are aware of the risks of alcohol and substance misuse and our young people are encouraged to be honest about their experiences to assess risks effectively.

Aims of this Policy

The aim of this policy is to outline the expectations of all employees, volunteers, and young people in relation to alcohol and substance misuse.

Gloucestershire Nightstop is committed to supporting those with an alcohol or substance misuse needs whilst effectively managing the risks associated to others.

Ensure that employees with an alcohol or substance misuse issue that is affecting their work are dealt with sympathetically, fairly, and consistently.

What is Alcohol or Substance Misuse

This policy covers all illegal drugs, alcohol, abuse of prescription and over-the-counter drugs and volatile substances (e.g. solvents), which will be collectively referred to in this policy as “drugs”, “alcohol” or “substances”. For the purposes of Gloucestershire Nightstop, “legal Highs” are included within the scope of this policy, under the terms “drugs” or “substances”

The term ‘use’ refers to any and all acts of consumption of intoxicating substances, regardless of whether they cause problems.

‘Misuse’ refers to any taking of substances that causes problems for the user or for someone close to them. This includes, but is not restricted to, any ‘self-defined’ problems that are identified by the user and/or their relatives. Sometimes the problems caused by a person’s substance misuse are not identified or recognised by those who are most closely involved, but if they are identifiable problems, they are included in the definition of ‘misuse’.

Prescribed medication should only be used by the person it is prescribed to and to the dosage set by the doctor/pharmacist, any use by other persons or more than the prescribed dosage is considered ‘misuse’.

Working with Young People

Employees, Trustees and Volunteers are not to consume alcohol or non-prescribed drugs whilst acting in any capacity for Gloucestershire Nightstop.

Only with the express prior approval of the Executive Director or the Chair of The Board of Trustees, can exceptions be made, and only in respect of reasonable alcohol consumption in relation to specific events and with restrictions.

Employees, Trustees and Volunteers should not offer or give young people alcohol or substances at any time.

Employees, Trustees and Volunteers should not offer to take drugs or substances from or hold on behalf of, or buy from or for, young people.

All Employees, Trustees and Volunteers are expected to comply with legal responsibilities at all times. Where necessary a report to the police may be made.

Young People Accessing the Service

Young people accessing services from Gloucestershire Nightstop are expected to be honest with employees about their current alcohol and substance use in order to fully assess any risks present to both staff and volunteers. Prescribed medication must be disclosed at assessment stage or can invalidate the risk assessment and placement will be reviewed.

No alcohol or substance use or possession, except for prescribed medication, is tolerated whilst engaging with Gloucestershire Nightstop services.

If a volunteer suspects that a young person is under the influence of alcohol or substances, they must report it to the duty worker or the on-call person if out of hours.

Whilst a young person who uses alcohol or substances recreationally would not be excluded from Gloucestershire Nightstop services, Gloucestershire Nightstop does expect all Young People to refrain from use or possessing alcohol or substances whilst in receipt of support or services from us.

Management of Suspected Alcohol or Substance Misuse

There may be time when employees, trustees or volunteers may need to involve the police where anyone is acting unlawfully and in particular where there is dealing/supplying of illegal substances.

Gloucestershire Nightstop will respond to any concerns or allegations by investigating and informing Nightstop UK in line with the "Informing Nightstop UK of Incidents, Safeguarding Concerns and Near Misses" policy.

Young Person

If under assessment it becomes clear that a young person is unable to refrain from the alcohol or substance misuse for the duration of their placement, where appropriate, Gloucestershire Nightstop will endeavour to support the young person in other ways, through signposting for support with their alcohol or substance misuse needs or for accessing appropriate accommodation and housing elsewhere that can meet their needs. Advice and Support Service can still be offered.

In circumstances where a placement is already underway and there is reason to suspect the young person is under the influence of, or in possession of, drugs and/or alcohol. Where the young person is over 18, alternative accommodation may be sourced by on call staff, where available. Where a young person is under 18, the on-call worker will contact the EDT for support and to find safe alternative accommodation. If the young person's behaviour is aggressive or violent the hosts or on call worker may need to call the emergency services for support or removal.

Gloucestershire Nightstop reserves the right to refuse or withdraw any of its services in the event of a suspected breach of this policy. Gloucestershire Nightstop will reassess and review the risk assessment and consider the context of any breach of this policy when deciding whether to withdraw services.

Employees

The following is considered Gross Misconduct;

- The consumption of alcohol while on duty (unless with prior approval from the Executive Director at a specific work-related event, or being unfit to work because of the consumption of alcohol possession, or being under the influence, of drugs at work.
- For this purpose, the term 'drugs' is used to describe both illegal drugs and other psychoactive (mind-altering) substances which may or may not be illegal.

If a member of staff is not under the influence of alcohol or substances or misusing them but the quality of their work is deteriorating or being affected because of the use of alcohol or substances outside of work, then Gloucestershire Nightstop will encourage employees to get support and address their alcohol or substance misuse issues. Information will be provided to the employee about where support can be found and can support with making referrals where needed. Any disclosures from employees will be treated sensitively. A full risk assessment will be carried out to ensure that colleagues, young people and hosts are not impacted. Employees' performance will be managed under the capability procedures outlined in the Employee Handbook.

Volunteers

If a volunteer is under the influence of alcohol or substances, then the placement will not go ahead or be ended and alternative accommodation and/or transport will be sourced for the young person, as appropriate.

Any incident will be reported to Nightstop UK and investigated. The volunteer agreement may be ended in these circumstances.