

People & Culture | Alcohol, Drugs and Smoking Policy

RDocument Revisions Log

Date	Ver	Revised By	Approved By	Description of change
03 Mar 2025	1.0	Rosie Wilson-Patterson		DRAFT
				FINAL

Purpose of Document

The purpose of this document is to set out the policy for alcohol, drugs, and smoking in the workplace. Focus Group is committed to maintaining a safe, productive, and healthy work environment. The misuse of alcohol, drugs, and smoking in the workplace can compromise safety, performance, and employee wellbeing. This policy outlines the expectations and procedures regarding alcohol and drug use to ensure a professional and compliant workplace.

Applicability and Scope

This policy applies to all employees of Focus Group.

Effective Date

This policy is effective from the date the version is approved.

Responsibility

Directors, Heads of Department, all Managers and Team Leads are responsible for implementing and maintaining this policy across all relevant staff.

All employees are responsible for making themselves familiar with the policy and following the guidance detailed.

Policy Statement

Focus Group is dedicated to maintaining a safe and productive working environment for all employees. As part of this commitment, we enforce a strict prohibition on the consumption of alcohol, drugs, and other substances (including legal highs) in the workplace or during working hours. The company operates a smoke-free workplace. Any violation of this policy will be regarded as gross misconduct and addressed accordingly.

Alcohol

Consumption of even a small amount of alcohol can adversely affect the work of an individual and pose a risk to the health and safety of themselves and others. It is worth noting that alcohol can take up to 24 hours to leave a person's bloodstream, so consuming a significant amount of alcohol of an evening can leave a person unfit to work the following morning.

It is hugely important that you do not present yourself at work under the influence of alcohol. You must also not consume any alcohol during work hours, over lunchtime or during any other breaks, unless this has been specifically authorised by your line manager.

Should alcohol be served at a company-organised event, or an event where you are representing Focus Group, even outside of working hours, it is important to continue to behave responsibly and not drink to excess. Any behaviour that reflects badly on Focus Group may be considered a disciplinary matter, and in serious cases may amount to gross misconduct.

Illegal Drugs/Substances

The consumption, storage, distribution or sale of illegal drugs or any other behaviour-altering and/or intoxicating substance, including legal highs, is strictly prohibited. This applies to any time during work hours, and at any work events or occasions where you may be representing Focus Group.

You must not present yourself for work under the influence of any illegal drugs or other substances taken for non-medical purposes, and we will not hesitate to report any illegal activity to the police and other relevant authorities.

Medication and Prescription Drugs

If you are taking any prescription drugs, or any medication that may affect your ability to carry out your role at Focus Group, we would ask that you inform your line manager so that steps can be taken to ensure the safety of yourselves and others.

It is your responsibility, when beginning any course of medication, to check whether it may adversely affect your ability to work.

Smoking and Vaping

The Company operates a smoke-free workplace. Smoking (which includes the use of e-cigarettes and personal vaporisers) is therefore strictly prohibited throughout all Company premises, including any Company vehicle.

Smoking and vaping (including e-cigarettes) is only permitted in the designated outside areas. Employees should try to keep smoking breaks to a minimum. Employees should be particularly careful to avoid taking

smoking breaks at busy periods or at a time that will cause increased work or pressure for colleagues. Managers may agree when breaks can be taken over the working day.

Dependency

Individuals facing dependency on alcohol, drugs, or other substances may be encouraged to seek appropriate counselling and/or medical assistance, with support offered where possible. Any disclosure of dependency will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and shared only on a need-to-know basis. However, there may be instances where it is necessary to inform additional parties such as managers, regulatory authorities, or others, to ensure safety or compliance with legal requirements.

Any absence arising from treatment or counselling related to alcohol, drug or substance abuse, or dependency, will be treated as sickness absence under our wellbeing and sickness absence policy. While we will always do our best to be supportive of an employee facing dependency, this will not prevent disciplinary action being taken should the individual act in breach of this policy.

Alcohol, Drug and other Substance Testing

If there is reason to believe that you are under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances, Focus Group reserves the right to request you submit to testing. Because of the safety-critical nature of our company, you could be asked to submit to a test upon arrival at work, or at any point throughout the working day.

It is up to Focus Group to determine if a test is required, and if somebody is clearly under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances, a test may not be required but disciplinary action will still be taken.

Refusal to comply with testing may result in disciplinary action.

Reporting Concerns

Employees are encouraged to report concerns about substance misuse to their manager or People & Culture in confidence.

Support

Employees who may be struggling with substance misuse are encouraged to seek support through our Employee Assistance Program (EAP) or other available resources. You can access details to our EAP [here](#).