

# ST PAUL DE CHARTRES RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE MANAGEMENT POLICY MANUAL

Issue No: 1  
Form No: M20.D3

Authorised by GM

Date: Oct 2011  
Review Date Oct 2013

## (D3) DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

**AIM:** The objective of this policy is to maintain a safe, healthy and productive workplace by preventing incidents caused by alcohol and other drugs.

### 1. POLICY STATEMENT

Employees have an obligation and responsibility to ensure that they are “fit for duty” and take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of themselves and other people in the workplace. An Employee’s consumption of drugs or alcohol may place themselves and others in unnecessary danger.

### 2. DEFINITIONS

#### 2.1. Drugs

Drugs include any illegal or prescription substances that alter mood and/or physical functioning.

#### 2.2. Fitness for duty

An Employee is fit for duty if performance is not impaired by:

- Illegal or prescription drugs;
- Blood alcohol level below 0.05 grams per 100 ml of any blood specimen or, for professional drivers, at or below 0.02 grams per 100 ml of any blood specimen;
- Fatigue;
- Certain medical conditions; or
- Certain emotional conditions.

### 3. PROCEDURES

#### 3.1. Employee Obligations

- Employees have an obligation and responsibility to ensure that they are fit for duty;
- No illegal drugs are allowed onto the Company’s property;

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- No alcohol or illegal/prohibited drug is to be consumed by any Employee whilst on duty or during meal breaks; and
- Employees are not permitted to commence duty when exhibiting signs of being intoxicated, under the influence of any illegal or prescription drugs, or in any other condition which may reasonably be considered to endanger the health and safety of the Employee and/or other Employees.

An Employee who is suspected of not being fit for duty, will not be allowed to work. An Employee is deemed to be affected by alcohol if they have a blood alcohol level of or above 0.05 or, for professional drivers, above 0.02.

An Employee who is under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs and not fit for duty may be identified by;

- Self identification and/or self referral to a treatment program;
- A co-worker;
- A Supervisor; and/or
- A medical assessment.

## **3.2. Disciplinary Action**

The Company may initiate disciplinary action against any Employee who is affected by illegal drugs, prescriptive drugs and/or alcohol. Disciplinary action, depending on the circumstances, may take any of the following forms:

- Further education and training;
- Verbal warning;
- Written warning;
- Final written warning;
- Dismissal; and/or
- Summary dismissal.

Generally, if an Employee affected by illegal drugs, prescriptive drugs and/or alcohol places themselves or others at risk of injury the appropriate penalty will be summary dismissal.

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## 3.3. Issues to Consider When Deciding Disciplinary Action

When considering disciplinary action against an Employee at the time that the Employee is allegedly affected by drugs and/or alcohol, the following factors should be considered:

- The physical and mental state of the Employee;
- The possibility of anger, aggression and/or violence being directed to other Employees;
- Whether the Employee has consented to a medical examination and testing;
- Whether the Employee was claiming to be fit for duty or not;
- History of the Employee including previous disciplinary action and current medical treatment; and
- Other evidence available and witnesses which would support the disciplinary action proposed.

## 3.4. Guidelines to Determine if an Employee is not Fit for Duty

A Guide to determine whether an Employee is affected by alcohol and/or illegal or prohibited drugs may include, but is not limited to:

### ***Work Performance and Work Patterns***

- High number of mistakes;
- Extremes in performance; and/or
- Difficulty in remembering instructions or handling complex situations.

### ***Physical Symptoms and Conditions***

- Weariness;
- Exhaustion;
- Excessive blinking;
- Blank stares;

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- Unusual efforts to cover arms;
- Wearing sunglasses at unusual times;
- Slurring of words;
- Smelling of alcohol; and/or
- Unable to stand-up straight without assistance.

### ***Absenteeism and personal health***

- Increase in absence especially before and after weekends;
- Consistently late;
- Disappear from job regularly; and/or
- Signs of nervousness or emotional distress.

### ***Social Interaction on the job***

- Withdrawing or avoiding peers;
- Overly sociable; and/or
- Unusual outbursts of emotions eg. Angry or irritable.

### ***Accidents and concentration***

- Highly accident prone on and off the job;
- Taking unnecessary risks or needlessly endangering others;
- Difficulty concentrating; and/or
- Appear to be confused.

## **3.5. Employee Assistance**

An Employee may request assistance for identifying appropriate programs for drug and/or alcohol education or rehabilitation.

Employee assistance may be accessed by an Employee's own initiative or may be offered by their Supervisor/Manager.

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The confidentiality of Employees accepting Employee assistance is assured, except for information that is required to determine an Employee's fitness for work or appropriate disciplinary action.

## **3.6. Alcohol on the Premises**

Alcohol is not to be brought onto Company property or where work is being performed without the expressed permission of the Manager.

Alcohol can only be consumed on the Company's premises with the expressed permission and prior approval of the Manager (eg. For work functions).

## **3.7. Prevention of Alcohol and Drug Related Incidents**

Training and education in this policy will be provided to all staff. This training may cover:

- The effects of drug and alcohol use on health, safety and work performance;
- The consequences for Employees who fail to comply with Company policy;
- Workplace and personal lifestyle stressors that can contribute to drug and alcohol abuse;
- Personal stress reduction methods;
- What constitutes harmful drug and alcohol use;
- Ways of dealing with harmful alcohol and drug use;
- Who to approach in the workplace for assistance; and/or
- Skills for Supervisors/Managers in identifying drug and alcohol use and how to manage the issues.

## **4. SUMMARY OF KEY POINTS**

- Supervisors/Managers must not permit Employees to commence work if the Employee is suspected of being under the influence of an intoxicating substance.

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- Confidentiality is assured for Employees participating in any counselling or medical treatment, except for information that is required by the Company to determine either fitness for work or appropriate disciplinary processes.
- Alcohol or any illegal/prohibited drug is not to be consumed by any Employee whilst on duty or during work breaks.
- Alcohol is not to be brought onto Company premises without the permission of the Supervisor/Manager.
- The Company may carry out disciplinary action if this policy is breached.

**Associated Legislation:** *National Road Safety Act No. 93 1996*  
*Occupational Health and Safety Act 2000 (NSW)*  
*Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Act 1986 (SA)*  
*Workplace Health and Safety Act 1995 (QLD)*

**Associated Policies:** *Counselling and Discipline*  
*Termination and Redundancy*