



Drugs and alcohol – what you need to know

Principles that guide us

- We make sure that we are fit to carry out our work and unimpaired by alcohol or other substances.
- We moderate our behaviour at work functions (and afterwards) so that we are safe and Auckland Council's reputation is protected.
- We look after those around us by using our Speak up, "see something, say something, do something" approach when we notice an alcohol or drug related issue.

Critical information

Can I drink alcohol while working?

Use your judgement in situations where you might be offered a drink during work hours. In some parts of the business, particularly those involving safety-sensitive roles, it is never acceptable to consume alcohol during work hours or when you are, or will be, carrying out council work. If you are in any doubt, ask your people leader.

Can I bring alcohol into our workplace?

In most cases, it is not appropriate to bring alcohol into our workplace unless you have authorisation from an appropriate senior manager. If it is authorised, it is important that you follow Our Charter and its supporting guidance..

Use common sense to ensure that alcohol is consumed safely and in moderation. Always keep in mind how your behaviour, and that of your colleagues, might affect our reputation. We want all visitors to our offices and members of the public to see that people who work at Auckland Council have high standards.

Can I still take medication?

If you are taking prescribed or over-the-counter medications, check whether the medication may interfere with safe performance of your job. If so, tell your people leader.



How do I know someone has a drug or alcohol abuse problem? What signs should I look for?

Do not make quick judgements about other people's behaviour, but bear in mind that it is our collective responsibility to ensure that people are safe to work. Some signs that may indicate an issue are:

- frequent lateness or unexplained absences
- frequent small accidents or near miss, unsafe behaviour resulting in minor injuries or broken objects
- unusual physical symptoms or behaviours (unsteady gait, hyperactive or manic activity, sudden weight loss, etc.)
- a sudden lack of concern over personal appearance and hygiene
- an unwillingness to talk about hobbies, family life, or personal interests in someone who was forthcoming before
- lower levels of productivity in the morning; a general sluggishness when first reporting to work
- bloodshot eyes, or bags under the eyes indicating a lack of sleep.

If you suspect that someone you work with may not be safe to work, or has a substance abuse problem, you should alert either your people leader, People and Performance (P&P), or the Integrity Team as soon as possible.

How can I seek help if I have a substance abuse problem?

We encourage people with a drug or alcohol problem to be proactive and seek professional help, and we are committed to helping you in any way we can. You can:

- talk to your people leader who will assist you in seeking help
- talk to the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Team (H&S)
- talk to a People and Performance (P&P) business partner, or contact one via Awhina
- talk to an Employment Relations consultant, or contact one via Awhina.

Auckland Council also provides an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) which provides confidential counselling. You can call the EAP on 0800 327 669 at any time.



Does Auckland Council do drug and alcohol testing?

We may conduct drug and/or alcohol testing in circumstances where safety or wellbeing could be at risk. For example:

- For pre-employment into a safety-sensitive role, or transfers to a safety-sensitive role.
- Post-accident/incident, where there is reasonable cause to suspect that drugs and/or alcohol may be involved.
- Where someone's behaviour means there is reasonable cause to suspect impairment by drugs or alcohol.
- Where employees are undergoing rehabilitation and the testing forms part of the rehabilitation programme.

Random testing may be conducted in safety-sensitive roles. Testing will be conducted in a manner that ensures accuracy of results, is as non-invasive as possible, and takes into account privacy and confidentiality. Where we have reasonable grounds, we may search personal or council property on our premises to detect inappropriate use or possession of drugs or alcohol.

Our bottom lines

- Any person working in an Auckland Council workplace must report fit for duty and be able to perform tasks assigned to them. Performance, especially in safety-sensitive roles, must not be affected by the use or after-effects of alcohol, illegal drugs, non-prescription drugs, prescribed medications or any other substance that impairs your ability to carry out your role.
- No person working in or present on an Auckland Council workplace may prescribe, distribute or deal in drugs, whether illegal or not.

Breaching our bottom line expectations would be considered and treated as misconduct.

Things to consider about taking drugs and alcohol

- Do I need to carry out any work tasks or duties after this staff function?
- How do I support my peers by looking out for their wellbeing?
- Am I identifiable as an Auckland Council representative when I drink or purchase alcohol?
- Am I acting with the organisation's and my team's best interests at heart?

Use common sense and Our Charter to guide your judgement.



Some drug and alcohol-related scenarios you may encounter

I need to decide what to do about a peer who I think comes to work hungover

Ask yourself:

- Who should I talk to about it?
- What do I know for sure?
- Can I describe some clear examples of what I've noticed?

Talk to your people leader about your concerns.

Treat your colleague as if their behaviour is honest and correct, until proven otherwise.

I'd like to bring a bottle of wine into the office, to give to a friend later

Ask yourself:

- Is there somewhere secure and private I can store it?
- Will a visitor make a judgement if they see it?
- Do I need to bring the bottle of wine to work, or is there another way to get it to my friend?

Try not to bring alcohol into work if you don't have to.

I'd like to go out for drinks after work as a team celebration

Ask yourself:

- Do I have a safe way to get home if I drink?
- Am I behaving appropriately?
- What work commitments do I have after this?

Drink responsibly. Keep an eye out for your team, This is a time to celebrate and be social, not initiate important work-related conversations.



Process documents

For recruiters

- Pre-employment or transfer process test results

For people leaders

- Determine need to test and obtain consent
- Manage test results procedure
- Prepare for stand down procedure (this should be carried out by a people leader with support from H&S and P&P)
- Arrange rehabilitation procedure
- Manage employee rehabilitation procedure

For people who work at Auckland Council

- Consent to test procedure
- Testing procedure
- Book and attend rehabilitation sessions procedure

If you need help or more information

Your people leader is the best person to talk to first, if appropriate.

Contact other people you can trust

- Contact your health and safety representative
- Contact the Health and Safety Team via Awhina
- Phone the Integrity Team (0800ACINTEGRITY, 0800 224 683)
- Email the Integrity Team
- Contact your union delegate.
- Community Alcohol and Drug Services (CADS)



You may also be interested in

- Catering guide
- Conflicts of interest guide
- See, say, do something - Speak up

Our Charter feedback

Tell us what you think.

