



BBC Alcohol and Drugs Policy

The BBC will address constructively and sympathetically employee problems related to alcohol and substance dependency.

However, employees must be in a fit state to carry out their work and the BBC will take action if their performance is impaired by the use of alcohol, drugs or other substances. This is particularly important where the work undertaken could cause harm to the employee or others, such as driving or operating equipment.

Substance and Alcohol Abuse

If a manager or employee has reasonable grounds to suspect that an individual is impaired by the use of alcohol, drugs or other substances and/or could cause harm to themselves or others in the course of their work, they must act immediately, if necessary reporting them to a more senior manager, to prevent them carrying out that activity. Action may then be taken under the **BBC Disciplinary Policy** against the impaired individual.

Employees who, because of occasional excessive use of alcohol, drugs or other substances, behave in a manner contrary to normal standards of conduct will be dealt with under the **BBC Disciplinary Policy**. This will also apply to behaviour whilst the employee is off-duty where there is a concern or connection with the employee's job. The decision as to what course of action to follow is at the discretion of the BBC.

Managers should note that under current legislation it is an offence:

- to possess, supply, offer to supply or produce controlled drugs without authorisation.
- to allow controlled drugs to be supplied, kept or used without authority on your premises.

If a manager suspects an employee of carrying out the above activities during the course of their duties, this will be treated as an allegation of gross misconduct and the police notified.

Alcohol Dependency Procedure

The BBC will usually assist employees in accessing specialised help if the employee acknowledges that they have an alcohol dependency problem.

If a manager knows or suspects that an employee has problems which are related to alcohol dependency they will discuss their concerns with the employee. The employee may request that an accredited trade union representative or BBC colleague (other than a practising lawyer) be present at the meeting.

The manager may adjourn the meeting to allow a referral to the **BBC Occupational Health Service** for advice on accessing specialised help.

If the employee is diagnosed with an alcohol dependency problem or if the employee and the manager agree that the employee has such a problem, the manager will discuss a course of action which may include time-off from work to attend appropriate treatment.

This time-off will be treated as sickness absence and the manager has discretion to pay BBC Sick Pay, subject to the same procedure and limits in the **BBC Health and**

Sickness Absence Policy. Further reviews regarding the course of action will be scheduled as appropriate.

Provided that the individual acknowledges the alcohol dependency problem, complies with advice from BBC Occupational Health Services and an agreed course of action, they will suffer no insecurity of employment because of the alcohol dependency, unless other factors have to be taken into account.

Where an employee is not diagnosed with an alcohol dependency problem, or does not acknowledge an alcohol dependency problem or fails to comply with a course of action, any issues of performance or conduct will be dealt with under the **BBC Capability Policy** or **BBC Disciplinary Policy**.

Drug Dependency

Whilst recognising the legal constraints, there may be circumstances where it is appropriate to assist an employee with a drug dependency problem by following the same procedure as used in the cases of alcohol dependency.