

## Woking Community Transport Alcohol Policy

### **Introduction**

Woking Community Transport are responsible employers and we take our obligations to our employees very seriously. This is why we have set out this policy to help us ensure the health, safety and welfare of our employees and to help us comply with our legal duties. Employees who develop alcohol related problems cause harm to themselves, to others and impair their performance.

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 places a duty on employers to provide a safe and healthy working environment, and to ensure the health, safety and welfare at work of their employees as well as any visitors or contractors on the premises.

### **Aims of the Policy**

This policy aims to:

- Promote awareness of alcohol related problems and addiction;
- Encourage a sensible approach to drinking alcohol;
- Ensure that the Society complies with its legal obligations;
- Indicate restrictions on drinking alcohol at work;
- Protect Employees from the dangers of alcohol abuse; and
- Support Employees with an alcohol related problem.

### **Health and Safety**

In a social environment the consumption of alcohol in moderation is an accepted part of life. In the workplace however it can impair performance, result in inappropriate behaviour, and can place both the individual and those around them in danger, as well as affect health.

In the workplace alcohol abuse can take two different forms:

- Occasional inappropriate drinking; and
- Consistently inappropriate drinking.

Problems arising from the first category are more likely to be cases of misconduct whilst the second will be more likely to involve long term health and performance issues. In either case the health of the individual employee will be affected and quite possibly the health and safety of those around them.

While it will be clear if an individual is drunk at work, the symptoms of larger scale systematic alcohol abuse may be less obvious. Symptoms of alcohol abuse may include:

- Frequent absences on Mondays and Fridays;
- Unusually high rates of absenteeism;
- Unkempt appearance/Lack of hygiene;
- Spasmodic work patterns and lower productivity; or
- Poor relations with others.

### **Restrictions on Drinking Alcohol at Work**

- Unless it is formally approved by the Managing Director employees may not consume alcohol during normal working hours nor should they be incapable of work through the consumption of alcohol.
- Alcohol must not be consumed in any situation where as a consequence the safety of the individual, colleagues or visitors is put at risk.
- Alcohol must not be consumed in excess [or in sufficient quantities to impinge on the exercise of any individual's duties] when on Society business outside normal working hours, for example when involved in functions.
- Employees are not obliged to work with anyone they consider to be incapable through the consumption of alcohol and should immediately report the matter to the HR/Office Manager.
- Employees who are incapable of working through the consumption of alcohol should be immediately removed from duty and the matter reported to the Managing Director.
- Employees will be held to be contributorily negligent in the event that whilst on Society business they cause an accident or damages to anyone or anything, and that the incident occurred due to the Employee's consumption of alcohol.

### **Disciplinary Action**

Employees who are unfit or otherwise incapable for work through the consumption of alcohol will be liable for disciplinary action, may be found guilty of gross misconduct, and may face summary dismissal.

If there is reasonable cause or good grounds for testing, the society reserves the right to request the employee to be tested; a refusal may lead to disciplinary action. An alcohol level above the legal limit will constitute gross misconduct resulting in disciplinary action.

### **Procedure**

- In the event that an employee is diagnosed with an alcohol related problem the Society will treat it as a health matter. However this does not excuse the employee from any of the disciplinary matters that may fall within the scope of the Societies disciplinary policy.
- All alcohol related issues will be dealt with in a constructive and

sympathetic manner. The individual responsible for all such issues is the Managing Director who will also provide any interested employees in confidence with details of where to seek more information or help.

- All requests for help or advice will be treated in the strictest confidence and all information gathered as a result will be held in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- After receiving any appropriate medical reports the Society will provide support to any affected employees. Where an employee agrees to follow a suitable course of action or treatment any disciplinary action may be suspended.
- The Society reserves the right to give affected employees lighter duties at the same rate of pay, or require them to take paid leave if it is deemed appropriate
- Following effective treatment and in the absence of any disciplinary action the Society will endeavour to return an affected employee to the same role previously fulfilled by the employee and where this is not possible to a suitable alternative.
- In the event that an employee following successful treatment for an alcohol related problem suffers a relapse, the Society is under no obligation to make provision for any further treatment and the employee in question may face summary dismissal.

**This policy has been approved & authorised by:**

**Name:** Guy Padfield  
**Position:** Managing Director  
**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
**Signature:** *Original Signed*