

Why have an alcohol and other drug policy?

Did you know:

Many workplaces have a policy that only covers testing of alcohol and other drugs, leaving both a legal and wellbeing gap. An alcohol and other drug policy needs to be focused on impairment and fitness for work.

Like other policies, an alcohol and other drug policy defines clearly what is and is not acceptable in regard to alcohol and other drug use by workers and contractors that is likely to affect the safety and productivity of the workplace.

A strong alcohol and other drug policy:

- Prevents harmful alcohol and other drug use among workers and contractors, and reduces risks and harms;
- Promotes a culture where wellbeing is emphasised with a universally shared perception that alcohol and other drugs at or around work are incompatible with a safe and effective workplace;
- Provides clear expectations, roles and responsibilities, and instructive procedures for reducing risks and managing issues related to workers' alcohol and other drug use if they do arise.

The following outlines many of the essential ingredients of an alcohol and other drug policy.

A focus on worker health and wellbeing

Fitness for work describes a worker's capacity to work without risk to themselves or others' health and safety.

The ability to work safely and skilfully can be affected by multiple factors including stress, fatigue, physical and mental health problems. In many cases, the signs can look a lot like alcohol or other drug use, which can lead to incorrect assumptions.

An effective alcohol and other drug policy therefore focuses broadly on fitness for work rather than on alcohol and other drug use specifically.

Application across the entire workplace

Effective alcohol and other drug policies apply to every person equally in the organisation from the most senior staff member to the most junior, without exception. Ensuring universal application, from CEO to new apprentice, will strengthen the credibility of the policy, increase commitment to the policy by the workforce, and provide clarity and transparency in regard to its application.

Clearly documented processes and procedures

The policy and accompanying procedures should describe what is and is not acceptable in the workplace in relation to alcohol and other drug use. The documents should also indicate clearly what will happen if limits are breached and provide detailed instruction in the steps to be taken by whom and when. The documentation should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect any organisational change.

Training and education for the entire workforce

Lack of awareness of an alcohol and other drug policy is a recipe for disaster. A policy can only be effective if it is integrated into day to day operations, therefore effective dissemination of the policy and procedures to the entire workforce is crucial for success.

Dissemination goes beyond simply circulating the documents for a tick and sign; adequate training for all workers is required, as is training for managers and supervisors on how to implement the policy under real world conditions. Effective dissemination of a policy that takes a wellbeing approach will also positively influence development or strengthening of a workplace culture that is intolerant of risky alcohol and other drug use.

Effective referral options for workers that need help

With a focus on worker and contractor health and wellbeing, referral options for those needing assistance or those identified as unfit for work is a necessary component of effective policy. Ideally, each workplace would have a list of local support services that can assist workers and contractors with a range of issues including physical and mental health and problems related to the use of alcohol and other drugs.

The WorkWell program.

WorkWell is the workplace policy program of 360Edge. You can be confident in the results you will achieve with WorkWell because it is backed by the latest scientific evidence.

Our best practice policy program ensures that your organisation complies with its legal and duty of care obligations, while promoting a workplace culture that values the safety and wellbeing of all.

The WorkWell program can be tailored to suit your organisation's needs. It consists of the following components:

- Rapid review
- Policy development and implementation
- Expert review
- Resources

Rapid review

Our Rapid Review service involves a fast and effective assessment of your current workplace policies and programs using our scientifically informed measurement and review system.

Following a Rapid Review, workplaces are presented with a comprehensive report of our finding and a set of recommendations for improving your policies and programs.

Policy development and implementation

An all-inclusive, comprehensive service to review your existing policies, customise and deliver a state of the art drug and alcohol policy backed by the latest evidence and legal review. Includes resources, full support during implementation and a progress check at 6 months.

Expert review

360Edge is composed of [leading experts](#) in alcohol and other drug matters including evidence-based prevention, treatment and harm reduction.

Our Expert Support program can help with:

- Responding to alcohol and other drug issues which impact productivity and workplace safety.
- Designing effective employee assistance programs and referrals for alcohol and other drug problems.
- Implementing effective programs and policies which shift problematic workplace cultures in relation to alcohol and other drugs.
- Workforce training and development on alcohol and other drug matters.
- Managerial training on effective behaviour change through our evidence-based Moventium® team motivation training.

Resources

We offer a full suite of resources for self-directed policy implementation:

- Toolbox topics on alcohol and other drugs for workers
- Toolbox topics information brochures to post in the work site
- Training for managers and team leaders in how to deliver Toolbox topics
- Self-completed policy templates that meet best practice standards and are legally sound
- Policy dissemination posters
- Video implementation guides

Previous clients



About 360Edge.

We are a leading Australian health consultancy, specialising in the alcohol and other drug, and allied, sectors. We provide a full suite of advisory services to help organisations accelerate change. We work with leading international organisations, governments and not for profit agencies across Australia and internationally.

Our vision is for a thriving community that provides the best policy and practice responses right across the spectrum of alcohol and other drug use. Our mission is to ensure governments and services have the tools they need to respond effectively and efficiently to people who use alcohol and other drugs to reduce harms.

We are driven to make a positive impact in the world and strongly believe in social justice and human rights, and it drives all of our work. We believe that everyone has the right to the opportunities and privileges that society has to offer. Our values of excellence, transparency and integrity are at the core of everything we do. We live these values within the team and with our customers and collaborators.

Our team of experienced ‘pracademics’ take a 360 approach to viewing situations from multiple perspectives. We collaboratively and holistically work with our clients at every stage, wherever they are in the cycle of change, to achieve their goals.

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the traditional custodians of country throughout Australia and their connection to land, sea and community. We pay our deep respects to elders past, present and future, and to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

