

Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy

Last updated: 25th June 2026

Next review: 25th June 2027

1. Our commitment

Participation People is committed to providing a safe, healthy and professional environment for everyone who works with, for or on behalf of our organisation.

We recognise that the misuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances can have a significant impact on health, safety, wellbeing and the quality of the services we provide. We are committed to supporting individuals where appropriate while maintaining our responsibility to safeguard children, young people, colleagues, partners and the wider community.

This policy sets out our expectations for maintaining a safe working environment and reflects our commitment to acting responsibly, lawfully and with care.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- promote a safe and healthy working environment
- reduce the risks associated with alcohol and substance misuse
- protect children, young people, colleagues, partners and the public
- support individuals who seek help for substance dependency
- ensure compliance with relevant health and safety legislation.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all employees, workers, contractors, volunteers and anyone representing Participation People.

It applies while undertaking work on behalf of Participation People, including when working at client sites, attending events, travelling for work or representing the organisation at professional or work-related social events.

4. Our expectations

Everyone representing Participation People is expected to carry out their role safely, professionally and responsibly.

Individuals must not:

- attend work or carry out duties while impaired by alcohol or drugs
- consume alcohol or drugs whilst carrying out work duties unless alcohol has been explicitly authorised as part of a work-related social event
- consume alcohol when responsible for the care, supervision or wellbeing of children or young people
- possess, distribute or supply illegal drugs while undertaking work on behalf of Participation People
- engage in any behaviour that could place themselves or others at risk or damage the reputation of Participation People.

Where alcohol is available at authorised work-related events, everyone is expected to behave responsibly, respectfully and lawfully, and in line with our safeguarding policy.

5. Safeguarding children and young people

Participation People places the safety and wellbeing of children and young people at the centre of everything we do.

Anyone responsible for children or young people as part of their role must not consume alcohol or be impaired by alcohol or drugs while carrying out those responsibilities, regardless of whether alcohol is available at the event.

Safeguarding responsibilities always take priority.

6. Prescription medication

Participation People recognises that many people take prescribed medication.

Where prescribed medication may affect an individual's ability to carry out their role safely, they are encouraged to seek medical advice and discuss any potential impact with Participation People so that appropriate support or adjustments can be considered where necessary.

7. Support and wellbeing

Participation People recognises that alcohol and drug dependency are health issues and encourages anyone experiencing difficulties to seek support as early as possible.

Where appropriate, we will work with individuals to identify reasonable support, treatment or rehabilitation options while balancing our responsibilities for health, safety and safeguarding.

Seeking help will always be treated sensitively and confidentially wherever possible.

8. Managing concerns

Where Participation People has reasonable grounds to believe that an individual may be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while undertaking work on our behalf, appropriate action may be taken to protect the safety of those involved and to investigate the circumstances.

This may include temporary removal from duties, reasonable enquiries, or other action in accordance with our internal policies and procedures.

Participation People also reserves the right, where appropriate and lawful, to undertake alcohol or drug testing, conduct reasonable searches, or involve the police where criminal activity is suspected.

9. Confidentiality

Any personal information relating to this policy will be handled confidentially and in accordance with Participation People's Data Protection Policy and applicable data protection legislation.

Information will only be shared where necessary, proportionate and lawful.

10. Governance

Participation People is committed to promoting a culture of safety, wellbeing and personal responsibility.

We regularly review our policies and procedures to ensure they remain effective, legally compliant and aligned with best practice in safeguarding, health and safety and employee wellbeing.

11. Relevant legislation

This policy is informed by and operates alongside relevant UK legislation, including:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

- Misuse of Drugs Act 1971
- Medicines Act 1968
- Equality Act 2010
- any other applicable health and safety, employment and safeguarding legislation.

12. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where legislation, organisational learning or best practice requires updates.