



POLICY - DRUGS AND ALCOHOL USAGE IN THE WORKPLACE

Approved by	SRW Board of Directors
Date Approved:	September 2021
Date Effective:	Immediately
Date of Next Review:	June 2024
Applicable to:	SRW Employees and Contractors (referred to as 'Employees' throughout the policy)
Contact:	Manager People and Culture
Reference:	<i>Occupation Health & Safety Act 2004 (Vic)</i> <i>Road Safety Act 1986 (Vic)</i> <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities 2006 (Vic)</i>

OVERVIEW

This policy provides Southern Rural Water (SRW) employees and contractors (referred to as 'Employees' throughout the policy) with guidelines relating to the use or impairment resulting from alcohol consumption, prescription and/or illegal drugs usage in the workplace.

The term 'workplace' extends to Employees who have approved working from home arrangements. As such, this policy applies to SRW employees who are engaged within their ordinary working hours when they are working from home.

THE POLICY

SRW is committed to providing a safe, healthy and productive workplace. SRW has a duty, so far as is reasonably practicable, to monitor the health of Employees for the purpose of preventing illness or injury at work, and to assess if employees, contractors and other persons are fit for work.

Drug and alcohol impairment is an organisational risk that must be managed in the workplace for the safety and wellbeing of all Employees and relevant stakeholders who come in contact with those representing SRW.

Alcohol and Illicit Drugs

Employees should not report to work, at any time, if the level of alcohol in their blood exceeds the legal blood and alcohol concentration limit, or they are under the influence of, or affected by, illicit drugs or substances.

SRW does not condone the use, sale, or possession of illicit drugs or substances. SRW has the right to report the possession of and/or use of illegal drugs to Victoria Police.

Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) Limits

Driving a vehicle with a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) level in excess of the legal limit is strictly prohibited as per the requirements of the *Road Safety Act 1986 (Vic)*. Employees must also be aware that residual alcohol within their blood may affect their BAC when operating vehicles, plant or machinery.

SRW acknowledges the following BAC limits apply for certain occupational groups:

Occupational Group	BAC Limit
Employees and Contractors (driving SRW fleet and private vehicles when engaged in work activities)	0.05
<i>Employees and Contractors operating plant and machinery, and heavy vehicles.</i> <i>From 1 April 2021, the zero BAC requirement will apply to drivers of all heavy vehicles which are defined as vehicles with a Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) greater than 4.5 tonnes. Previously the zero BAC requirement only applied to drivers of 'larger vehicles' – vehicles with a GVM greater than 15 tonnes (VicRoads, 2021)</i>	0.00

Consumption of Alcohol at SRW Related Events Activities and Events.

SRW acknowledges that alcohol may be consumed at sanctioned events or activities initiated by or attended by SRW employees. On these occasions, SRW employees are expected to conduct themselves responsibly and abide by the legal limits.

In accordance with the Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality framework, SRW permits the responsible consumption and provision of alcohol at SRW related events in consideration of its obligations under the *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004*, the *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998* and the VPSC Code of Conduct.

The following parameters may be useful for Employees in making these decisions:

- Consumption and provision of alcohol during ordinary working hours is not supported (i.e., consumed during lunch breaks, business meetings and when on standby).
- The purchase of alcohol at events, seminars, out-of-hours meetings and conferences is considered a private expense and not subject to reimbursement from SRW.

Any SRW sanctioned event where alcohol is served are subject to the following conditions:

- Provision of alcohol would be relatively uncommon and be associated with a meal.
- To be held at a time that minimises the risk of Employees returning to work impaired by alcohol. (e.g., if standard office hours are worked, the event should be held in the late afternoon or early evening).
- Events with alcohol service should not exceed two (2) hours in duration.
- No more than two (2) standard drinks per person should be provided.

Any Employee displaying signs of intoxication, including impaired coordination, judgment, intellectual capacity or slurred speech, headaches, nausea, vomiting, loss of inhibitions or smelling of alcohol will not be permitted to continue to consume alcohol and will be sent home. For more information, refer to the Impairment Procedure.

SRW will not pay for alcohol supply at SRW sanctioned events.

Prescription and Over the Counter Medication

Where an Employee is required to take prescription drugs and/or over the counter medication, it is the responsibility of the Employee to ensure that the medication will not affect their ability to safely undertake the responsibilities of their position.

Where there is the likelihood of prescription drugs having an adverse effect, Employees must advise their supervisor immediately and the supervisor must modify the staff members tasks

to ensure that they are not placed at risk and do not pose a risk to others. If this is not possible, the Employee may be instructed to take personal leave.

Suspected Impairment

If an Employee is suspected of intoxication by alcohol and/or drugs at work, they may be instructed to leave the workplace immediately. If necessary, the Manager/Supervisor will assist with arrangements to ensure the Employee arrives home safely.

Affected Employees sent from the workplace to recover will go on sick leave or leave without pay and will not be permitted back into the workplace until their fitness for duty is confirmed. Upon their return to the workplace the affected Employee will be offered assistance by their Manager/Supervisor and may be accompanied by a support person if required.

For a second episode of excess alcohol consumption or illicit drug use in the workplace, and after previous support for the same issue has taken place, the Employee will be asked to undergo immediate alcohol and drug testing.

All serious one-off episodes of alcohol intoxication and/or drug usage will warrant an immediate drug and alcohol test.

Alcohol and Drug Testing

SRW requires Employees and contractors to undergo 'For Cause' alcohol and drug testing if it is deemed necessary and at the request of the General Manager of the affected Employee and General Manager People, Safety and Culture.

Any Employee who fails any such test will not be permitted to return to the workplace until their fitness for duty is confirmed and will be required to take sick leave or leave without pay to cover such absence.

SRW conducts random alcohol and drugs testing for all Employees. Employees are identified for testing by way of random sampling.

Occupational Accidents in the Workplace

When a serious accident occurs in the workplace, including near misses, the General Manager may request that the Employee undergo drug and/or alcohol testing.

Employee Assistance Program

All SRW Employees and their immediate families can access confidential support and assistance via the employee assistance program, New View Psychology on 1300 830 687.

Breach of this Policy

Any breach of this policy will be considered serious misconduct and action will be taken in accordance with SRWs disciplinary and termination processes.

Any breach of this policy by a Contractor will result in the Contractor being required to show cause as to why their contract should be maintained and not terminated for a serious breach of the terms and conditions of the contract.

GRIEVANCE AND DISPUTES

Any grievances or disputes regarding the enforcement of SRWs alcohol and drug testing and subsequent disciplinary action outlined this policy shall follow the process set by the dispute resolution provisions of the *Southern Rural Water Enterprise Agreement 2017* or replacement agreement.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

Code of Conduct

Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Safe Workplace Procedure 251 - Impairment

Discipline and Performance Management Corporate Instruction

Victorian Public Sector Commission (VPSC) Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Framework