



POLICY - DRUGS AND ALCOHOL USAGE IN THE WORKPLACE

Approved by	SRW Board of Directors
Date Approved:	June 2024
Date Effective:	Immediately
Date of Next Review:	June 2027
Applicable to:	SRW employees and contractors
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 / temporary hire, and consultants (whether directly and indirectly engaged) (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 are not to 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.

The following BAC limits apply for occupational groups and work activities at SRW:

Occupational Group / Work activity	BAC Limit
Employees who are engaged in work activities, which includes driving SRW fleet and private vehicles when engaged in work activities This includes engaging in work activities under flexible work arrangements, including working from home.	<0.05
Employees who are engaged in work activities that include high risk activities outlined in Safe Work Method Statements (SWMS), including operating plant and machinery, and heavy vehicles (defined as Gross Vehicle Mass (GVM) greater than 4.5 tonnes), including, but not limited to boating, tip truck, tractor, forklift and crane operation.	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 VPS Code of Conduct.

The following parameters apply to consumption of alcohol:

- 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.

MD approval is required to provide alcohol (in accordance with above) 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 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 employee's tasks to ensure 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.

Alcohol and Drug Testing

Suspected Impairment

If a manager or line supervisor is provided information that indicates an employee may be using alcohol and/or drugs and represents a danger to themselves and/or others, they must inform the Manager Health and Safety and the relevant General Manager.

Based on the nature of the information, the Manager Health and Safety and the relevant General Manager may authorise targeted testing of the individual.

If the manager or line supervisor has a reasonable cause that an employee is not fit for work due to alcohol and/or drug use, they are to initially discuss their concerns with the employee.

Following this discussion, if they still have a reasonable cause that alcohol and/or drug testing is required they must:

- direct the employee not to perform any further work and if required, wait in a safe location, then make themselves available for Alcohol and other drug (AOD) testing.
- document any concerning or unusual behaviours exhibited by the employee.
- contact their relevant General Manager immediately to advise of the possible requirement for reasonable cause AOD testing.
- obtain General Manager authorisation for testing of the individual.
- contact the Health and Safety Team to organise the testing.

Random Testing

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

Employees will be managed as having a positive alcohol or drug test result if they:

- intentionally leave the workplace to avoid testing after the AOD Testing Provider arrives at the workplace
- refuse to sign the consent form provided by the AOD Testing Provider
- refuse to participate in testing.

Management of results

Employees who refuse to be tested, or intentionally leave a workplace to avoid testing will be referred to the Manager People and Culture to consider required action.

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.

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 www.newviewpsychology.com.au or 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 SRW's 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.

RELATED POLICIES AND DOCUMENTS

VPS Code of Conduct

Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Safe Workplace Procedure 251 - Impairment

Discipline and Performance Management Corporate Instruction

VPSC Gifts, Benefits and Hospitality Framework