

Drug and Alcohol Policy

Policy Details

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Policies	Code of Conduct for Employees People Management Framework Workplace Health and Safety Policy
Delegations	Nil
Forms	Nil
Supporting Documents	AS3547 – Australian Standard for Alcohol Breath Testers AS/NZS 4308:2008 – Urine Drug Testing Standard AS/NZS 4760:2019 – Oral Fluid Drug Testing Standard Specimen Collection Procedure

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Intent

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear systems and procedures that support and maintain each worker's capacity to perform their duties safely, effectively, and without impairment.

Scope

This policy applies to all workers including employees, contractors, employees of contractors, consultants, volunteers and work experience persons at all Council workplaces and work sites.

Alcohol consumption is permitted within designated accommodation areas at Council's remote worksites when workers are off duty. Any consumption must be moderate, responsible, and must not result in impairment or affect a worker's ability to present fit for work at their next shift.

Alcohol, including unregulated alcohol (homebrew), is strictly prohibited in all Council workplaces and worksites, including work areas, vehicles, and any location where work activities are undertaken. All workers must maintain a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of no more than 0.05%, unless otherwise specified. A BAC of 0.00% is strictly required for all high-risk activities, plant or machinery operation, while on call and at all Council job sites. Risk classification is based on the task being performed, not the role.

Workers are responsible for ensuring that any off-duty alcohol consumption does not impair their fitness for work or their ability to comply with applicable BAC limits.

Policy Statement

Carpentaria Shire Council (Council) recognises that the use of drugs and/or alcohol can adversely affect a worker's health, safety, judgment, and performance, and may significantly increase the risk of workplace incidents and injuries. Accordingly, all workers are required to present for work and always remain fit for work, free from the effects of drugs and alcohol that may impair their ability to perform their duties safely and responsibly.

Responsibilities

Council will:

- Ensure this policy and the procedures contained herein meet duty of care obligations and comply with legislation and best practice;
- If a worker or trainee under the age of 18 is selected to undergo a drug or alcohol test that worker must be accompanied by an officer of the same gender whilst the drug and alcohol testing is carried out;
- Ensure this policy is appropriate, relevant and communicated to workers;
- Provide a confidential Employee Assistance Program to help workers deal with personal or work related issues that could impair fitness for work;
- Ensure any drug and alcohol testing equipment used by an authorised person is maintained in accordance with the relevant Australian Standard;
- Ensure any authorised Specimen Collector is qualified to implement this policy as required in the relevant Australian Standard; and
- Consider refusal to undertake a Drug and Alcohol Test to be a breach of this policy and a breach of a condition of employment or contract.

Workers are responsible for:

- Reporting to work in a fit state. Where a worker feels they are not fit for duty they should immediately notify their supervisor or manager;
- Remaining in a fit state while on-call;
- Assessing their own fitness for duty prior to attending an emergency call-out;
- Consenting to drug and alcohol testing as part of a random testing program, where they have been involved in an incident or near miss in the workplace or where there is reasonable cause to believe they may not be in a fit state for work;
- Disclosing details of all medication being taken prior to undergoing drug and alcohol testing;
- Familiarising themselves with the contents of this policy and complying with the policy.

Prohibited Substances

- Alcohol
- Homebrew (Unregulated Alcohol)
Homebrew refers to any homemade or unregulated alcohol not produced in accordance with Australian standards.
- Naturally occurring illicit or illegal drugs
- Synthetic illicit or illegal drugs
- Prescription medication used by a person other than the individual it was prescribed to

Drug and Alcohol Testing

Random Testing

Random drug and alcohol testing will take place on a regular basis without notice. A worker or group of workers may be requested to provide a breath sample and/or a saliva sample and/or a urine sample to an authorised person of Council at any time without notice.

Post Incident Testing

A worker will be required to provide a breath sample and/or a saliva sample and/or a urine sample to an authorised person of Council or law enforcement agency when they have been involved in any incident which causes a threat, near miss or actual harm to the health and safety of workers in the workplace.

Reasonable Cause

Where abnormal workplace behaviour has been observed, or if there is other information or circumstances which indicates that an individual may not be fit for work, the worker may be required to provide a breath sample and/or saliva sample and/or a urine sample to an authorised person of Council.

Drug and Alcohol Testing – Methodology and Results

Drug Testing

All workers must be fit for work and must test negative for illegal drugs while undertaking Council duties or attending any Council workplace or worksite.

Workers who are prescribed or taking any medication, including prescription or over-the-counter medication, that may impair their judgment, alertness, coordination, or ability to perform their duties safely, must notify their supervisor prior to commencing work or as soon as reasonably practicable. Workers may be required to provide medical confirmation from their treating doctor outlining the potential impact of the medication on their fitness for work and their ability to safely perform their duties.

Where medical advice indicates that a worker may be impaired or unable to safely perform their normal duties, Council will take reasonable steps to support the worker while maintaining workplace safety. This may include temporarily modifying duties or redeploying Council employees to suitable alternative duties. Where suitable duties are not available, the Council employee may be required to access sick leave or other approved leave in consultation with their manager and Human Resources.

Contractors who are taking medication that may impair their fitness for work must also notify their Council contact or supervisor and must not undertake work while impaired. Contractors assessed as unfit for work due to medication will be required to remain offsite until they are medically fit to safely return to duty.

Stage	Council Workers (Employees)	Contractors	Consultants, Volunteers, Work Experience
Initial Test (Saliva)	A saliva sample will be collected to screen for the presence of illicit drugs. If a non-negative result is returned, the worker will be required to undertake a confirmatory urine test.	A saliva sample will be collected to screen for the presence of illicit drugs. If a non-negative result is returned, the contractor will be offered a confirmatory urine test. All costs associated with confirmatory testing are the responsibility of the contractor or their primary contractor.	A saliva sample will be collected. Any non-negative result will result in immediate removal from the workplace.
Confirmatory Test (Urine)	A urine sample will be collected to confirm the presence of the drug identified in the saliva test. If the confirmatory urine test is negative, the result will be recorded as negative, and the worker may return to normal duties.	A urine sample may be collected to confirm the presence of the drug identified in the saliva test. If the confirmatory urine test is negative, the result will be recorded as negative, and the contractor may return to normal duties.	Not applicable.
Laboratory Confirmation (NATA Accredited)	If the confirmatory urine test is non-negative, part of the sample will be sent to a National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited laboratory for analysis. The worker will be provided safe transport	If the confirmatory urine test is non-negative, part of the sample will be sent to a NATA accredited laboratory for analysis. The contractor will be removed from site and not permitted to return until the laboratory result is	Not applicable.

Stage	Council Workers (Employees)	Contractors	Consultants, Volunteers, Work Experience
	home and will be stood down with pay pending the laboratory result.	received and reviewed by Council.	

Alcohol Testing

All workers and contractors undertaking high-risk activities or operating plant, equipment, or machinery must maintain a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) of 0.00% while at Council workplaces, worksites, or undertaking Council business.

For the purpose of this procedure, high-risk activities include the operation of all plant, equipment, and machinery.

Workers undertaking low-risk activities must not exceed the legal Blood Alcohol Concentration limit applicable to driving an ordinary vehicle in Queensland (0.05 BAC). While moderate consumption may not constitute a breach under low-risk activities, workers are actively encouraged not to consume alcohol during working hours and must remain fit for work at all times.

Please Note: Risk classification is task-based and may vary accordingly.

Stage	Council Workers (Employees)	Contractors
Initial Test (Breath Test)	A breath sample will be collected. If a reading above 0.00% BAC is detected, the worker will be required to undertake a confirmatory test after a minimum of 20 minutes.	A breath sample will be collected. If a reading above 0.00% BAC is detected, the contractor will be required to undertake a confirmatory test after a minimum of 20 minutes.
Confirmatory Test (Breath Test)	If the confirmatory test is above 0.00% BAC, the worker will be stood down with pay for the remainder of the day and provided safe transport home.	If the confirmatory test is above 0.00% BAC, the contractor will be removed from duty and stood down from site for the remainder of the day.
Return to Work Requirement	The worker must undergo and pass a breath alcohol test (0.00% BAC) prior to recommencing duties. A confirmed positive result constitutes a breach of this policy and may result in disciplinary action.	The contractor must undergo and pass a breath alcohol test (0.00% BAC) prior to recommencing duties. Further site access will be at Council's discretion and in accordance with contractual obligations.

Council employees located at a remote worksite will be required to remain in the accommodation blocks. Council employees located in Normanton or Karumba will be given safe passage home as determined by their supervisor.

Consequences of a Breach of Policy – Discipline Process

Carpentaria Shire Council is committed to maintaining a safe and healthy workplace. Any worker who breaches this Drug and Alcohol Policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Actions may include counselling, formal warnings, suspension, termination of employment or

engagement, or other measures in accordance with the Local Government Act 2009, relevant industrial instruments, and contractual obligations.

Any worker found to be manufacturing, possessing, selling, or distributing illicit drugs at a Council workplace or worksite will be immediately removed from duty and referred to the appropriate law enforcement and regulatory authorities for investigation.

Disciplinary outcomes will be determined based on the circumstances of the breach, including the level of risk posed to the individual, other workers, and the public.

Refusal, Avoidance or Falsification of Tests

Action	Council Workers (Employees)	Contractors
Immediate Response	Stood down immediately pending investigation.	Removed from site immediately pending investigation.
Investigation Outcome	Required to show cause as to why their employment should not be terminated.	Engagement may be terminated.
Future Work Eligibility	If employment is terminated, the individual will not be eligible to work for Council or on Council projects for a minimum period of two (2) years.	Will not be eligible to work on any Council projects for a minimum period of two (2) years.

Alcohol Policy Breaches (Exceeding Approved BAC Limits)

The following actions serve as a guide. Actual outcomes may vary depending on the level of risk, circumstances, and severity of the breach.

Offence	Council Workers (Employees)	Contractors
First Offence	Formal warning issued. Access to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) will be offered.	Breach of policy notice issued to the contractor and/or their employer.
Second Offence	Final written warning issued. Strongly encouraged to access counselling or rehabilitation support services.	Removed from site and ineligible to work on Council projects for twelve (12) months.
Third Offence	Required to show cause as to why their employment should not be terminated. If terminated, ineligible to work for Council or on Council projects for twelve (12) months.	Not applicable – contractors are typically removed following the second offence.

Confirmed Positive Drug Test

Action	Council Workers (Employees)	Contractors
First Confirmed Positive Result	Required to show cause as to why employment should not be terminated. If terminated, ineligible to work for Council or on Council projects for two (2) years.	Immediately removed from site and ineligible to work on Council projects for two (2) years.
Second Confirmed Positive Result	Permanently disqualified from working for Council or on any Council projects.	Permanently disqualified from working on any Council projects.

Definitions

TERM	DEFINITION
Abnormal Workplace Behaviour	In the context of this policy, means when other people notice that a person displays unusual workplace behaviour that is not the norm for that person.
Alcohol	Alcohol is defined as any fermented liquor that contains ethyl alcohol (ethanol) as an intoxicating agent. This includes a wide range of beverages such as beer, wine, and spirits. Homebrew, which is homemade beer, falls under this definition as it is made from fermented grains, fruits, or vegetables. Other intoxicating substances, such as drugs and intoxicating substances, are substances that can affect the way a person thinks, feels, and behaves, and are not intended for consumption. These substances can include substances containing ethyl alcohol that are not intended for consumption or are used as additives in food preparation or preservation
Authorised Person	In the context of this policy, means a person authorised by the Chief Executive Officer or delegate to conduct a drug and alcohol test on Council's behalf. An authorised person may be a Council employee, who is qualified as a specimen collector, a drug and alcohol testing provider or a health practitioner.
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	Work-based early intervention programme aimed at the early identification and/or resolution of both work and personal issues that may adversely affect performance.
Illicit Drugs	Includes, but is not limited to, heroin, cocaine, barbiturates, cannabis, Medicinal Cannabis, amphetamines, methylenedioxy methamphetamine (MDMA, Ecstasy), non-prescribed pharmaceutical drugs including painkillers such as codeine. Other substances include amphetamines, methadone, other opiates and steroids and the inappropriate use of volatile substances and other substances like ketamine or inhalants.
Job Site	A job site refers to any location where work duties are undertaken, including all Council-controlled facilities, operational areas, off-site locations and any other place where work-related activities occur. Employees are considered to be at a job site for the entire duration of their shift, regardless of whether they are undertaking high-risk or administrative tasks.
Legal Drugs	Prescribed or over the counter drugs.

Adopted by Council 22 April 2026 Resolution 0426/011.

APPENDIX A

HIGH RISK WORKPLACES	LOW RISK WORKPLACES
• Zero Drug Tolerance • Zero Alcohol Tolerance	• Zero Drug Tolerance • Alcohol limit equivalent to the 0.05 BAC driving limit in Queensland.
Road Work Sites – construction, maintenance, traffic control. All plant and equipment used in roads construction and maintenance	Normanton Council Administration Offices
Water and Waste Water Facilities – including all buildings and reservoirs. Any worksite where plumbing, trench work, confined spaces work or chemical usage is undertaken	Karumba Customer Service Centre and Library
Aquatic Facilities	Normanton Library and Visitor Information Centre
Works Depots Normanton and Karumba – any area within the Depot fence line	
Airports Normanton and Karumba	
Child Care Centre, Sports Centre or any location where childcare activities are being undertaken	
Barramundi Discovery Centre and Hatcher	
Worksites and activities associated with Local Laws, Environmental Health, Building Surveying and Compliance functions	
Waste Stations Normanton and Karumba	

Disclaimer: The information in Appendix A outlines updated High Risk and Low Risk workplaces in accordance with current legislation and may be subject to change.

Please Note:

Workers are actively encouraged not to consume alcohol during working hours and must remain fit for work at all times.

Where a worker undertakes tasks outside their usual low-risk scope that are considered high risk, all high-risk provisions apply for the duration of those activities. Risk classification is based on the task being performed, not the role.