

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District

POLICY MANUAL

Section	Employment
Policy Number	AE-2405-02
Policy Title	Alcohol, Drug Use and Impairment Policy

POLICY OBJECTIVE

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District is committed to protecting *employees* and the public from the potential adverse effects of the inappropriate use of alcohol and drugs. The *District* and its *employees* have a responsibility to ensure that the *workplace* remains free from inappropriate use of alcohol and drugs

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District recognizes that *addiction* is a treatable disease and will promote employee self-awareness and voluntary referral for treatment to get well. The District will support the rehabilitation and return to work of employees who are experiencing difficulties with *substance use disorder*.

Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District further recognizes that prevention and early intervention improves the probability of lasting recovery.

Employee and public safety concerns are paramount in *decision-critical* and *safety-sensitive positions* that require the public trust.

DEFINITIONS

“*Accident*” means an event resulting in significant injury to a person(s) or significant property damage;

“*Addiction (Substance Use Disorder)*” means a maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress;

“*Addiction Specialist*” means a physician certified in the specialty of addiction medicine;

“*Alcohol*” means the intoxicating agent in beverage alcohol (including but not limited to beer, wine, and distilled spirits);

“*Board of Trustees*” means the Board of Trustees of the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District;

“*Decision-Critical Position*” means any position as determined by the District (refer to Appendix A) in which occupational performance depends on the ability to consistently, reliably and rapidly exercise sound judgement and insight in the workplace, and in which impairment may negatively impact this performance;

“*District*” means the Salt Spring Island Fire Protection District;

“*District Premises*” means any and all property, facilities, land, parking lots, structures and vehicles owned, leased, used or under the control of the District, and /or any incident or training site to which an employee is assigned;

“*Employee*” for purposes of this policy means casual, part-time and regular employees including paid-on-call members and volunteers acting on behalf of the District;

“*Fire Chief*” means the officer position as established in the *District’s* “Fire Department Establishment and Operations Bylaw”, Bylaw No. 59;

“*Fit for Duty*” means that an *employee* is able to perform the full duties of the job with competence and in a safe manner as compared to established performance standards;

“*Illicit Drug*” means any drug or *substance* that is not legally obtainable and whose use, sale, possession is restricted or prohibited by law;

“*Impaired*” means that an *employee* is unable to perform job duties in a safe and competent manner due to a functional limitation;

“*Medication/ prescribed drug*” means a drug obtained legally either over-the-counter or through doctor’s prescription;

“*Near Miss*” means a failure in work performance or other occurrence that nearly results in an accident;

“*On Duty*” for purposes of this policy means when an *employee* has reported for work to the *workplace*;

“*Possession*” means the care, custody, control or ability to immediately access a substance;

“*Reasonable Suspicion*” means an understanding sufficient to lead a supervisor or Fire Chief to suspect that drugs or alcohol might be influencing an individual’s work performance;

“*Safety-Sensitive Position*” means any position determined by the District (refer to Appendix A) in which a state of impairment could result in immediate direct and significant risk of injury to the individual, others, District property, and/or the environment; this includes, but is not limited to, positions that require the Employee to operate a vehicle, use a motorized vehicle or other equipment, or perform duties that have the potential for significant harm to the Employee, co-workers or the public;

“*Substance*” means alcohol or any substance listed in the schedules contained in the *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* or any impairing agent or any medication used by an individual in a manner that is inconsistent with the instructions of the prescribing physician; and

“*Substance Test*” means an analysis of the biological presence of a *substance* by means of urine, breath, blood and/or saliva sampling;

“*workplace*” means any place where an *employee* is or is likely to be engaged in any work and includes any vehicle, apparatus or equipment used by an *employee* in work.

SCOPE OF POLICY

The policy applies to all *employees* including paid-on-call members and volunteers acting on behalf of the *District*.

STATEMENT OF POLICY

The *District* has an obligation to provide safe, reliable and efficient service to the public. As well the *District* endeavors to provide a safe and healthy work environment and promote the general health and wellbeing of its *employees*.

In order to achieve these goals, and to have a safe workplace, the *District* will not tolerate: *impairment* by any means while on duty including but not limited to impairment caused by consumption of *medication/prescribed drugs, illicit drugs* or *substances* including *alcohol*; and *possession of illicit drugs* while on duty.

Under this policy the following are specifically prohibited:

1. The use of a *substance* at the *workplace* or during working hours;
2. Being under the influence of a *substance* during working hours;
3. Reporting to the *workplace* under the influence of a *substance*;
4. Operating vehicles, apparatus or equipment under the influence of a *substance*, and
5. The *possession* or sale of a controlled or illegal *substance* or substance paraphernalia on *District premises*.

An *employee* may be required to take a *substance test* if after an investigation into the circumstances of an *accident* or *near miss* the *Fire Chief* comes to a *reasonable suspicion* that an *employee's* mental state may be a contributing factor to the *accident* or *near miss*.

An investigation may be undertaken to determine that the actions or omissions of the *employee* contributed to the detrimental outcome of the *accident* or *near miss*.

Responsibility of Employees

It is the responsibility of every *employee* to arrive at the *workplace fit for duty* and to conduct themselves in a safe and lawful manner while *on duty*. It is the responsibility of every employee not to use drugs or alcohol or be impaired by fatigue, *illicit drugs, medications* or *alcohol* while at work.

It is the responsibility of *Fire Chief* and every *employee* to promote and maintain an alcohol and drug-free workplace in the interests of workplace health and safety as well as public safety. It is the responsibility of all *employees* to ensure that the workplace is free from the adverse effects of the use of alcohol or drugs, or the misuse of *medication*.

Employees who believe they have a developing alcohol and/or drug problem are expected to assume responsibility and seek assistance from their personal physician, *Employee Assistance Plan*, and/or appropriate community resources before their job performance is affected. Employee obligations are further set out in Operational Guidelines and WorkSafe BC regulations.

Employees who become aware of conduct by another *employee* which is contrary to this policy and that poses an immediate threat to the safety or health of any *employee*, the public, or damage to equipment must inform their supervisor or *Fire Chief*.

Risk Sensitive Positions

Most *employees* are deemed by the nature of their duties to be in *decision-critical* and/or *safety-sensitive positions*.

At their sole discretion an employee's supervisor or the *Fire Chief* may determine the degree of urgency for interventions and *decision-critical* and/or *safety-sensitive positions* will affect decisions in determining fitness to work and /or to return to work. Prior to returning to work from an absence related to *addiction* issues, an *employee's* fitness to work will be determined by an *addiction specialist*.

Medication (prescribed or self-administered)

Employees who are taking *medications* of any kind, whether prescribed or self-administered, are responsible for taking steps to ascertain whether the *medications* are capable of causing any *impairment* to their ability to carry out their job duties safely and efficiently. *Employees* taking *medications* that may affect their work performance must report this information to their supervisor and/or *Fire Chief*. The supervisor or *Fire Chief*, will determine whether to approve accommodation (modification of duties or hours of work) or a leave of absence.

Social Events and Hosting

At *District* sanctioned social functions, on *District premises* or elsewhere, the *District* as employer is required by law to exercise reasonable care to ensure the safety of *employees* and guests. *Alcohol* is permitted at social functions, provided Operational Guideline standards are met and that consumption is controlled.

Driving Limitations/Restrictions

Employees are not to operate apparatus or vehicles while *impaired*.

Employees who are required to drive *District* apparatus or vehicles or are required to maintain a valid driver's license to fulfill their job duties must report any license suspension, driving prohibition or restriction that will interfere with their ability to do their job.

On Call

Employees who are scheduled for Stand-by Duty are responsible for remaining *fit for duty*. When unexpected emergencies arise, *employees* who are not *on duty* or Stand-by

Duty may be requested to respond. If an *employee* is not “fit for duty” due to impairment it is the *employee’s* responsibility to refuse the work and not to respond.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION GUIDELINES

The District will provide education on early detection, intervention and rehabilitation initiatives.

The *District* will deal with *employees* with *substance use disorders* as a condition which negatively affects safety, attendance, performance and behavior. It is not the *District’s* responsibility to diagnose but rather to intervene in a timely way to reduce risk of unsafe acts and to offer referral to counseling, assessment, assistance and on-going support for recovery.

In addition to assistance from their personal physician, *Employee Assistance Plan* and community resources, the *District* will ensure that *employees* are given adequate time off for assessment, treatment and rehabilitation and that they may access any benefits to which they are entitled including paid Sick Leave and/or unpaid Leave of Absence.

Violations of this policy and related operational guidelines may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES’ DISCRETION

The provisions set out in this policy are subject to revision from time to time at the discretion of the *Board of Trustees*.

CROSS REFERENCES

APPROVALS

Approval date:	2018-05-28	Approved by:	Board of Trustees
1. Amendment date:	2019-03-18	Approved by:	Board of Trustees
2. Amendment date:		Approved by:	
3. Amendment date:		Approved by:	

APPENDIX A

Safety-Sensitive and Decision-Critical

Positions

The District deems the following positions to be Safety-Sensitive:

- Any other position deemed safety-sensitive by the District's Administrator

The District deems the following positions to be Decision -Critical:

- Any other position deemed Decision-Critical by the District's Administrator

The District deems the following positions to be neither Safety-Sensitive nor Decision Critical:

- Volunteers