



Staff

Ascend Adventure works with vulnerable people who may be ill and also have chronic relapsing conditions related to drugs and/or alcohol. It is important that workers do not put any of our service users nor the service at risk through their own actions. It is also important not to bring the name and reputation of the organisation into disrepute.

No employee of Ascend Adventure is to drink alcohol during their work hours, including breaks, or when representing Ascend Adventure. Workers must not drink alcohol prior to work. Care should be taken, for instance, if employees drink alcohol in the evening before their work. People may be still over the legal limit for driving in the morning or they may be unfit to work for example. Workers must ensure that they not suffering from a hangover or their breath smelling of alcohol as a result of the evening before and that they are fit for work.

No alcohol or drugs must be brought onto or consumed on Ascend Adventure premises or during Ascend Adventure activities at any time. In particular, staff must never drink alcohol or take drugs if they are required to drive private or Ascend Adventure vehicles on work business.

Social drinking after normal working hours and away from the Ascend Adventure clients or premises is, of course, generally a personal matter and does not directly concern Ascend Adventure. Concern only arises when, because of the pattern or amount of drink involved, the employee's attendance, work performance or conduct at work deteriorates. Drinking alcohol for the duration of residential activities is not permitted, even if not in direct contact with participants/clients.

No employee is allowed to work if under the influence of alcohol or drugs. This may include medication.

Participants/clients- illegal drugs and alcohol

Ascend Adventure has a duty of care to staff, volunteers and participants to provide as safe an environment as possible. The misuse of drugs and alcohol can be a threat to that safety. This policy should be applied with reference to Ascend Adventure's Child Protection and Vulnerable Adult Policies.

Participants should be informed prior to participation that they must not be under the influence of nor consume drugs and alcohol whilst attending an Ascend Adventure programme or activity (see exceptions below). Participants will sign an acknowledgement of risk form to this effect.

The potential consequences of breaching this policy (such as temporary exclusion from the programme) should be made clear. Staff are advised to reinforce this by delivering a ground rules session at the start of the programme

In the event of drug use being discovered or suspected, action must be taken to curtail the offending behaviour. Staff are under no obligation to directly involve the police and should refer to the Confidentiality Policy for further guidance on this. However, staff must be aware that Delivery Partners/Referring Agencies may have conflicting guidance, so a discussion should take place before a programme begins to jointly agree the process.

Involving the Police may be appropriate in situations where the offending behaviour cannot be curtailed and/or:

- is perceived as a serious threat to the safety and welfare of staff, volunteers and/or other participants present
- has resulted in serious injury or death

Staff and volunteers must not obstruct the police in the process of their investigations, as this is a serious offence. For example, the physical concealment of illegal drugs or of a person who possesses them, or helping such a person to escape the police (e.g. by creating a diversion or providing means of transport)

All accidents and incidents involving known or suspected drug/alcohol use or misuse must be reported to the Directors as soon as possible and a written record made. Directors have the responsibility to inform Delivery Partners/Referring Agencies where applicable. Volunteers must report any incidents to staff.

Exceptions: alcohol dependency

Ascend Adventure seeks to offer adventurous activities for everyone. The nature of our client group means that some individuals have physical alcohol dependency, which may involve potentially life-threatening withdrawal symptoms (e.g. alcohol). Ascend Adventure will undertake additional risk assessment when making decisions about the suitability of offering program places to individuals with physical substance dependency. Consideration will be given to the risks and benefits to the individual and the group overall. In the event of an individual needing to use alcohol for medicinal purposes this will be agreed in advance, the amount of alcohol consumed will be the minimum required to prevent withdrawal, and it will be consumed discreetly away from other participants. Ascend Adventure will reserve the right to withdraw the offer of a program place if these conditions are breached.

If excessive drug/alcohol use occurs on a residential

Wherever possible, staff should make every effort to facilitate the cooperation of the individual/s concerned, with the objective of allowing them to complete the residential, subject to them subsequently complying with the policy. This is over- ridden by prior arrangements with Delivery Partners/Referring Agency. Consideration must be given to the overall safety and wellbeing of the group and Ascend Adventure staff.

Incidents of this nature should not result in a decision to terminate the course for all participants unless authorised by a Director.

Participants/clients- Prescribed medication

Participants who require the use of prescribed drugs for a medical condition (i.e. insulin, ventolin, tegratol, tranquillisers, etc) or as a substitute for an illegal substance (e.g. methadone) may participate on Ascend Adventure programmes, subject to;

- The prior knowledge and approval of the staff delivering the programme
- The participant making acceptable arrangements with Ascend Adventure staff for the secure storage of the minimum amount of required medication needed for the duration of the activity.
- A Risk Assessment being carried out.

Staff should consider the safety and welfare of the individual, staff, volunteers and other participants. This may require amendments to the standard programme of activities and their locations. In some circumstances it may be advisable to place these participants on specific courses to ensure the appropriate levels of safety and welfare. In particular, consideration should be given to;

- How to store the drug/s and associated equipment securely (particularly if the drug is a controlled substance under the Misuse of Drugs Act)
- Ascend Adventure's staff knowledge and understanding of the effects of the drug/s and the symptoms that may appear if the drug is not taken
- The impact of symptoms or side-effects on other group members

Ascend Adventure staff and volunteers are not permitted to administer prescribed medication to another person nor measure the quantity of medication taken by another. It is the responsibility of a participant to take their medication. This responsibility of the individual may be over-ridden by a prior arrangement with the Referring Agency if they are licensed to administer medication for their clients. Medicine must be stored securely and written permission to do this must be received in advance. In the event of a participant being under 18 years of age, this written permission must be from a parent or legal guardian.

If a participant refuses to take their prescribed medication, the responsible person must call 999 if the implications of not taking this medicine will have serious consequences for the participant

Drug dealing

If a participant is found to be or suspected of dealing drugs on the programme, they must be temporarily excluded from the programme. The Directors decision is final regarding reinstating a participant following exclusion.

If a participant is heavily intoxicated

Staff can act on suspicion and don't need proof, due to the potential risk to both the participant in question and others, especially if they are partaking in an adventure activity. Suspicion should be based on obvious signs such as the smell of alcohol on breath, known history or asking the participant directly.

If a person or group is suspected of being heavily intoxicated with drugs or alcohol they may have to leave that session immediately and go home when it is safe for them to do so. This must be implemented in line with any agreement with the Delivery Partner or Referring Agency.

If with staff or volunteers, the participant should be taken away to somewhere safe where they can sober up and there should be at least one member of staff with them at all times. If the participant is unconscious or experiencing serious side-effects (for example, breathing difficulties, hallucinations or fitting) call 999 immediately. Inform the Delivery Partner or Referring Agency as arranged. If needed, trained staff should administer first-aid. If the participant's behaviour becomes uncontrollable, violent and aggressive and it is felt could potentially harm themselves or others, the police should be called. Staff should be mindful of their own personal safety when managing such situations.

Confidentiality

Staff and volunteers should follow the Ascend Adventure Confidentiality Policy. In all circumstances, volunteers should consult staff. Staff are not obliged to take any action in the following circumstances (although they may decide it is in the best interests of the participant to take action):

- Being told that a participant has used drugs
- Observing possession or use of drugs off the premises and not under Ascend Adventure supervision

In certain circumstances it may be appropriate for referral agencies or (if the participant is under 18) parents to be informed of an individual's drug or alcohol use. While this decision should remain with the Directors, the following should be considered;-

- The staff member's obligations to provide the referral agency with an accurate report
- The long term interests of the participant

Policy Review

This policy was last reviewed on: 17th January 2021

Date of next review: 17th January 2023 or sooner in the event of new legislation.