



etbi

Education and Training
Boards Ireland
*Boird Oideachais agus
Oiliúna Éireann*

ADDICTION & SUBSTANCE ABUSE

POLICY

*For all staff in
Education and
Training Boards
Ireland*



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I. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Education and Training Boards Ireland (hereinafter called “ETBI”) recognises that it has a responsibility to maintain a safe and efficient work environment, and that it has a duty of care in relation to the wellbeing of its staff. While it is not ETBI’s policy to intrude on the privacy of individuals, ETBI must have concerns in situations where health or behaviour impair the conduct, safety or work performance of its staff. It is recognised that the misuse of any substance may be a cause of such impairment. ETBI reserves the right to report the sale of controlled substances or the use, purchase, sale or possession of an illegal drug or drug paraphernalia to the Gardaí.
- 1.2 ETBI’s Addiction & Substance Abuse Policy is applicable to all staff irrespective of the position they hold and where conduct and performance of duty is, or may be, impaired as a result of substance abuse.
- 1.3 Drug or substance abuse is the use of any drug, legal or illegal, which damages some aspect of the user’s life. It is not confined to the use of illegal drugs but also includes the incorrect use of legal drugs such as alcohol and prescribed medicines.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is:
 - I. To help protect all staff members from the dangers of substance misuse and to encourage those with a problem to seek assistance.
 - II. To ensure that staff members’ use of substances does not impair the safe and efficient running of ETBI, or result in risks to the health and safety of themselves, other staff members, customers and the general public.
 - III. To comply with all relevant legislation in this area.

3. ETBI'S POLICY

3.1 ETBI recognises the difficulties associated with addiction and will make every effort to assist all staff members where possible. However, it is a requirement of ETBI that no staff member shall:

- 3.1.1 Report, or endeavor to report, for duty whilst in an impaired condition resulting from the use of a substance.
- 3.1.2 Unlawfully possess, store, distribute or consume any substance whilst on duty.
- 3.1.3 Consume or be under the influence of alcohol on ETBI premises or while engaging in work related activity, except where permitted at specially designated programmes, events or functions authorised by ETBI.
- 3.1.4 Misuse legal or illegal drugs on ETBI premises or while engaging in work related activity. Illegal drugs should not be used at any time.
- 3.1.5 Fail to exercise personal responsibility and/or use discretion in relation to social drinking during occasions when they are required to represent ETBI at business functions, or to entertain clients.
- 3.1.6 Drive under the influence of an intoxicant whilst on ETBI duty. Any staff member found to have done so may be removed from driving duties immediately and may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal if the offence occurred while the staff member was driving an ETBI vehicle or a private vehicle on ETBI business.

3.2 Any staff member found to be under the influence of a substance whilst on ETBI duty, and who represents a risk to either themselves or others, will be relieved from duty immediately and may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action up to and including dismissal/removal from office.

4. ETBI RESPONSE TO STAFF MEMBERS WITH ADDICTION

- 4.1 Alcoholism is recognised as a disability for the purposes of the Employment Equality Acts. Alcoholism and drug addiction can be responsive to proper treatment and, as such, staff suffering from a disability will not be discriminated against on the basis of their illness.
- 4.2 Staff who have an alcohol or drug addiction will be actively encouraged to avail of professional assistance and given the opportunity to do something positive about their problem. However, should a staff member fail to continue with treatment or respond to same, they will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal where appropriate. Information about employee assistance programmes (EAPs) will be made available to assist staff members. Information received from staff members concerning addictions will be dealt with in the strictest confidence. ETBI will not tolerate abuse of this Addiction & Substance Abuse policy or of its available employee support mechanisms, such as EAPs.
- 4.3 All individual cases will be assessed with regard to their particular circumstances. Referral to support mechanisms will not arise in every case and ETBI will not permit staff members to use such mechanisms to circumvent disciplinary processes.
- 4.4 ETBI will provide staff members and their families with confidential, professional assessment and referral for assistance in resolving or accessing treatment for addiction to, dependence on, or problems with alcohol, drugs, or other personal problems adversely affecting their job performance. Confidential assessment and referral services will be provided to the employee.

5. REVIEW OF POLICY

- 5.1 There will be a review of this policy two full years after its introduction or earlier if deemed necessary by ETBI management.