

Drugs and Alcohol at work

Joint statement on purpose and status of this policy

This policy has been drawn up after consultation between the National Trainers Federation (NTF), the National Association of Racing Staff (NARS) and the Thoroughbred Breeders Association (TBA) and has the full support of each organisation. Its operation and effectiveness will be kept under review.

The NTF, NARS and TBA believe that it is in everyone's interest to have a safe working environment. The misuse and abuse of alcohol, drugs and other substances can affect health, attendance, performance and relationships at work, and the safety and welfare of people and horses.

This policy aims to:

- eliminate the use of alcohol, drugs and other substances, and the misuse of legal drugs in the workplace
- encourage individuals with substance misuse and other addiction problems to seek help
- set out the rules on drug, alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace
- and seek to ensure that employers and employees are aware of the addiction support options available to them, and where to obtain further advice and assistance

The NTF with the support of NARS, and the TBA, encourage their members to identify employees who are affected by addiction issues and encourage them to seek help and treatment. Most employers' disciplinary procedures state that attending for work under the influence of alcohol or drugs is classed as gross misconduct. However the NTF, NARS and TBA encourage employers to consider whether it is appropriate to approach the presenting issue as a supportable health matter, and not solely as a disciplinary matter.

This agreement does not confer any contractual rights on individuals.

Health and Safety at Work Act 1974

Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 the employer is required to protect the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. Failure to do so could leave the employer liable to criminal or civil proceedings.

It also requires employees to take reasonable care of themselves and others who could be affected by what they do. Employers too, could be liable to a charge if their misuse of substances puts safety at risk.

Rules on alcohol, drugs and use of other substances whilst at work, and fitness for work

The policy agreed between the NTF, NARS and TBA is that the working environment within thoroughbred horseracing yards should be free from the influence of drugs, alcohol or other substances. For those reasons, the following rules will be enforced by employers:

No member of staff shall report or try to report for work when unfit due to alcohol, drugs (whether illegal or not) or substance misuse, nor be in possession of alcohol or illegal drugs in the workplace or in any work vehicle. No employee shall consume alcohol or illegal drugs or misuse other substances whilst at work.

Any breach of these rules is a serious matter and in the event of a breach the employer may take disciplinary action (see below) which may include dismissal.

Whether any employee is fit for work is a matter for the reasonable opinion of the employer, trainer or other senior management.

Prescription Drugs

Staff who take prescription drugs should check their effects with their doctor and not work if unfit to do so. Employees must inform their employer if they are bringing prescription drugs into work premises and/or when taking prescription drugs which may affect or impair their performance.

Cross Contamination

Employees must be aware of the risk of cross contamination from any drug or residue of drug (powder) whether legal or not, which could result in a horse in the care and control of the trainer testing positive for a prohibited substance under the BHA rules of racing.

Disciplinary Action

Where an employee breaches the rules stated above, that breach will normally be dealt with under the employer's disciplinary procedure.

However the disciplinary procedure may be suspended for a reasonable period pending investigation of whether the employee has a health or addiction problem and, if so, if they wish to address the problem through appropriate support and treatment options.

Whether the disciplinary procedure is suspended will be the employer's decision and will depend upon:

- the nature of the employee's alleged offence
- the evidence that the employee has a health related or addiction problem
- the employee's willingness to seek support and treatment

Employees who decide not to engage with appropriate support and treatment options, or who discontinue support and treatment before its satisfactory completion, may be subject to the normal disciplinary procedure. Employers are reminded of the procedures required for a lawful dismissal and to seek advice if uncertain.

Help and support available

The employer will endeavour to make available advice and specialist help to any employee who feels they have a problem with alcohol, drug and substance misuse. Employees who feel they have a problem are encouraged to seek assistance through their employer or one of the specialist organisations listed below. The employer will treat any matter confidentially.

If the employee is committed to engage in addiction support or treatment through the support of the employer, both employee and employer agree to the following provisions.

The employee may continue to attend work if appropriate, or if unfit to do so should take sick leave with the employee's doctor confirming the employee is unfit to work. The employer's normal sick pay provisions will apply. The employer reserves the right to request that an employee be referred to a doctor appointed by the employer or the employee's own doctor, for a medical opinion.

Where in the employer's reasonable opinion following a risk assessment, there may be a risk to the employee, work colleagues, others, horses or property the employee may be re-assigned to appropriate duties for the duration of the treatment.

If the employee discontinues the treatment, or the treatment is not effective, then the employer may reinstate their usual disciplinary procedures for any underperformance, poor conduct or poor attendance which may include earlier events where disciplinary procedures have been suspended.

If an employee has concerns about a colleague that he or she believes may be misusing drugs, alcohol or substances, the employee is encouraged to notify their employer. If a false accusation is made in bad faith the employee may be subject to appropriate disciplinary action.

Other addictions

Whilst the procedures in this policy do not cover other addictions, support and treatment options are also available for gambling, eating disorders and other addiction issues. Employees who feel they have a problem are encouraged to seek assistance through their employer or one of the specialist organisations listed below.

Alteration and Termination

Should the NTF, NARS or TBA wish to terminate this agreement they shall do so by giving three months' notice in writing to the other, and any alteration to be by agreement between the parties.

This version of the agreement was published in May 2023.

Racing Welfare

Help for racing's people in need. Offers confidential impartial help and advice with any issues, including comprehensive support for people experiencing addiction difficulties.

Helpline 0800 6300 443

7 days/week 24 hours/day

Text 07860 079043

www.racingwelfare.co.uk - including a live chat area

Alanon

Offers understanding, strength & hope to anyone whose life is, or has been, affected by someone else's drinking

0207 4030 888

7 days/week 10am - 10pm

www.al-anonuk.org.uk

Alcoholics Anonymous

Men & women who share their experience, strength & hope to help others to recover from alcoholism

0800 9177 650

7 days/week 24hrs/day

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk help@aamail.org

Beat (Beating Eating Disorders)

Provides information & support for all aspects of eating disorders

0808 801 0677

Youthline 0808 801 0711

Mon/Fri 3pm to 10 pm

www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk

Families Anonymous

Relatives & friends of people involved in the abuse of mind-altering substances, or related behavioural problems

Online forum

www.famanon.org.uk

FRANK

Find drug & alcohol treatment services available in any area of the UK, & information about drugs & alcohol

0300 123 6600

SMS 8211

7 days/week 24hrs/day

www.talktofrank.com Live chat 2pm - 6 pm

Gamanon

Supports the friends & families of those who have been affected by a gambling problem
Meetings and online meetings
www.gamanon.org.uk

Gamblers

Anonymous Men & women who have joined together to do something about their own gambling problem & to help others
Meetings and online meetings
www.gamblersanonymous.org.uk

Gambling Therapy

Online forum, buddy system, advice, group therapy, counselling for those affected by compulsive gambling
Online
www.gamblingtherapy.org

Gamcare

A leading authority on the provision of support, advice & counselling to people affected by gambling problems
0808 8020 133
7 days/week 8am - midnight
www.gamcare.org.uk

Injured Jockeys Fund

Assists jockeys (their spouses, or dependants) who have suffered through injury & are unable to ride
01638 66 22 46
Mon/Fri 9am - 5pm
www.ijf.org.uk

Narcotics Anonymous

Men & women for whom drugs had become a major problem, meeting to help each other stay clean
0300 999 1212
7 days/week 10am - midnight
www.ukna.org

Overeaters Anonymous

A supportive fellowship of individuals, recovering from varied compulsive eating behaviours.
Meetings and online meetings
www.oagb.org.uk

Samaritans

Provides confidential, non-judgemental emotional support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide. A safe place to talk about whatever is getting to you.

116 123 (free to call)

7 days/week 24hrs/day

www.samaritans.org

email jo@samaritans.org