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Overview

The Drug and Alcohol Operating Manual provides detail and clarification on the operation of the City's [Drug and Alcohol Standard](#).

Medications

Employees must obtain and use medications responsibly, which includes ascertaining whether a medication could cause the employee to be unfit for work/duty. This must be done before attending or performing work while using medication.

Ascertaining the Effects of Medication

Employees must make reasonable efforts to understand the potential effects of medication. This may include consulting with a physician, pharmacist, or the authorizing health care practitioner about the potential effect of the medication on the employee's ability to safely and productively perform their job duties. Such consultation should include advising the physician, pharmacist, or authorizing health care practitioner about the specific nature of the employee's job duties and identifying any other medications which are being taken concurrently.

If an employee is uncertain if a medication could cause them to be unfit for work/duty, the employee should seek assistance from a Disability Management Consultant. A Disability Management Consultant can provide documentation for an employee to take to their physician, pharmacist, or authorizing health care practitioner in order to facilitate a fulsome dialogue and to assist the advising individual in understanding the specifics of the employee's job duties so that they may reliably advise on whether the medication could cause the employee to be unfit for work/duty.

Disclosing the Use of Medication

If the use of a medication could cause the employee to be unfit for work/duty, it must be disclosed to a supervisor or a Disability Management Consultant. The employee will be required to participate in any process required in determining whether the employee will be cleared for duties (with or without modification) while using the medication.

As part of this process, employees may be required to:

- confirm the specific medication being taken, including timing, dosage, and nature of its use;
- provide confirmation whether alternative treatments have been considered;
- provide periodic updates to medical documentation or confirm ongoing use of medication; or

- attend an Independent Medical Exam (IME) requisitioned by the City.

Retaining and Providing Documentation

The employee and any advising physician, pharmacist, or authorizing health care practitioner must retain copies of any relevant documentation in respect of medication and any ascertaining of whether it could cause the employee to be unfit for work/duty.

Upon request of the City in appropriate circumstances (e.g. post-incident, following a positive drug and alcohol test, in response to concerns about use at work, as part of considering an accommodation), an employee may be required to provide prior documentation relating to their efforts to ascertain the effect of medication.

Investigative Process

Suspected Possession of Drugs or Alcohol

Supervisors have the right to investigate any situation when there are reasonable grounds to believe that drugs of concern or related paraphernalia are present on City premises in violation of the drug and alcohol standard.

Supervisors are responsible for identifying situations where a search is justified based on factors that could include behaviour, odour, or presence of paraphernalia. Supervisors may consult with other supervisors, Corporate Security and/or Labour Relations to determine and take appropriate steps, including conducting a search.

Initiating a Drug and Alcohol Investigation

If a supervisor has reason to believe that an employee may be unfit for work/duty:

1. The employee will be escorted to a safe place and informed of the supervisor's reason for concern.
 - a. Employees working in non-safety sensitive positions: if the supervisor's concerns are not resolved, the supervisor should contact Labour Relations.
 - b. Employees working in safety sensitive positions: the supervisor will contact a Safety Engagement Lead and in collaboration, a determination will be made if drug and alcohol testing is required.
2. The employee may be temporarily held out of service or reassigned pending completion of any investigation.
3. Depending on the circumstances, further assessment or investigation may be required before the employee can return to work.

4. The supervisor may consult additional persons (e.g. Labour Relations, Disability Management) for assistance where appropriate.

If there are immediate medical concerns, the supervisor should assist the employee in seeking appropriate medical attention (e.g. physician, hospital, clinic) without delay.

Drug and Alcohol Testing

The City will conduct drug and alcohol testing for employees in safety-sensitive positions when there is a reasonable cause to believe an employee may be unfit for work/duty (“reasonable cause”) or where drugs of concern may have been a contributing factor to an incident (“post-incident”).

The decision to test will be made in collaboration between the supervisor and the Safety Engagement Lead. Where testing will occur, the basis for the decision will be documented as soon as possible after action has taken place.

A refusal to appear for, or participate in, a required drug and alcohol test is misconduct subject to discipline up to and including termination. An employee failing to appear or participate may be deemed to have a positive test result.

Reasonable Cause Testing

Drug and alcohol testing will take place when there are reasonable grounds to believe that an employee working in a safety sensitive position may be unfit for work/duty.

A decision to refer an employee for testing for reasonable cause may include the following considerations:

- Has the employee shown signs that they may be unfit for work/duty such as: a deviation in their typical physical appearance, behaviour, actions or work performance (which could include slowed or slurred speech, unsteady on feet, fumbling or poor motor control, confusion, yelling, fighting, odour [alcohol, cannabis or other scents], bloodshot or glassy eyes, etc.)?
- Has the employee admitted or implied the use of drugs of concern?
- Has the employee put forward a plausible explanation as to their behaviour or appearance?
- Were the observations made by the supervisor or Safety Engagement Lead personally, or were they provided by a witness? Has the witness provided reliable, firsthand information?

Post-Incident Testing

Drug and alcohol testing may be required after a significant work-related incident as part of a full investigation into the circumstances. The purpose of post-incident testing is to rule out the possibility that drugs or alcohol may have contributed to the cause of the incident.

The following considerations apply:

- When an incident occurs, the employee(s) involved must report the incident immediately to their supervisor and participate fully in any subsequent investigation.
- The supervisor will gather relevant information immediately after the event and provide the information to the Safety Engagement Lead.
- A test will not be necessary if there is clear evidence that acts or omissions of the employee(s) could not have been a contributing factor (for example, the incident is known to be caused by a structural or mechanical failure).
- A decision to test after an incident will be documented as soon as practicable.

Drug and Alcohol Cutoff Levels

Drug and alcohol testing is conducted by a third-party provider on the basis of oral fluid, urine, and/or breath testing. Test results are compared to predetermined thresholds (cutoffs) to determine if an employee is unfit for work/duty. An employee with a drug or alcohol level equal to or in excess of any cutoff level(s) set out in [Appendix A](#) is unfit for work/duty.

The use of drugs of concern can have potentially impairing effects lasting well beyond the consumption of those substances. It is an employee's responsibility to ensure they are not unfit for work/duty.

Safety Sensitive Positions

"Safety sensitive position" means any position that requires the employee to engage in a process, function or duty that has the potential for significant harm to the employee, their co-workers, other contractors and/or the general public, including the operation of a vehicle and/or equipment.

Safety sensitive positions include those employees expected to conduct the following duties:

- Operate powered mobile equipment that carries an operator and can be set in motion by the operator's actions (e.g. automobiles, trucks, backhoes, forklifts, loaders, graders, buses)
- Operate process equipment/instruments used to perform a service by measuring, recording, or controlling electronic, hydraulic, mechanical or pneumatic devices (e.g. Dispatch Operator, Process Control Technician)

- Operate mechanical equipment through their assigned duties (e.g. power saw, table saw, jack hammer, lawn mower)
- Perform life-saving techniques, engage in life threatening procedures or perform specified duties in an emergency response (e.g. Fire Fighters, Lifeguards)
- Entrusted with the care of vulnerable persons (e.g. Aquatic Instructors, Summer Camp Instructor)
- Work in high hazard areas (e.g. busy roadways, intersections, bridges) and/or areas with specific OHS legislative requirements (e.g. confined/restricted spaces, areas requiring fall protection or rigging)
- Perform duties in the vicinity of hazardous elements or other persons which may heighten the risk of a significant incident occurring
- Employees who are required to provide direction to safety sensitive employees which may put those employees in situations of heightened risk

In the event a position cannot be defined by these criteria, the management staff of the area will determine whether the position is safety sensitive in consultation with Workforce Safety & Employee Health.

Responsible Escorting

Employees must not operate any vehicles and will be provided responsible escorting where appropriate, such as where:

- there are reasonable grounds to believe the employee is unfit for work/duty;
- the employee has been involved in an incident for which drugs of concern may have been a contributing factor; or
- the employee has self-disclosed being unfit for work/duty.

In these circumstances, a safe escort will be arranged to transport the employee to a hospital, clinic, drug and alcohol testing facility, or their home or the care of another person, as appropriate.

Driving Eligibility and Reporting Obligations

Employees who operate a motor vehicle in their employment with the City are required to maintain a valid driver's licence for the class operation required and to operate motor vehicles in accordance with applicable laws. Employees must inform their supervisor immediately of:

- Any expiration, suspension or loss of a driver's license;

- Any charges or administrative penalties brought against them for impaired driving offences while operating a City vehicle (e.g. operating a vehicle in excess of any legislated alcohol or drug limit, driving while impaired, refusal to test); and
- The occurrence of any Immediate Roadside Sanction (IRS) test while operating a City vehicle.

These circumstances may result in an investigation into the employee's conduct and the employee no longer being permitted to operate City vehicles. Failure to report or participate in an investigation as required may result in discipline up to and including termination.

Additional information is contained in the City of Edmonton Driver's Manual.

Rehabilitation & Treatment

The responsibility for the costs associated with rehabilitation and treatment are generally shared between the City and the employee as both parties have an interest in the employee successfully addressing any substance dependency issue and returning to productive employment.

The City recognizes that more than one attempt at rehabilitation may be required for an employee to meaningfully address a substance dependency issue. Where eligible, an employee's department will be responsible for the costs of any required monitoring to ensure the employee can safely return to work and any follow-up monitoring set out in a relapse prevention program. Costs associated with rehabilitation are generally borne as follows (subject to eligibility, collective agreement provisions and any relevant rehabilitation agreement(s)):

First Rehabilitation Effort

The employee's department will cover the costs of medical evaluation, treatment planning and appropriate residential treatment costs (includes detox).

Second Rehabilitation Effort

The employee's department will cover the costs of medical evaluation and treatment planning. Costs associated with residential treatment (includes detox), will be shared on a 50%/50% basis between the department and the employee. The employee will be required to sign an approval allowing their portion of costs to be deducted from their earnings following an agreed upon schedule.

Subsequent Rehabilitation Efforts

If it is determined that additional rehabilitation efforts must occur, the employee will be responsible for all costs associated with the rehabilitation. The department may, at its sole discretion, enter into an agreement with the employee to cover these costs on a recoverable basis if there is a reasonable prospect of repayment.

Return to Duty Agreements

If employment is continued following a violation of the City's drug and alcohol standard, the employee may be required to enter into a return to duty agreement governing their continued employment.

Examples of conditions that may be included in such an agreement are:

- temporary removal from their position;
- assessment by a substance abuse expert to determine any need for a structured treatment program;
- adherence to any recommended treatment, monitoring, and aftercare program;
- abstinence from substance use;
- satisfactory performance on return to duty;
- successful completion of a return to duty test;
- ongoing unannounced testing for a period determined on a case by case basis; and
- any other condition appropriate to the situation.

Failure to meet the requirements of a return to duty agreement may result in further discipline or termination of employment.

Support and Resources

The City's drug and alcohol standard supports its efforts to protect the physical and psychological well-being of its employees, the workplace, and the public.

The City has many resources available for employees who feel they may be struggling with issues caused by, or related to, the use of drugs of concern or substance dependencies.

Employees with a possible substance dependency are encouraged to seek assistance as soon as possible. Dependencies are treatable illnesses and early intervention greatly improves the probability of a lasting rehabilitation and recovery.

If you need to talk to someone, you are encouraged to access any of the following resources:

- **Employee Family and Assistance Provider (EFAP)** - Follow this [link](#) or search "EFAP" on OneCity for access and contact details.
- **Disability Management** - Email disabilitymanagement@edmonton.ca or call 780-496-8835.

- **City Chaplain** - Follow this [link](#) or search “City Chaplain” on OneCity, or call 780-496-7863.
- **Labour Relations** - Follow this [link](#) or search “Labour Relations Contact” on OneCity.
- **Mental Health and Wellness Team / Peer Support Group** - Follow this [link](#) or search “Employee Wellness Supports” on OneCity for additional details and contact information.
- (Where applicable) A union representative or shop steward.

Appendix A - Drug and Alcohol Cutoff Levels

The City of Edmonton's drug cutoff levels are aligned with the Construction Owners Association of Alberta (COAA) Canadian Model for Providing a Safe Workplace (6.0).

NOTE: The cutoff limits do not replace the requirement to abide by applicable laws, including those applying to vehicle operators. Under *the Traffic Safety Act* commercial vehicle operators are prohibited from having **any** alcohol or drug in their body.

Oral Fluid Drug Concentration Limits

Drugs or classes of drugs	Screening concentration equal to or in excess of ng/mL	Confirmation concentration equal to or in excess of ng/mL
Marijuana (THC)	4	2
Cocaine metabolite	20	-
- Cocaine or Benzoyllecgonine	-	8
Opioids	40	-
- Codeine	-	40
- Morphine	-	40
- Hydrocodone	-	40
- Hydromorphone	-	40
- Oxycodone	-	40
- Oxymorphone	-	40
6-Acetylmorphine	-	4
Phencyclidine	10	10
Amphetamines	50	-
- Amphetamine	-	50
- Methamphetamine	-	50
- MDMA (Methylenedioxyamphetamine)	-	50
- MDA (Methylenedioxyamphetamine)	-	50

Urine Drug Concentration Limits

Drugs or classes of drugs	Screening concentration equal to or in excess of ng/mL	Confirmation concentration equal to or in excess of ng/mL
Marijuana metabolite	50	15
Cocaine metabolite	150	100
Opioids		
- Codeine	2000	2000
- Morphine	2000	2000
- Hydrocodone	300	100
- Hydromorphone	300	100
- Oxycodone	100	100
- Oxymorphone	100	100
6-Acetylmorphine	10	10
Phencyclidine	25	25
Amphetamines	500	-
- Amphetamine	-	250
- Methamphetamine	-	250
- MDMA (Methylenedioxyamphetamine)	500	250
- MDA (Methylenedioxyamphetamine)	-	250

Alcohol Limit

On a breath alcohol test, if the screening test result displays a blood alcohol content level at or above 0.020, a breath alcohol confirmation test will be conducted.

- Employees displaying a blood alcohol content level at or above 0.040 on a confirmation test are unfit for work/duty.
- Employees displaying a blood alcohol content level at or above 0.020 on a confirmation test, but lower than 0.040, may be considered unfit for work/duty, with consideration given to all relevant circumstances.

Appendix B - Drug and Alcohol Process Flow Chart

Includes processes for both safety sensitive (testing pathway) and non-safety sensitive employees. In the event of a discrepancy, the latest version will be followed.

