

# ***ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND YOUR HEALTH***

## **A RESOURCE AND POLICY GUIDE FOR THE EMPLOYEES AT HAMLINE UNIVERSITY**

### **CONCERN FOR HEALTH AND SAFETY**

The abuse of alcohol and controlled substances can seriously impair your health and your ability to work. It may also cause you to endanger the safety and well-being of others.

Hamline University is committed to promoting an environment that rejects substance abuse as an acceptable lifestyle, to helping individuals obtain help for substance abuse problems, and to encouraging individuals to make health decisions about alcohol and other drugs.

Prevention of substance abuse is sought in several ways: by providing accurate information on drug-use issues, by promoting healthy use of leisure time, by providing drug-free activities, by enhancing skills for dealing with stress, and by working through campus leaders and peers to establish healthy norms.

This information was prepared in accordance with the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. It describes the health risks and legal sanctions associated with alcohol and other drugs. It outlines the university's standard of conduct and disciplinary actions taken against employees who violate the standard. It also provides a list of resources for counseling or treatment.

### **HOW DRUG USE AFFECTS HEALTH**

There are risks associated with the chronic use of all psychoactive drugs, including alcohol. Acute or "experimental" use of drugs can result in a range of adverse health effects from nausea and anxiety to coma and death. Described below are some of the health effects of alcohol and other drugs. Please note special cautions:

- \* The extent and the likelihood of negative side effects increase significantly if drugs are used in combination (including alcohol or over-the-counter medications).
- \* A pregnant woman who uses alcohol, cigarettes or other drugs exposes her fetus to serious risks, such as miscarriage, low birth weight or brain damage.
- \* The frequent use of any drug increases the likelihood of becoming dependent.
- \* There is a significant risk of being infected with the virus that causes AIDS or other diseases if you inject drugs and share needles.

***Alcohol*** is the drug most frequently abused on college campuses and in our society. Even small

amounts of alcohol can significantly impair the judgment and coordination required to safely drive a car. The consumption of alcohol also increases the incidence of aggressive acts, including acquaintance rape, spousal and child abuse, and property damage. Moderate to large amounts of alcohol can severely impair your ability to learn and remember information. Because alcohol acts as a depressant on the central nervous system, it can increase feelings of depression or suicide. In very large amounts it can cause respiratory and cardiac failure, resulting in death.

***Marijuana*** has been found to impair short-term memory and comprehension. Hours after the feeling of getting high fades, the effects of marijuana on coordination, perception and judgment remain. Marijuana is the second most frequent drug (behind alcohol) found in the blood of individuals involved in fatal accidents. An overdose may bring on paranoia, panic attacks or other psychological problems. Chronic use has been associated with lung damage, abnormalities in the reproductive system and decreased motivation.

***Stimulants, Cocaine and Amphetamines*** can cause anxiety, panic attacks, agitation, high blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, chronic sleeplessness and hallucinations. Cocaine and crack cocaine are extremely dangerous and can rapidly cause addiction. An overdose can result in seizures and death.

***Hallucinogens*** such as LSD, MDA, PCP (angel dust), mescaline, and peyote can cause powerful distortions in perception and thinking. Intense and often unpredictable emotional reactions can trigger panic attacks or psychotic reactions. Some hallucinogens can cause heart or lung failure.

***Inhalants*** can cause nausea, headaches, irregular heartbeat and damage to lungs, bone marrow, kidneys and liver. Sudden death can occur due to brain and heart damage.

***Narcotics*** such as heroin, codeine, morphine and opium are highly addictive. Overdose may lead to convulsions, coma or death.

***Tobacco*** use is associated with more deaths than all other drugs combined. Nicotine increases your heart rate and raises your blood pressure. Long-term effects include emphysema, bronchitis, heart disease, and lung cancer.

## **THE UNIVERSITY'S POLICIES REGARDING DRUG USE BY EMPLOYEES**

Hamline University is committed to maintaining a drug-free environment for its employees. In compliance with applicable federal and state laws, the university prohibits the unlawful possession, use, distribution, sale or manufacture of alcohol and controlled substances on university property or as part of any university activity.

Detailed information on policies may be found in the Staff Guidebook which is available on Hamline's Website, or through the Office of Human Resources.

## WHAT SANCTIONS MAY APPLY

Employees who violate federal or state laws concerning drugs or alcohol are subject to criminal prosecution; those who violate university policy may be disciplined in accordance with university policies, statutes, rules, employment contracts and labor agreements, up to and including dismissal and referral for prosecution.

## THE LAWS

***Under Federal Law***, simple drug possession first-time offenders can be sentenced up to one year in prison and a \$100,000 fine. A sentence of life imprisonment can result from a conviction for possession of a controlled substance that results in death or bodily injury. Possession of more than five grams of cocaine can trigger an intent-to-distribute penalty of 10 to 16 years in prison.

Other federal sanctions include forfeiture of property; forfeiture of vehicles, boats or aircraft used to transport or conceal a controlled substance; denial of federal benefits and revocation of licenses.

***Under Minnesota Law***, penalties vary with the amount of the drug confiscated; the type of drug found; the number of previous convictions; and intent to manufacture, sell or use the drug. For example, possession of three grams of cocaine can result in a fine up to \$250,000 and a prison term up to 20 years.

Alcohol penalties under Minnesota law fall into three main categories:

### 1) ***Driving While Under the Influence (DWI)***

Contrary to popular belief, DWI is not the same as having an “alcoholic concentration of .10 or more.” Although a level of .10 or more ensures that your license will automatically be revoked, in Minnesota, you can be arrested if your alcohol concentration is .04 or greater and the results of your test can be used as relevant evidence that you are driving under the influence. First-time offenders face a fine of up to \$700, 90 days in jail and loss of license for 30 days (six months if you are under 21). Your license may be revoked for up to a year if you refuse to submit to testing for intoxication.

### 2) ***Violations by Persons Under 21***

Consumption of alcohol, possession, entering of licensed premises or misrepresentation of age are all misdemeanors.

### 3) ***Social Host Liability***

Social host liability means that anyone over 21 who knowingly serves alcohol to someone under 21 may be held civilly liable for any damages subsequently caused by that person.

## **WHERE TO GO FOR HELP IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM WITH ALCOHOL OR OTHER DRUGS**

### ***HAMLIN'S EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PLAN***

Available to employees and their families on a confidential basis 24 hours a day, 365 days a year which helps address a variety of concerns (parenting, education, aging, financial, legal, addiction and recovery). No identifying information is shared with the employer. Provided through Hartford Insurance. Call 1 (800) 964-3577.

### ***HAMLIN'S COUNSELING & HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT***

Employees may seek help in obtaining referral sources and literature by calling (651) 523-2204.

### ***COMMUNITY RESOURCES***

Many local agencies can be found in the yellow pages under Alcoholism Information and Treatment or under Drug Abuse Information. Be sure to check with your health insurance carrier for coverage and preferred providers.

There are no fees or dues for attending support groups, which meet anonymously to discuss and resolve members' common problems.

Alcoholics Anonymous (24 hours)  
(651) 221-1918 or 1 (800) 333-4313

Narcotics Anonymous  
(612) 939-3939

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