



Drugs Policy

Expected Standards

This policy relates to the use of illegal drugs or other harmful substances on the Rufus Centre premises.

Its purpose is to:

- a) Comply with the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 by ensuring that Rufus Centre does not knowingly permit the use or supply of controlled drugs on its premises.
- b) Provide a safe working environment for staff and customers.
- c) Minimise and deter drug use at the venue.
- d) Prevent drug dealing in the premises.
- e) Safeguard customers who have used drugs or misused other substances.
- f) Support customers seeking help regarding their own or others' drug use.

The policy will be communicated to customers by:

- *Posting a copy on the Rufus Centre website.*
- *Raising awareness of the policy when appropriate, e.g., on tickets sales.*
- *Publicising on the website that there will be a zero policy in smoking cannabis anywhere in the smoking area and those caught by security or staff will be escorted off the premises.*

The possession of illegal drugs is a criminal offence and as such is viewed very seriously by the Town Council, we do not permit any employee or customer to take, use, possess, sell or be under the influence of any controlled substance whilst on Company premises. Any staff member breaching this may be subject to disciplinary procedures; customers may be subject to ejection, bans and potentially be reported to the police.

If not confronted, drug use on licensed premises is likely to increase as the premises will develop a reputation where drug use is tolerated; **we do not want to develop that reputation.**

We are aware that “turning a blind eye” could be construed as “permitting”; this will not be tolerated on these premises.

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 splits-controlled drugs into three Classes defined by the amount of harm they have the potential to cause. **They are categorised as follows:**

CLASS A: Which includes Cocaine, Crack Cocaine, Heroin, Ecstasy, Cannabis Oil and LSD

CLASS B: Which includes Cannabis, Cannabis Resin and Amphetamine

CLASS C: Which generally include prescription drugs which are abused such as Diazepam and Steroids.

In addition to the classification of controlled drugs, the 1971 Act also creates the offences with the main ones being:

Possession: Also known as **personal use** where the individual has a small amount of a controlled drug on their person.

Possession with Intent to Supply: This is where an individual has a controlled drug in their possession and the reason for this is to supply it to another.

Supply: This is where a person supplies or offers to supply a controlled drug to another person.

The part of the Act which directly effects licensed premises is: Section 8 of the 1971 Act.

This states it creates an offence to “**Knowingly permit or suffer any drug related activity on the premises**”. Activity in this instance will relate to any of the above offences. The burden here is on the licensee and staff of the premises to prevent the use of controlled drugs on their premises.

Psychoactive Substances Act 2016 Consideration will also be given to preventing the use of so-called “legal highs” in contravention of this legislation items such as Spice, Laughing Gas (NO₂), Mephedrone, (not an exhaustive list) will be treated in the same way as any illegal drug under the Misuse of Drugs Act.

All security, staff and managers have a duty to support this policy to make sure that people coming into our venue feel safe and are able to enjoy themselves in a drug free environment.

All employees are expected to remain vigilant for any signs or symptoms of drug use and act accordingly.

Venue Countermeasures

- Clear signage on a ‘Zero Tolerance Policy’ to be placed in key areas, e.g., at the entrance, toilets etc.
- Strategic lighting levels in key areas.
- Security staff patrol plans.
- High-vis presence of staff ‘front of house’.
- High levels of housekeeping, e.g., clearing and wiping tables, general maintenance
- Checking toilet cisterns and behind panelling.
- Frequent staff visits to toilets
- All security staff to be in High-Viz both outside *and* inside
- Arrangements with Police for reporting of crime and disposing of confiscated drugs.

High-risk areas

Security and staff will regularly monitor key areas within the premises for suspicious activity. These have been identified as follows; toilets, badly lit areas, car parks and smoking areas.

Equipment used in Drug Taking

Drug takers use a variety of different materials when taking drugs. Some of the things to look out for include:

- Wraps – the folded paper, foil, small button bags, or clingfilm that drugs are sold in
- Torn, unlit cigarettes
- Torn up beer mats, packets of Rizlas – used for rolling joints, roaches
- Foam stuffing taken from seats/bits of foam left around

- Payment with tightly rolled banknotes or notes that have been tightly rolled
- Traces of blood or powder on banknotes
- Drinking straws left in toilets
- Tinfoil or spoons, especially if they are burnt, scorched or covered in soot
- Syringes – used for injecting drugs
- Tightly rolled banknotes or drinking straws
- Traces of white powder on any surface

Typical Symptoms/Signs of Possible Drug Use

The signs and symptoms of drug use can vary depending on the type of drug but can include:

- Acting 'drunk'.
- Acting in an erratic, excited, aggressive, or silly nature.
- Having a 'nothing can stop me' high.
- Having bloodshot eyes.
- Unnaturally doopey, vacant staring, sleepy euphoria, dancing.
- Very dilated pupils.
- "Jawing".
- The excessive drinking of water or soft drinks.
- Traces of white marks or powder around nostrils.
- The distinctive 'herbal' smell of cannabis smoke.

Signs of Drug Dealing

These can include

- A person "seeing a succession of "visitors" who only stay with him/her a short time.
- A person making frequent visits to the toilet, garden or car park followed by a different person/people each time.
- People exchanging small packages or cash, often in secretive manner, but may be quite open (to avoid suspicion).
- Furtive, conspiratorial behaviour — huddling in corners and whispering
- Conversation includes frequent references to drugs (slang names)
- **Remember: dealers are not identifiable by appearance; they often look highly respectable. They are not always male.**

Staff procedure and responsibilities

Searching - see Customer Search Policy

Drugs seized or found on premises

Where items suspected of being illegal drugs are found on an individual following a voluntary search, and the amount of drugs found on a person are a small quantity which could be construed as 'for personal use' then it is acceptable for the drugs to be seized and deposited in a safe or secure area and the person may be refused entry, there will be no need for the Police to be called.

However, should the amount of any drugs found amount to more than 'simple possession' (i.e., possession with intent to supply) or if it is suspected that the subject is a drugs dealer, then in those circumstances the expectation is that the Police will be called, and the items handed over to the attending officer as part of an evidential package. This should be done at the same time as the individual is handed over to the Police, having agreed to remain at the premises. A written statement documenting the search and the subsequent handover will be required.

Where items are located inside the premises and a person is NOT identified and there is no prospect of doing so, the items will be confiscated and placed in a safe or secure place and handed over to the police.

Where drugs are placed in the safe or a secure place, it is the expectation that a call is made to the control room of the local policing area to arrange collection. Such a call should be made as soon as is practical and an incident log created flagged for the attention of the Licensing Officer. Where the venue is busy and this occurs on a weekend or public holiday, this call MUST be placed no later than the first working day after the drugs are found and deposited.

Failing to adhere to this may amount to a staff member or manager committing an offence of unlawful possession as outlined above.

The defence to this is knowing or suspecting it to be a controlled drug, he took possession of it for the purpose of delivering it into the custody of a person lawfully entitled to take custody of it and that as soon as possible after taking possession of it he took all such steps as were reasonably open to him to deliver it into the custody of such a person.

Confiscation of Drugs

If any drug or other controlled substance is found during customer searches or general management of the venue, the substance should, wherever possible, be confiscated.

Door Security procedure and responsibilities;

What security and staff members should do if they suspect someone is:

- on drugs
- in possession of drugs
- supplying drugs
- if they find drugs on the premises

This should include:

- Door searches
- Confiscation of drugs
- Refusal of entry to the venue
- Incident reporting
- Observation for possible problems

Management procedure and responsibilities;

Guidance for duty supervisors or managers on what should they do with any found or confiscated drugs.

These should include

- Liaison with the Police and Licensing Authorities
- Ensuring overall safety of the venue and operation of the drugs policy
- Decision making at incidents
- Incident reporting
- Observation for possible problems
- Placement and upkeep of Zero Tolerance and Search messages
- Provision of training for all staff, including door staff, on drug awareness
- Oversight of the search policy
- Management of Incident Book

- Upkeep and management of CCTV