

SCHOOL POLICY: ALCOHOL - POSSESSION AND CONSUMPTION IN SCHOOLS AND AT SCHOOL RELATED ACTIVITIES

PUBLISHED: August 1998

CONTACT: Workplace & Legal Support

RELATED POLICIES: *Excursions - Policy & Mandatory Procedures*
Outdoor Adventure Activities- Policy & Mandatory Procedures
Overseas Excursions - Policy & Mandatory Procedures
Playground Supervision of Students

1 PURPOSE

This policy describes mandatory procedures for schools regarding the possession and consumption of alcohol on school premises and during school activities outside the school.

2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 **Work experience** is a student's short term unpaid participation in the workplace as a learner and observer.

2.2 **School functions and activities** include the variety of learning, recreational, sporting and social occasions which are organised by a school or with the assistance of school staff. They also include social and fundraising activities organised in respect of a school by the school board or by the parent association.

2.3 **Parent(s)** is inclusive of those with parental responsibility and guardians.

2.4 **Continuing responsibility for students** exists where teachers have responsibility for the care and safety of students during school activities. Such school activities include education programs within the school precincts as well as programs and activities conducted outside the school. The responsibility exists for the duration of the activity/program and until the duty of care responsibility of students returns to parents.

3 POLICY STATEMENT

3.1 This policy incorporates the requirements of the *ACT Public Sector Management Standards, Standard 4, Ethics*, which sets out the code of conduct for all ACT government staff, and the *ACT Liquor Act 1975*, which governs the sale of alcohol in the ACT.

3.2 The department through its staff has a duty of care to take all reasonable steps to minimise the risk of injury/prevent harm to students.

3.3 Staff have a responsibility to discharge their duty of care and to perform their official duties at all times in accordance with the *Public Sector Management Standards*.

4 MANDATORY PROCEDURES

4.1 General

4.1.1 Alcohol must not be consumed on school premises during normal school hours. Exemption may be made with the approval of the principal for appropriate special occasions at times when students are not present.

4.1.2 Staff must not drink alcohol during hours of duty or when they have a continuing responsibility for students. This includes school excursions/outdoor adventure activities and any other school activity that is held outside ordinary school hours.

4.1.3 All staff should be discouraged from drinking alcohol during lunch breaks as the effects of alcohol consumption can detract from an officer's work performance.

- 4.1.4 Alcohol must not be carried in or on government vehicles except where prior approval in writing has been given for a special occasion by the principal. Under no circumstances is alcohol to be consumed in or on government vehicles.
- 4.1.5 Principals should ensure that staff present at students' social occasions which are not sponsored by the school, including some year 12 end of year activities, are aware of the possible implications of attending such activities and are aware of their responsibilities.
- 4.1.6 Students under the age of 18 years are prohibited by the *ACT Liquor Act 1975* from purchasing or consuming alcohol on any occasion.
- 4.1.7 Students are not permitted to consume or possess alcohol at any school activity including excursions, outdoor adventure activities and camps.

4.2 **Accredited Courses**

Students of any age should not be required to serve alcohol except as part of a course in hospitality which contains a specific requirement for them to do so. The existence of a course within a school is not in itself sufficient reason for students to be serving alcohol eg. at a school social function. The occasion must fall within the requirements of the course.

- (a) Students under the age of 18 years must not serve alcohol during hospitality courses unless the course provider is the Canberra Institute of Technology or is registered under the *ACT Liquor Act 1975*.
- (b) This registration must be checked by the school with the Registrar of Liquor Licensing before the school enrolls students in such a course. This check also applies to commercial training schools for which the government school acts as an agent.
- (c) The principal may give approval for specific school functions to be used as practical sessions for such hospitality courses provided that the requirements of the *ACT Liquor Act 1975* and those set out in other sections of this policy are met.
- (d) Where secondary colleges wish to be the provider of a training program involving the serving of alcohol by students, the principal must ensure that the course has met departmental and BSSS approval procedures and that a suitable member of the teaching staff is then approved under the *Liquor Act* to conduct the course.
- (e) It will be the principal's responsibility to ensure all approvals are current and that both the Director (Schools) and the Registrar of Liquor Licences are notified in advance of those occasions when students will be serving alcohol. Both the principal and teacher approved by the Registrar will be responsible for meeting the requirements and expectations of the Registrar.

4.3 **Work Experience**

- (a) Students under the age of 18 years. Although the *ACT Liquor Act 1975* also allows persons under the age of 18 years to serve alcohol in the course of paid employment, work experience does not qualify as an exemption to the Act. Therefore, students under 18 years should not be placed in positions which will require them to serve alcohol.
- (b) Students over the age of 18 years. Students who are 18 years and over may be placed in work experience situations where alcohol is served under approved work experience guidelines relating to the suitability of the placement for the individual student concerned.

4.4 **Social Functions and Activities not involving Students**

Consumption of alcohol is permitted on social and school fund raising occasions involving staff and/or parents provided that the requirements set out below are met. The following procedures must be followed on each occasion where school staff, school boards, or P&C associations wish to provide or sell alcohol.

- (a) The function must not occur during normal school hours or at times when any school activities involving students are in progress.
- (b) Students present with their parents at social and school fund raising occasions are the responsibility of their parents.
- (c) Prior approval for possession and consumption of alcohol must be given by the principal. This must occur in relation to each individual occasion and must be in writing.
- (d) Parents should be advised in advance when alcohol will be offered at the above social and school fund raising functions.
- (e) Where alcohol is to be sold, requirements under the ACT Liquor Licensing Board (Liquor Act 1975) are to be observed.
- (f) Principals are ultimately responsible for the conduct of such functions. They should ensure that staff are instructed about their responsibilities on such occasions.

4.5 **Community Education Programs**

- (a) Alcohol in necessary and moderate amounts may form part of specific community education programs, such as wine appreciation. Prior approval must be obtained from the principal.
- (b) The purpose and conduct of each course would need to be clearly documented and consumption of alcohol appropriate in the context of the course and appropriate to those adults attending the course. The principal must ensure that this occurs.
- (c) Other relevant requirements of this policy must also be observed.

4.6 **Community Use of School Facilities**

Community users and hirers of school facilities for other than school functions/activities and community education programs, are not permitted to bring alcohol onto or to consume alcohol on school premises.