

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Safety
AREA: Specific Area Guidelines

Number: 06.04.02

SUBJECT: Substance Use Disorder Prevention

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

- A. The University of Houston (the “University”) is committed to the health and well-being of its students and employees through the development and maintenance of a substance use disorder prevention program that is in compliance with the Drug Free Workplace Act of 1988 and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Amendments of 1989. This policy applies to all University students, faculty and staff employees, affiliates, contractors, and visitors (“University community”) and is applicable twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week.
- B. Employees may have their job performance and productivity adversely affected by their progressive dependence on drugs or alcohol. Much of this cost is in lost wages, health care expenses, and workers’ compensation. Additionally, the impact of drug use and high-risk alcohol consumption by college students cannot be overlooked in terms of its financial, emotional, and academic cost to the individual students affected and their university. For specific information related to the effects of alcohol and other drug use, go to the National Institute on Drug Abuse website, <https://nida.nih.gov/> or the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism website, <https://niaaa.nih.gov/>.

II. POLICY

- A. The University prohibits the unlawful possession, use, sale, marketing, manufacturing, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol in the Workplace, on the Campus, and at any off-campus University activity, including violations of state underage drinking laws. Illicit drugs are drugs that are manufactured, obtained, or sold illegally, including prescription drugs obtained or sold without a prescription.
- B. In addition to this prohibition, the University’s substance use disorder prevention program (1) establishes standards of conduct for students and employees in the Workplace, on the Campus, and at any off-campus University activity and (2) informs students and employees about the dangers of substance use disorders, the assistance programs for substance use disorders available to them, and the penalties that may be imposed for drug- and alcohol-related offenses. A University student or employee who violates these standards of conduct is subject to disciplinary action, in addition to any applicable criminal penalties.
- C. Procedures for distribution of alcoholic beverages at University events can be viewed at the University’s [Alcohol Policy](#).

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Campus: All areas of the University, including areas that are not adjacent to the main Campus, such as UH (University of Houston) Technology Bridge (formerly known as the Energy Research Park), UH at Sugar Land, and UH at Katy.

- B. Contract: A legal instrument reflecting a relationship between the federal government and a recipient whenever the principal purpose of the instrument is the acquisition by purchase, lease, or barter, of property or services for the direct benefit or use of the federal government; or whenever an executive agency determines in a specific instance that the use of a type of procurement contract is appropriate.
- C. Controlled Substance: A controlled substance in schedules I through V of section 202 of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812), as further defined by regulations at 21 CFR 1300.01 through 1300.05, and as defined in the Texas Controlled Substances Act (Texas Health & Safety Code § 481.001 et seq.).
- D. Conviction: A finding of guilt (including a plea of nolo contendere) or imposition of sentence, or both, by any judicial body charged with the responsibility to determine violations of the federal or state criminal drug statutes.
- E. Criminal drug statute: A federal or state criminal statute involving the manufacture, sale, distribution, dispensation, use, or possession of any controlled substance.
- F. Employee: An individual receiving a salary, wages, other compensation and/or stipend support from the University.
- G. Federal agency: Any United States executive department, military department, government corporation, government-controlled corporation, or any other establishment in the executive branch (including the Executive Office of the President), or any independent regulatory agency.
- H. Grant: An award of financial assistance, including a cooperative agreement, in the form of money, or property in lieu of money, by a federal agency directly to a grantee. The term grant includes block grant and entitlement grant programs, whether or not exempted from coverage under the grants management government wide regulation (“Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments”). The term does not include technical assistance that provides services instead of money, or other assistance in the form of loans, loan guarantees, interest subsidies, insurance, or direct appropriations; or any veterans’ benefits to individuals, i.e., any benefit to veterans, their families, or survivors by virtue of the service of a veteran in the Armed Forces of the United States.
- I. Grantee: A legal entity that applies for or receives a grant or contract directly from a federal agency.
- J. Student: A person who (a) is currently enrolled at the University; (b) is accepted for admission or readmission to the University; (c) has been enrolled at the University in a prior semester or summer term and is eligible to continue enrollment in the semester or summer term that immediately follows; or (d) is attending an additional program sponsored by the University while that person is on Campus.
- K. Substance Use Disorder: A disease that affects a person’s brain and behavior and leads to an inability to control the use of a legal or illegal drug or medicine.
- L. University activity: An activity officially sponsored by the University.
- M. University community: University students, faculty and staff employees, affiliates, contractors, and visitors.

- N. Workplace: The physical boundaries of the University and facilities owned or controlled by the University or alternative approved workplace.

IV. SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER PREVENTION PROGRAM

For additional information, including a summary of state law, resources for assistance, and educational guidelines or programming, contact the Center for Student Involvement, the Student Centers Conference & Reservation Services Office, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), UH Wellness, or the Dean of Students Office.

A. Standards of Conduct

1. No student or employee may unlawfully possess, use, sell, market, manufacture, or distribute an illicit drug or alcohol in the Workplace, on the Campus, and at any off-campus University activity, including all buildings, vehicles, grounds, sidewalks, and parking areas owned and/or operated by the University.
2. Alcohol possession, use, sale, marketing, or distribution may be permitted in the Workplace, on the Campus, and at any off-campus University activity only if it complies with the University's [Alcohol Policy](#).

B. Health Risks Associated with Substance Use Disorder

Any prolonged drug or alcohol use can lead to physical health issues as well as mental health impacts, including long-term dependency. Outlined below is a list of drugs and their health risks taken from the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration website. A more complete and detailed accounting may be found on their website at <https://www.dea.gov/factsheets/>.

1. Alcohol. Excessive alcohol (including beer, wine, or liquor) has a potential for health effects including alcohol use disorders, also known as alcoholism or alcohol dependence. Short-term health effects include impaired brain and motor function, decrease in body temperature, injuries such as motor vehicle crashes, violence, and risky sexual behaviors. Long-term health effects include harm to fetus for women who consume alcohol while pregnant, chronic diseases such as liver cirrhosis and cancers, and alcohol use disorders. Alcohol overdose can result in coma and death. Alcohol withdrawal may include sweating, increased heart rate, increased hand tremor, insomnia, nausea or vomiting, transient hallucinations, psychomotor agitation, anxiety, and grand mal seizures. Severe cases of alcohol withdrawal can lead to delirium tremens, with a risk of death.
2. Narcotics/Opioids. Narcotics/Opioids (including heroin, morphine, hydrocodone, oxycodone, codeine, fentanyl, and others) have a potential for both physical and psychological dependence. The possible effects of using narcotics/opioids include pain relief, drowsiness, respiratory depression, constricted pupils, and nausea. Overdose may result in slowed breathing, clammy skin, convulsions, extreme drowsiness, and death. Withdrawal may include irritability, tremors, severe depression, nausea, chills, and sweating.
3. Other Depressants. Other depressants (including Valium, Xanax, Ambien, and barbiturates) have a potential for both physical and psychological dependence as well as tolerance. The possible effects include anxiety relief, slurred speech, impaired mental functioning, loss of motor coordination, and impaired memory.

Overdose may result in coma and possible death. Withdrawal may be life threatening.

4. Stimulants. Stimulants (including Adderall, cocaine, methamphetamine, and methylphenidate) have a potential for rapidly developed tolerance and psychological dependence. The possible side effects include a euphoric “rush,” extended wakefulness, decreased appetite, agitation, panic, flushed skin, and palpitations. Overdose may result in high fever, convulsions, cardiovascular collapse, and possible death. Withdrawal may result in depression, anxiety, and extreme fatigue.
5. Hallucinogens. Hallucinogens come in a variety of forms (including MDMA or liquid ecstasy, LSD, psilocybin-containing mushrooms, and others) and may have limited effects on the body including elevated heart rate, dilated pupils and often vomiting. Possible effects on the mind include perceptual distortion and after weeks or months users may develop Hallucinogen Persisting Perception Disorder (HPPD). Overdose may result in fear, paranoia, respiratory depression and death due to respiratory arrest.
6. Cannabis. Cannabis includes marijuana, tetrahydrocannabinol (THC), and hashish or hashish oil. All may result in short and long-term effects on the mind and body. Possible effects include but are not limited to disinhibition, increased appetite, disorientation, and enhanced sensory perception. Withdrawal may occasionally result in sleep difficulties, irritability, and decreased appetite.
7. Anabolic Steroids. Anabolic Steroids (including testosterone and others) may result in psychological dependence. A wide range of adverse effects on the body depend on several factors including age, sex, the anabolic steroid used, amount used and duration of use. Possible effects may include virilization, fluid retention, shrinkage of the testicles, acne, and increase risk of coronary artery disease, strokes and heart attacks. Effects of overdose are unknown. Withdrawal may possibly include depression.
8. Inhalants. Inhalants are substances common in household products that produce chemical vapors that can be inhaled to induce psychoactive effects. They are abused by sniffing, bagging or huffing, and possible effects may include damage to parts of the brain, headache, impaired memory, slurred speech, lack of coordination and organ damage. There is a common link between inhalant use and problems in school. Overdose may result in loss of consciousness, asphyxiation and possible death. Withdrawal may result in agitation, trembling, anxiety, insomnia, vitamin deficiency, confusion, hallucinations, and convulsions.

C. Assistance Programs for Substance Use Disorder

1. Information and Referral. All members of the University community are eligible to consult with professional staff of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) regarding referrals for substance use treatment and recovery support groups. University faculty and staff are also encouraged to consult with their Employee Assistance Program for additional referrals or treatment options.
2. Individual Counseling. Currently enrolled students can be seen for short-term counseling and crisis intervention for assistance with substance use problems. However, CAPS will make a referral for long-term substance use and detox.

Faculty and staff are eligible for an initial consultation and referral for such services. CAPS can be reached at (713) 743-5454.

3. Cougars in Recovery. Cougars in Recovery provides a myriad of programs and services to help students succeed at the University. CIR is an abstinence-based collegiate recovery community (students only). There are three main components to the program, which include Community Check-In (peer-to-peer process groups), community member 24-hour drop-in center (the lounge), and CIR Recovery Townhouse Living Learning Community. Additionally, CIR provides social substance-free activities through recovery tailgating, an outdoor adventure learning experience each semester, monthly community gatherings, and twenty-four hour access to the CIR Group Me. CIR is located in Moody Towers room 103 and can be reached at (713) 743-1026 if you are in need of assistance. More information can also be found at: <http://www.uh.edu/cir/>.
4. Psycho-Educational Programs. On a periodic basis, workshops focusing on the development of strengths and skills related to the effective management of substance related problem areas are offered by Counseling and Psychological Service and UH Wellness. These programs are open to University of Houston students, faculty and staff at no charge. UH Wellness conducts one-on-one facilitated conversations around alcohol and drug use through BASICS (Brief Alcohol Screening in College Students), along with CASICS (Cannabis Screening and Intervention for College Students). These programs may be accessed voluntarily or be required through a disciplinary action. UH Wellness also offers a state approved Alcohol Education Course for Minors in Possession available to students who receive a court ordered citation or referrals from the Dean of Students Office or other campus departments. UH Wellness can be reached at (713) 743-5420, and more information can be found at: <http://www.uh.edu/wellness/>.
5. Student Health Center and Campus Pharmacy. The University community can visit the Student Health Center and Campus Pharmacy and speak with medical professionals about any drug and alcohol questions in a safe and friendly environment. Appointments can be made online (<http://www.uh.edu/healthcenter/>) or via a walk-in. The Student Health Center and Campus Pharmacy can be reached at (713) 743-5151.
6. UH Health Family Care Center (FCC). The University community can visit the FCC and ask medical and behavioral health professionals questions about drugs and alcohol in a safe and friendly environment. Appointments can be made by calling [\(832\) 842-2737](tel:8328422737).
7. Student Organizations. Individuals can be assisted in forming groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and Alanon. If you are interested in starting a new student organization and want to understand the registration process, please reach out to the Center for Student Involvement at (832) 842-6245.
8. The Council on Recovery. This community resource offers short-term counseling for anyone affected in any way by a substance use disorder. Trained substance use disorder counselors can help select a 12-step oriented program and/or appropriate treatment. Their address is 303 Jackson Hill St, (713) 942-4100.

9. Employee Assistance Program. Through the EAP, benefits-eligible employees and their dependents can access free, convenient and confidential short-term counseling services and/or referrals for all types of concerns including: Alcohol/Drug Problems, Stress and Anxiety, Depression, Parenting and Family Concerns, Couples and Relationship Issues, Grief or Bereavement, Anger Management, Change and Life Transitions, Work Conflicts, Communication Skills and more. Included in the program are a number of Work/Balance resources including telephonic and web-based resources, newsletters, trainings, self-assessments and online webinars. Topics addressed through these resources include Legal and Financial Assistance, Stress Management, Coping, Self-Improvement, Child and Elderly Care, and Identity Theft, among others. To learn more, please visit <https://www.uh.edu/human-resources/PowerUP-Wellness/EAP/>.
10. Mental Health Benefits. Through the University's insurance carrier, confidential counseling and other support resources are available, including Learn to Live, an online, on-demand, self-paced mental health service grounded in cognitive behavioral therapy.

D. Possible Legal Sanctions

1. Students and employees should be aware that there are penalties under federal and state law for drug- and alcohol-related offenses. For more information on the range of penalties, refer to https://www.uh.edu/wellness/programs/alcohol-and-other-drugs/biennial-review/_files/drugpenalties20231.pdf
2. The Texas Medical Amnesty Law (911 Lifeline law) provides immunity from criminal prosecution for consumption or possession of alcohol by a minor for those seeking assistance in response to an alcohol-related emergency.

E. University Sanctions for Non-Compliance

1. Employee. Any employee admitting to or convicted of the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs or alcohol on Campus, in the performance of their job duties or at an off-campus University activity, will be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including termination of employment).
 - a. The employee may be referred for prosecution and may be required to satisfactorily participate in a drug and alcohol assistance or rehabilitation program, as agreed upon between the employee and Human Resources.
 - b. Further information concerning employee penalties is available from Human Resources. Employees can contact the HR (Human Resources) Employee Service Center at (713) 743-3988.
2. Student. Any student admitting to or found in violation of the University of Houston's Student Code of Conduct regarding the unlawful possession, use or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on Campus or at an off-campus University activity (see Student Disciplinary Policies and Procedures Section) shall be subject to disciplinary action (up to and including expulsion).
 - a. Amnesty for Medical Emergencies. In some cases, students can avoid formal University disciplinary action and the creation of a formal disciplinary record when they call UHPD or EMS to report an alcohol- or drug-related medical

emergency (such as alcohol poisoning or drug overdose) for themselves or for another student. The purpose of amnesty is to create a safe path to services for students who experience medical emergencies or negative consequences because of their substance use. In the following cases, amnesty may apply:

- Possession of alcohol or drugs by a minor
- Unauthorized possession or use of alcohol or drugs on Campus
- Consumption of alcohol by a minor
- Use of Alcohol and/or substances
- Intoxication as a result of using alcohol or drugs

If a student seeks help for their own alcohol- or drug-related medical emergency and brings it to the attention of the University prior to any conduct incidents or reports, the amnesty policy still applies.

- b. Further information concerning student penalties and amnesty for medical emergencies is available from the Dean of Students Office at (832) 842-6183.

V. PROCEDURES

Implementation of this policy is a joint responsibility of Human Resources, the Office of the Provost, the Division of Research, the Police Department, the Office of Financial Aid and the Division of Student Affairs.

A. Notification Requirements

1. This policy, including information about the health risks and sanctions for violation of the policy, will be provided annually to students and employees.
2. Each employee will be notified that, as a condition of employment on a federal grant or contract, the employee must abide by the terms of the policy and must notify the employee's supervisor and Human Resources of any criminal drug statute conviction for a violation occurring in the Workplace no later than five (5) days after such conviction.
3. The appropriate federal agency will be notified within ten (10) days after the University receives notice of a criminal drug statute conviction of any employee engaged in performance of the grant or contract.

- B. Biennial Review. A biennial review of this policy will be undertaken by a committee every two years to determine its effectiveness and implement any necessary changes to the policy and its programs and to ensure that its disciplinary standards are consistently enforced. Committee members are the following:

1. Vice President for Student Affairs;
2. Associate Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students;
3. Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs – Health and Well-Being;
4. Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs – Student Housing and Residential Life;
5. Director of UH Wellness and Health Promotion;
6. Director of Counseling and Psychological Services;
7. Associate Vice President of Human Resources;
8. Deputy General Counsel; and
9. Chief of Police

VI. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Parties: Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs – Health and Well-Being
Associate Vice President, Human Resources

Review: Every two years

VII. APPROVAL

Approved: /Paul Kittle/
Vice President for Student Affairs

/Raymond Bartlett/
Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

/Renu Khator/
President

Date: January 20, 2026

VIII. REFERENCES

[41 U.S.C. Chapter 81](#) – Drug-Free Workplace

[34 CFR Part 86](#) – Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention

[National Institute on Drug Abuse](#) website

[DEA Factsheet](#)

[Alcohol Policy](#)

[Student Code of Conduct](#)