

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK
GALVESTON HOUSING AUTHORITY
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SUBSTANCE ABUSE

ALCOHOL & DRUG POLICY

The GHA is a drug-free and alcohol-free workplace. The Authority takes seriously the safety, health, and well-being of all of its employees, as well as the quality and integrity of the services we offer. Violation of this policy will lead to discipline, up to and including termination of employment.

Alcohol - The use, sale, purchase, transfer, possession, consumption or being under the influence of alcohol while performing Authority business or while in an Authority facility is strictly prohibited. Individuals who are impaired or appear to be impaired will be tested for alcohol usage. If an employee tests positive, he or she will be removed from the workplace and terminated.

Legal - An employee's use of a legal drug can pose a significant risk to the safety of the employee or others. Employees who feel or have been informed that the use of such a drug may present a safety risk are to report such drug use to their supervisor. An employee undergoing prescribed medical treatment with any drug that may alter his/her physical or mental ability must report this to the supervisor, who will determine whether the employee's job assignment should be changed during the period of treatment. The legal use of prescribed medications is permitted on the job only if it does not impair an employee's ability to perform his or her work effectively and in a manner that does not endanger themselves or others. Misuse of prescribed drugs will be dealt with as if the employee were taking illegal drugs.

Illegal Drugs - It is strictly prohibited for an employee to use, sell, purchase, transfer, possess, or be under the influence of an illegal or illegally obtained drug while in a GHA facility or while performing GHA business. Additionally, off-duty involvement with illegal drugs that interferes with job performance or in some way affects GHA is strictly prohibited. Individuals who are impaired or appear to be impaired will be tested for drug usage. If an employee tests positive, he or she will be removed from the workplace and terminated.

Testing – GHA reserves the right to test employees for alcohol or drug use including, but not limited to, the following situations: where a supervisor reasonably suspects that an employee is showing signs of possible alcohol/drug abuse and/or it is required by law. If an employee is involved in an accident while on GHA time or with a GHA vehicle, the employee will be subject to post-accident alcohol/drug testing. An employee's refusal to consent or failure to appear for such test will be considered an automatic positive result and will result in termination.

Pre-Employment Drug Screening -The GHA maintains pre-employment screening practices designed to prevent the hiring of individuals who use illegal drugs or individuals whose use of legal drugs or alcohol indicates a potential for impaired or unsafe job performance. All individuals receiving conditional offers of employment will be subject to drug screening. A prospective employee's consent to submit to drug testing is a material condition of employment. Refusal to consent will result in a refusal to hire. Employment is conditional upon satisfactory results; a positive reading shall be cause for the Authority to deny employment.

Confidentiality - In all cases, substance abuse testing will be conducted with due regard for employee privacy to ensure the integrity of test results. All medical records pertaining to drug screening are protected by the Authority and will be kept in separate files in the Human Resources Department. Information concerning drug-screening procedures and results involving employees will be revealed only on a need-to-know basis to protect employee safety and Authority property.

Employees with questions or concerns about substance dependency or abuse are encouraged to discuss these matters with their supervisor or the Human Resources Department.

If a current employee requests assistance prior to testing, he or she will be given assistance or referrals to appropriate resources in the community. It will be the responsibility of the employee to comply with any referrals for diagnosis and to fully cooperate with prescribed therapy. An employee's failure to fully cooperate in this regard shall be grounds for disciplinary action, including discharge, when such failure or noncompliance continues to adversely affect job performance.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)

The Authority offers referrals to an Employee Assistance Program ("EAP") to educate and assist all employees with alcohol abuse, drug and substance abuse, addiction, stress, depression, illness and other personal difficulties. The terms and benefits of the EAP may change at any time in accordance with the contracted EAP provider.

This voluntary program is designed to assist drug and alcohol related problems prior to being identified as using, or disciplined for being under the influence of drugs and alcohol. At the discretion of Human Resources, in most cases, voluntary enrollment in a rehabilitative program will not result in suspension or disciplinary action. Voluntary participation in any program does not relieve the employee from meeting work requirements.

Employees who are referred to a program because of work performance, behavior or work-related issues due to substance abuse are subject to dismissal for refusal to enter or failure to successfully complete the program or failure to improve his/her performance, behavior.

Employees will be allowed one opportunity to complete a program and improve performance. Should the employee fail to abide by the last chance agreement, Human Resources will recommend that the employment be terminated. The GHA abides by all applicable laws regarding confidentiality.

Contact information for the EAP may be obtained confidentially in the Human Resources Department.