

ZWIĄZEK HARCERSTWA POLSKIEGO ZARZĄD OKRĘGU w WIELKIEJ BRYTANII POLISH SCOUTING ASSOCIATION (UK Region) Ltd.

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DRUGS AND OTHER SUBSTANCES POLICY

1. Rationale

It is the aim of the Polish Scouting Association (UK Region) (PSA UK Region) to help all members to be able to take their place safely in a world where a wide range of drugs exists. We recognise that some drugs have beneficial effects, but also that every drug has potential to harm. For this reason, all drugs need appropriate and responsible care and management. In order to be able to make informed choices, leaders and members need to understand the nature of drugs, their social and legal status, their uses and effects.

2. Aims:

- To support the PSA UK Region's endeavour to maintain the safety and well-being of all members, participants, volunteers and employees.
- To clarify legal responsibilities, entitlements and obligations.
- To support all the members, participants, volunteers and employees of PSA UK Region by providing clear guidance and procedures on drug related issues to ensure clarity and consistency.

3. Key roles and responsibilities

The Board Safeguarding Lead or their nominated person is responsible for drug related issues within PSA UK Region.

4. Inclusive definition of drugs

PSA UK Region defines a drug as a substance which, when taken into the body, changes the way we feel, the way we perceive things, and the way our body works. This definition includes illegal substances and also legal substances such as alcohol, tobacco, solvents and medicines.

5. Managing drug related incidents: routine arrangements

- **Medicines – prescribed and over the counter**
Each unit/camp will have their own policy/procedure for the administration of prescribed and over the counter medicines that must be followed for everyone's safety.
- **Alcohol**
Consumption of alcohol during PSA UK Region activities/camps is strictly forbidden. Members/participants/volunteers/employees under the effects of alcohol will be asked to leave the premises for the safety of all those involved. If found with alcohol during activities/camps even if not found to be under the influence, the leader in charge reserves the right to confiscate the items and/or ask the individual to leave. However, this will be up to the discretion of the person in charge. The parent/guardian of those under 18 will be informed.



- **Tobacco**

Meeting places and camps are no smoking sites - indoors and outdoors, including vehicles being used for PSA UK Region purposes - at all times. Members, participants and volunteers are not permitted to bring to meetings/camps smoking materials. In the interests of health and safety, should a participant be found in possession of any of these on premises used for PSA UK Region activities or during PSA UK Region activities, they will be confiscated. The parent/guardian of those under 18 will be informed. (Note: matches and lighters can only be brought for scouting activities e.g.: kitchen use, campfires).

- **Solvents (including but not limited to Vaping Products)**

The organisation will ensure that potentially hazardous substances are stored safely, and members will be supervised if it is necessary that they come into contact with such substances in the course of their activities. All participating in PSA UK Region activities are not permitted to be in possession of solvent based products (for example but not exclusively vaping products). In the interests of health and safety, should a participant be found in possession of any of these on premises used for PSA UK Region activities or during PSA UK Region activities, they will be confiscated. The parent/guardian of those under 18 will be informed.

- **Illegal drugs**

No illegal drugs are permitted to be brought on to or used on PSA UK Region premises or during PSA UK Region activities. Those found during activities/camps to be under the influence will be asked to leave the premises. The parent/guardian of those under 18, will be informed.

6. Incidents

A drug related incident may include any of the following:

- A member, participant or volunteer who is suspected of being under the influence of a drug/substance.
- Finding drugs, solvents, substances or related paraphernalia on PSA UK Region premises and or during PSA UK Region activities.
- Possession of drugs, solvents, substances by an individual on PSA UK Region premises/during PSA UK Region activities.
- Use of drugs, solvents, substances by an individual during PSA UK Region activities/PSA UK Region premises.
- Supply of drugs, solvents, substances on PSA UK Region premises/during PSA UK Region activities.
- Individuals disclosing information about their drug, solvent, substance use.
- Rumours of drug possession supply or drug use.
- Reports of drug, solvent, substance possession supply or drug, solvent, substance use.

7. Guiding principles

- Drug related incidents **must be reported to a member of the Safeguarding team immediately**. The Safeguarding Lead will designate a lead supporter to the event leadership team (komenda), offering sources of support and liaising with outside agencies.
- Incidents will be dealt with after making an assessment of the situation and must be reported to the Regional Commissioner (Hufiec) and passed on to the PSA UK Region Scout or Guide Commissioner (Komendanci Choragwi).
- Appropriate support will be offered to those with substance misuse problems.
- Evidence of drug use or possession may result in exclusion.

- PSA UK Region will always seek to respond appropriately to each individual case by selecting from a range of possible responses, that which is most appropriate.

8. Procedures

- **Medical emergencies**

If an individual is unconscious, is having trouble breathing, is seriously confused or disorientated, has taken a harmful toxic substance or is otherwise at risk of immediate harm, medical help must be sought and first aid given as required. The priority will be the individual's safety.

- **Individuals in possession of drugs**

If any member, participant or volunteer on PSA UK Region premises/during PSA UK Region activities is found in possession of an unauthorised drug it will be confiscated. If the drug is suspected to be illegal, the leader of the activity/camp will contact the police and immediately hand over the drug. The substance must be handed to the police as soon as possible and not stored for any longer than is necessary. Talking with an individual about a drug related incident will have as its purpose to confirm or reject suspicions or allegations, rather than to conduct a wider investigation. All notes of conversations about such incidents must be fully documented. Parents/guardians of members under 18 will be informed and other professionals from the Police and Social Service etc. may be informed or consulted as appropriate. The leader in charge reserves the right to ask them to leave the activity/camp after the police have been informed and have attended to seize possession of the item. It should be noted that possession of an illegal drug would leave the person responsible liable to arrest and criminal prosecution.

- **Support for members**

Following actions to preserve immediate safety, the health and emotional needs of members, participants and volunteers will be considered. Support is available through the pastoral system to ensure a caring response to members in distress. Interventions will be considered if PSA UK Region feels an individual is showing signs which indicate particular risks of, or from, involvement with drugs, whether their own or that of their parent or carer. Such interventions may include consultation and subsequent referral to the relevant authorities.

- **Recording**

All incidents will be recorded within 24 hours. Forms will be submitted to the PSA UK Region Safeguarding Lead and stored securely as per PSA UK Region's document retention policy.

9. Legal Consequences

- **Drugs**

Illegal drugs fall into 3 categories:

Class A drugs – e.g. Crack cocaine, ecstasy, heroin, LSD etc.

Class B drugs – e.g. Cannabis, ketamine, amphetamines etc.

Class C drugs – e.g. Anabolic steroids, GHB, khat etc.

Potential offences under Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971:

- possession of a controlled substance
- possession with intent to supply
- supply of a controlled substance

Technically speaking if an individual is in possession of a controlled drug and they intend to share it with other members of their group then they would be in possession with intent to supply or even actually supplying a controlled substance leading to far stricter penalties than straight forward possession.

- **Alcohol**

It is an offence for a person over 18 to purchase or attempt to purchase alcohol for a person under 18 (save for in a licenced premises if the person is 16 or 17 and with a meal at a table).

- **CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS/CAUTIONS** – certain countries e.g. USA will not allow entry to persons who have been subject to a criminal caution or conviction. This would prevent members, participants and leaders from attending certain overseas events.

10. Confidentiality

Complete confidentiality can never be promised to an individual, though information given in confidence will only be disclosed to anyone else in the interests of Child Protection. If a member, participant or volunteer discloses that they are using a drug without medical authorisation, action will be taken to ensure that the individual comes to no serious harm if this is considered a significant risk. Leaders have a commitment to inform the individual in advance of any disclosure of information to others and if possible, enable the individual to be involved in the process. Leaders are committed to protect a young person's anonymity where their disclosure may implicate others. Regarding disclosures leaders need to carefully define and communicate the boundaries of confidentiality offered.

For more information

[*http://www.talktofrank.com/worried-about-a-friend*](http://www.talktofrank.com/worried-about-a-friend)

[*http://www.talktofrank.com/need-support*](http://www.talktofrank.com/need-support)

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