

OFFICE MANUAL, SECTION 6
DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

(01753) 530836

www.robertwalpole.co.uk

CONTENTS

KEY	3
REVISION TABLE	3
1. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY STATEMENT	4
2. ALCOHOL	5
3. DRUGS	5
4. TESTING	6
4.1. Unannounced testing	6
4.2. 'For cause' testing	6
4.3. Sentinel Sponsorship	7
4.4. Point of Contact Testing (POCT)	7
4.5. Test Refusal	7
5. INVESTIGATIONS AND RIGHT TO APPEAL	8
6. RECORDS	8
7. SYMPTOMS OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL MISUSE/ABUSE	8

KEY

[A30] = Electronic Folder Reference

REVISION TABLE

Revision	Date	Comments
1	27/05/2015	-
2	19/05/2017	Update to include details of 'for cause' testing
3	03/07/2020	Section on records keeping added
4	14/07/2022	Update to Table 2 and section 4; section 7 added
5	12/07/2023	Updated NR standard references; updated percentage in section 4.1, updated section 4.2, updated durations in section 6
6	02/07/2025	Update to sections 1, 3, 4.1, 4.3, 5, 7 and Tables 1 and 2. New section 4.4.
7	06/07/2026	Minor rewording in section 4.1, renamed section 4.3, new section 4.5

1. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY STATEMENT

Being under the influence of alcohol or drugs can seriously impair an individual's judgement and reactions leading to an increased risk of accidents and injuries occurring.

Robert Walpole and Partners has a zero-tolerance policy on the misuse of alcohol or drugs by all employees. This is based on the safety risks and on our obligations under the Transport and Works Act 1992 as well as relevant industry standards and guidance (in particular Network Rail Drugs, alcohol and substance misuse in the workplace NR/L2/OHS/00120, LU Alcohol and Work standard S1251, LU Drugs and Work standard S1257).

The policy sets strict limits and any individual in any part of the business, no matter what sort of work they do, found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs while at work will be subject to disciplinary action. Normally this results in dismissal. The policy covers 'over the counter' and prescription medication as well as illegal drugs.

All temporary staff, agency workers, and subcontractors must comply with this policy when working on behalf of Robert Walpole and Partners. Breaches may result in immediate removal from site and notification to their employer.

We aim to foster a culture of openness and support while ensuring the highest standards of safety. Staff experiencing difficulties with substance misuse are encouraged to seek support proactively.

The Drugs and Alcohol Policy Statement will be reviewed annually by the partners and revised as circumstances require. All staff will be briefed on this policy statement.

Signed: _____



M.J. Walpole
Partner

Date: 2026-07-06

2. ALCOHOL

Robert Walpole and Partners (RWP) has decided that to minimise any safety risks to customers and employees, it will have a ZERO alcohol policy. All employees must meet following requirements:

- a) No alcohol consumption whilst on duty or during breaks in the working day even if the meal break is spent away from company premises.
- b) Limit alcohol consumption whilst off duty to ensure that they are not under the influence of alcohol in any way when reporting for duty or carrying out work for the company.

Follow guidance in Table 1 to ensure starting work with zero alcohol blood level.

Table 1: ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION GUIDANCE

16-8 hours before starting work	8 hours before starting work	8 hours of work
Maximum 7 units consumption*	Zero consumption	Zero consumption
* Due to individual differences in alcohol metabolism, all employees are encouraged to abstain from alcohol the evening before work to ensure they report with a zero-alcohol level. The 7-unit guideline is indicative only and not a guarantee of compliance.		

3. DRUGS

Drugs may cause drowsiness and impair performance. Robert Walpole and Partners will not allow staff to work if they are or appear to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Staff can face dismissal and loss of pay.

Any member of staff taking prescribed drugs that may affect their working day should inform the RWP Safety Officer as soon as possible to enable an individual risk assessment. 'Fitness For Work' form found in Health and Safety policy can be used for this purpose. The disclosure is confidential and will be followed by advice, guidance or instruction on any restrictions based on the medication as well as medical fitness issues. This will not result in disciplinary action unless there is a failure to manage or report safety-related impairments.

Employees who voluntarily disclose a substance misuse issue before testing or incidents occur will be supported where possible, including signposting to external services such as their GP or relevant support charities.

Table 2: DRUGS CONSUMPTION GUIDANCE

Illegal drugs	Absolute prohibition (examples include Amphetamines, Benzodiazepines, Cannabis, Cocaine, Ketamine, MDMA known as ecstasy, Methadone, Opiates and Tramadol)
Prescribed or 'over the counter' drugs	Staff to ask doctor or chemist if they are taking any medication which affects their ability to work safely and advise Safety Officer

4. TESTING

4.1. Unannounced testing

Compliance with this policy will be monitored via unannounced testing of urine and breath on a selected sample of employees, who will not be informed in advance. This will be undertaken at work location(s) during the course of employees' duties. No less than 20% of a random sample of the workforce engaged in safety critical work (as defined by [ROGS 2006](#)), work requiring Personal Track Safety (PTS) certification, or work that is designated as a key safety post will be tested annually [A30]. Calculation of number of employees to be tested will be based on maximum number of relevant employees over the 12 months prior to date of the test.

All testing of any kind will be in accordance with relevant industry standards.

4.2. 'For cause' testing

Additional requirements for drugs and alcohol testing might be specified following an accident or incident, or if a staff member is suspected of being under the influence of drugs or alcohol whilst working. This is called 'For cause' testing and also applies to employees working from home. Examples of incidents where 'For cause' testing is recommended includes:

- any accident which results in the death or injury to a person, unless suicide, attempted suicide or trespass is suspected.
- derailment on a running line, or obstruction of a running line.
- train collision.
- serious possession irregularity leading to safety of the line being compromised.
- a safety critical duty holder fails to perform a duty in line with process or procedure.
- the potential to cause a serious incident/accident, such as a near miss.
- miscommunication leading to the safety of the line being compromised.

RWP employs the following organisation to undertake 'For cause' testing:

Express Medicals, 8 City Business Centre, Lower Road, London, SE16 2XB

Phone: **020 7394 8057** (24 hour 'For cause' hotline)

Alternate numbers only to be used if main line is down: 0771 433 5030,
07973 681315.

To request 'For cause' testing the 24 hour hotline above should be used, providing the name of our company, type of test (e.g. LUL, NR, Crossrail), on-site contact details and the address of the request.

4.3. Sentinel Sponsorship

Where required a pre-sponsorship drugs and alcohol screening will be completed by the Approved Medical Provider as described in Sentinel Scheme Rules.

In accordance with Network Rail standards, any individual returning a positive drugs or alcohol test, or who refuses a test, will have their profile on Sentinel database suspended for a period of five years. They will not be permitted to undertake safety critical work or work which requires PTS certification during this period.

Workers have the right to appeal against a positive test result as outlined within Network Rail standard NR/L2/OHS/00120.

4.4. Point of Contact Testing (POCT)

Robert Walpole and Partners may utilise Point of Contact Testing (POCT) for drugs and alcohol screening. POCT enables immediate, on-site screening using devices that can quickly detect the presence of substances in the body. The aim is to identify whether an individual is fit for duty without delay.

A non-negative POCT result will be treated as an initial screening only and must be followed by a confirmatory laboratory test. No disciplinary decisions will be based solely on a POCT result. All confirmatory tests will be conducted by a UKAS accredited laboratory, and results will be interpreted in line with industry guidelines and medical advice.

4.5. Test Refusal

Refusal to attend for a test or refusal to provide a sample for testing shall be treated as a breach of this policy and will be reported as a positive test result.

5. INVESTIGATIONS AND RIGHT TO APPEAL

Any positive drugs or alcohol test results will be investigated by business partner(s) in line with Robert Walpole and Partners' Disciplinary and Grievance Process (part 13 of our Office Manual). This will include but is not limited to:

- a) Seeking assurance from the testing provider that all applicable procedures were properly followed.
- b) Seeking advice on the most appropriate course of action from our Health and Safety advisor or other external experts.
- c) Conduct interview with the affected employee to understand the underlying causes.

On completion of the investigation process, a decision on employment outcomes will be made by business partner(s).

Employees have a right to appeal positive test results if they believe that the test result is incorrect. Robert Walpole and Partners' Disciplinary and Grievance Process (part 13 of our Office Manual) will be followed.

6. RECORDS

All records will be stored and managed in accordance with our Data Protection Policy. All test records will be held on file for a minimum of 6 years and for the duration of employment of the worker.

7. SYMPTOMS OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL MISUSE/ABUSE

Drugs and alcohol can affect different people in different ways. If someone is misusing alcohol or drugs, they may display some of the following symptoms:

- a) **Behavioural:** moodiness, aggressiveness, memory confusion, poor attention level, inappropriate responses to questions, irritability, sudden temper tantrums, or resentful behaviour.
- b) **Physical signs:** cold, sweaty palms, tremors; slurred speech; puffy face, blushing or paleness; red, watery eyes, pupils larger or smaller than usual, blank stare; smell of substance on breath, body or clothes; sucking on mints, using mouth wash, spraying aftershave/perfume or drinking large quantities of water or other liquids; extreme hyperactivity; excessive talkativeness; nausea, vomiting or excessive sweating; slowed or staggering walk; poor physical co-ordination; sleepiness.

- c) **Work related:** absenteeism, both through sickness, last minute requests for annual leave, lateness and unauthorised absence; accident proneness, increased incidence of mistakes or errors of judgement (in particular in relation to time and distance); deterioration in relationships with colleagues, management or clients; dishonesty and theft; overconfidence; reduced productivity.