

TOBACCO, DRUG AND ALCOHOL-FREE POLICY

Our Service is committed to creating and maintaining environments that promote the safety of all children, educators and visitors. We believe in maintaining a healthy, safe and productive workplace environment that reduces risks and hazards associated with the use of drugs and alcohol for educators, children and visitors.

EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS	
82	Tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment
83	Staff members and family day care educators not to be affected by alcohol or drugs
84	Awareness of child protection law
155	Interactions with children
168	Education and care services must have policies and procedures
170	Policies and procedures are to be followed
190	Infringement offences

PURPOSE

The Nightcliff Family Centre provides a tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment at all times. Children are educated and cared for in accordance with Education and Care National Law and Regulations and workplace health and safety legislation. The use of alcohol and/or other drugs has the ability to impact on the quality and standard of care educators can provide, their safety at work, and safety of children in the care of the Centre.

Research provides evidence that exposure to tobacco smoke poses major health risks to both children and adults. Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to the poisons of second-hand smoke because their bodies are developing. Effects of passive smoking include Sudden unexpected death in

infancy (SUDI) asthma, infections and conditions include croup, bronchitis and the increased likelihood of childhood asthma. (*Red Nose, 2020*).

Working in line with the *Code of Conduct Policy* and *Work Health and Safety Policy* this policy sets out expectations for all employees, engaged educators, volunteers, and visitors regarding what is and what is not acceptable behaviour and practice in relation to alcohol and drug use and provides procedures which outline how to deal with impaired people, employees, volunteers and visitors, at the FDC Service residence or approved venue.

SCOPE

This policy applies to the educators, educator assistants, children, families, approved provider, nominated supervisor, coordinator, students, volunteers, and visitors to the Centre.

IMPLEMENTATION

The Education and Care Services National regulations state the approved provider must ensure the environment is free from the use of tobacco, illicit drugs and alcohol and ensure that educators, employees or volunteers at the Centre are not affected by alcohol or drugs (including prescription medication) so as to impair the person's capacity to supervise or provide education and care to children. All staff, educators, volunteers, and students will abide by this policy at all times.

DEFINITIONS

Alcohol

- The most commonly used depressant drug. It affects both mental and motor function. Examples include beer, wine, spirits.

Under the Influence

- A person who has taken drugs or alcohol that interferes with sound judgement and acceptable behaviour that may impair mental and physical ability to perform their duties safely.

Drugs

- **Illegal Drugs:** drugs such as cannabis, amphetamines, ecstasy, cocaine and heroin, are illegal. They are not subject to quality or price controls and the amount of active ingredient varies. A person using illegal drugs can never be sure of how strong the drug is, or what is actually in it.
- **Prescription Drugs:** Prescribed and over the counter medications can also be misused for the purposes of intoxication. Employees taking medication should find out how it may affect them by consulting their doctor and advising the nominated supervisor or responsible person

if the prescribed medication will affect their mental and physical ability to perform their duties safely.

- **Illicit Drugs:** Illicit drugs include-illegal drugs, prescription medicines that have been obtained illegally or are not being used for medicinal purposes and other substances that are being used inappropriately — for example, sniffing glue or inhaling paint thinner

E-Cigarettes (Vaping)

- Battery-powered devices called e-cigarettes are utilised to heat a liquid substance that generates a vapor, which is then inhaled, thus imitating the smoking process.

USE OF TOBACCO, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

- NFC supports the [Smoke Free Environment Act 2000](#). The company and its employees, engaged educators, and volunteers, will follow all conditions outlined in this Act.
- NFC is bound by the Education and Care Services National Regulations. Alcohol, drugs, or other substance abuse by employees can have serious adverse effects on their own health and the safety of others. As such whilst providing education and care to children, educators, coordinators and volunteers must not:
 - consume illegal drugs or alcohol
 - be under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol
 - use or possess illegal drugs at any workplace
 - drive a vehicle, having consumed alcohol or suffering from the effects of illegal substances.
- Smoking or vaping is NOT permitted in or on the surrounding areas of the Centre when care is taking place. (The smoking ban extends to an area of up to 5m around the land the service is approved to provide education and care).
- Educators must ensure that children being educated and cared for as part of the service remain in an environment that is free from tobacco, drugs and alcohol. This includes when transportation for regular outings or excursions is provided for children.
- It is expected that if educators do smoke, the odour of tobacco/e-cigarette smoke will not be detected on their clothing or hands and any items children may contact, is residue free (cigarette butts, ash, matches etc) are disposed of and stored away from children at all times.
- Consideration should be given to ventilation and hygiene within the residence or venue to ensure tobacco smoke is not detected.
- Smoking or vaping is NOT permitted while educators and staff are supervising or participating in excursions.

NFC educators, coordinators or volunteers undergoing prescribed medical treatment with a controlled substance that may affect the safe performance of their duties are required to report this to the nominated supervisor. A medical certificate may be required prior to their approval to provide education and care.

EXPECTATIONS OF THE APPROVED PROVIDER, COORDINATOR/NOMINATED SUPERVISOR

Management is expected to:

- take appropriate action if a breach of the *Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy* occurs
- advise new employees and volunteers on the service of the *Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol- Free Policy* during the induction process. Visitors will be advised of this policy through signage such as
 - 'No Smoking' signs clearly visible at the front entry of the Centre
 - signage reminding families and visitors that they should not enter the premises if they under the influence of prohibited drugs or alcohol.

REASONABLE BELIEF OR SUSPICION

If a coordinator/nominated supervisor suspects an educator or educator assistant to be affected by drugs or alcohol, they must inform the approved provider immediately. Educators will report any concerns they may have about inappropriate actions of any other educator or educator assistant that involves the use of drugs or alcohol to management. Any incidents or reports are to be documented confidentially including action taken which followed the incident or report.

Management will observe and document any reasonable suspicions that an educator is under the influence of drugs or alcohol, this may include:

- observe any smell of alcohol
- eye dilation or red/bloodshot eyes
- slurred speech
- unable to act in a professional manner
- emotions where the employee is argumentative, agitated, irritable or drowsy
- movements where the employee is unsteady or fidgety or
- other behaviours.

If the coordinator/nominated supervisor has reasonable grounds to believe that an educator is under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol, alternative emergency arrangements will be made for the education and care of children in their residence/venue. Disciplinary action may follow, which may

include termination of employment/engagement due to a breach of Service policy. A breach in the *Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy* may result in termination of employment/engagement, even for a first offence.

BREACH OF THE TOBACCO, DRUG AND ALCOHOL-FREE POLICY

All staff members, educators and coordinators are made fully aware that any breaches of the *Tobacco, Drug and Alcohol-Free Policy* and role responsibilities may lead to termination of employment or engagement including:

- providing education and care for children under the influence of alcohol or drugs
- possessing or selling drugs at the FDC residence or venue
- failure to follow policies and procedures.

WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY (WHS) LEGISLATION

Each state specifies Work Health and Safety Acts and Regulations which involves the management of risks to the health and safety of everyone in the workplace. This includes ensuring children, visitors and educators are provided with a tobacco, drug and alcohol-free environment.

NT: Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act 2011 and [Work Health and Safety \(National Uniform Legislation\) Regulations 2011](#)

REVIEW

POLICY REVIEWED BY	Hannah West	Chairperson	29/08/2025
POLICY REVIEWED	August 2025	NEXT REVIEW DATE	August 2026
MODIFICATIONS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flow and minor text edits • Updates to include vaping and excluding use of tobacco or vapes on excursions 		