



JUST SAYING “NO” TO DRUGS IS NOT ENOUGH

INFORMATION SHEETS FROM THE ALCOHOL AND GAMING COMMISSION OF ONTARIO



The Regulations under the *Liquor Licence Act* state that a liquor licence holder may not permit a person to “have, use, distribute or sell controlled substances in his or her establishment.” The *Controlled Drugs and Substances Act* regulates certain dangerous drugs and narcotics (now known as “controlled substances”). Possession of these substances without proper authorization can result in federal charges (this includes the unlawful possession of prescription drugs).

As a liquor licence holder, therefore, you cannot permit illegal drug use or drug dealing on your premises. This applies during the operating hours of your premises and also when the premises is closed. Even if you and your staff are not personally involved, you can be held accountable for illegal activities in your premises and must take reasonable steps to prevent illegal drug use and dealing anywhere in your premises.

The Government of Canada announced that as of October 17, 2018 it is now legal to purchase, possess and use cannabis for recreational purposes in Canada. The province has also passed legislation that applies to people and businesses in Ontario.

Under Ontario law, a person cannot smoke or vape cannabis in enclosed public places or work places, and other smoke-free places such as establishments licensed by the AGCO. This includes restaurant and bar patios, and public

areas within 9 metres of any patios. Individuals are, however, allowed to possess and share a maximum of 30 grams of legal dried cannabis or the equivalent in non-dried form in public at any time.

The AGCO will continue to inspect licensed establishments for compliance with the LLA and its regulations, including that they not allow disorderly conduct or illegal activity. If a licensee suspects a patron is engaging in illegal activity at their establishment they are encouraged to contact their local police department and remove the customer from the premises.

Steps You Can Take

To discourage the presence of illegal drugs, you can create an environment unsuitable for drug users and dealers by taking the following steps:

- Provide proper lighting to avoid dark corners/areas.
- Have all tables visible to staff and other patrons.
- Employ and educate security staff. Use reputable security staff.
- Place Security in areas of concern (bathroom entrance, side stage doors, entries and exits).
- Refuse entry/service to anyone suspected of participating in the sale or use of illegal drugs on the licensed premises. Eject the individual and contact police.
- Have well-lit and monitored parking areas and outside service areas.
- If you think a member of your staff may be dealing or using drugs on the premises, contact the police for assistance. If necessary, install security cameras to monitor staff/patron activities.
- Create and enforce a strict house policy that clearly states your establishment's "zero-tolerance" towards illegal drugs.
- Educate your staff on drug awareness.

Crime Prevention Officers with your local police service will give presentations on drug identification, trends, etc.

- Watch for gangs as they are often involved in drug use and trafficking. Some gangs identify themselves with coloured bandannas, jackets, boots with coloured laces, tattoos, etc. Suspected gang activity should be reported. **Altercations should be dealt with by police.**
- Check your premises every night after closing for stashed drugs or weapons, especially in washrooms.
- Drug users cluster in washrooms for access to water (needed for mixing heroin) and privacy. Deny them that privacy and they will go elsewhere. All found drugs or weapons should be reported to police.
- Check for hypodermic needles taped under, behind or inside the water cisterns, behind the toilet bowl, or in a false ceiling. When searching, use your eyes – not your hands – to prevent accidental stabbing.

Behaviours To Watch For

Management and employees alike need to be aware of commonly noticed behaviours and methods used by people dealing in and/or using illegal drugs. These include:

- Making frequent trips in and out of the licensed premises.
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- Passing match boxes, folded money or folded napkins to others.
- Customers who arrive sober but quickly show signs of impairment inconsistent with their alcohol use. This is often caused by mixing drugs with alcohol. This is an important sign to be aware of, especially with female patrons who may be the victims of a tainted beverage. If you suspect or visually see drink tampering, notify

authorities as soon as possible and retain possession of the beverage for testing purposes to treat the victim. Ensure the victim's safety.

- Customers who continually visit the wash-room. Washrooms are common havens for drug dealing and use. Check them regularly if drug activity is suspected, especially if you find syringes, needles, small clear plastic bags, burned matches, bottle caps or other drug paraphernalia on the premises. If syringes or needles are found, they should be reported to the police.

Cannabis

Cannabis is the name that covers marijuana, hashish, and hash oil. Marijuana looks like chopped plant material ranging from green to light brown, but can also be processed into various forms including oils and capsules. It is typically smoked in the form of hand-rolled cigarettes or in a pipe and has a distinctive smell when burning. It can also be heated in a vaporizer which releases the active ingredients without burning. Hashish varies in colour from light-brown to near black, and its consistency may be soft or hard. It is often mixed with tobacco and smoked. Hashish oil is a thick oily product which ranges in colour from yellow to nearly black. The oil is spread onto the tip of an ordinary cigarette or sometimes onto the papers used for handmade cigarettes, then smoked.

Tell-tale behavioural signs of cannabis use include slow speech, droopy eyelids, dilated pupils, and increased appetite.

Recognizing Drugs

Cocaine is usually sold as a white, crystalline powder. Often it is snorted through the nose. Some users inject cocaine or convert it into a smokable form called "crack", a light brown or beige pellet formed when powdered cocaine is melted in a glass tube with water. Watch

for crude crack pipes made from soft drink cans. Paraphernalia associated with the use of cocaine include small spoons, razor blades, mirrors, small bottles of white powder, and plastic/glass pipes or straws.

Ecstasy tablets come in different shapes, sizes and colours, and are often stamped with a logo, such as a butterfly or clover, giving them a candy-like look. The chemical structure and the effects of ecstasy are similar to amphetamine (a stimulant) and to mescaline (a hallucinogen). Ecstasy affects the chemistry of the brain, in particular by releasing a high level of the chemical serotonin, which helps regulates of mood, energy level and appetite.

Fentanyl is an extremely powerful opioid drug – just two milligrams can end a life. The drug was originally developed and prescribed for chronic pain management, but through misuse, overdose deaths from it are on the rise across Canada. Prescription fentanyl comes in many forms, including powder, pills, patches, sprays and lozenges. The street form of fentanyl is usually powder and it can be mixed with other drugs, such as heroin and cocaine. An overdose of fentanyl can cause the user to stop breathing. Naloxone is a drug used to temporarily reverse an opioid overdose and can save a life. Many licensees are already keeping naloxone kits on their premises. For more information on this topic, please read the story "Get a naloxone kit and save a life" in *Licence Line – Volume 17: Issue 3* on the AGCO website

GHB is a popular club drug sometimes called "liquid ecstasy". In its liquid form, GHB looks like water. It has no smell, and is tasteless or has a slightly salty or solvent taste that can be easily masked. It is usually sold as a liquid in small vials, but is also available as a white powder or capsule. The effects of GHB are similar to the effects of alcohol. At a low dose, users usually feel more sociable, less inhibited and lightheaded. A slightly higher dose intensifies these effects or makes you drowsy and dizzy. A little more may cause nausea and vomiting, and a higher dose can make you slip

into a deep coma-like sleep. An overdose can result in difficulty breathing, a lowered heart rate, convulsions and even death.

Heroin is an opiate that usually comes as a white or brownish powder. It is usually dissolved in water and injected under the skin or into a vein or muscle, but it can also be sniffed or smoked.

Ketamine is a fast-acting anaesthetic and painkiller used primarily in veterinary surgery. Ketamine manufactured for medical use is sold in a liquid form, though it is usually converted into a white powder before it is sold illicitly. The powder is snorted, mixed into drinks or smoked with marijuana or tobacco. The liquid is added to drinks. When ketamine is taken in lower doses, users may feel sleepy, distracted and withdrawn. They may find it more difficult to think clearly, feel confused and have a distorted perception of time and body. At higher doses they may babble, not remember who or where they are, stumble if they try to walk, feel their hearts race and find it difficult to breathe. Too high a dose of ketamine causes loss of consciousness.

LSD has no colour, odour, or taste and is so strong that a dose (30 micrograms) is too small to see. It is packaged in miniature powder pellets (“microdots”), gelatin chips (“windowpane”), or squares of LSD-soaked paper (“blotter”). LSD is usually swallowed but may also be snorted or injected.

PCP is often sold in white or coloured chunks or crystals, but can also come in the form of a powder or tablet. Mixed with tobacco, marijuana, or dried parsley, it is usually smoked, but it can be swallowed or injected. Although it makes users “high”, it also often makes them violent towards themselves and others.

For more information, please contact AGCO Customer Service at 416-326-8700 or 1-800-522-2876 (toll-free in Ontario) or visit us online at www.agco.ca .