

	CITY OF DECATUR PERSONNEL POLICY		
Chapter 05	Conduct		
Section 02	Drug and Alcohol Use Policy		
Revised By:	Nate Mara, City Manager	Revised Date:	December 08, 2025
Approved By:	Nate Mara, City Manager	Effective Date:	January 1, 2026

05.02 - Drug and Alcohol Use Policy

The City of Decatur is committed to maintaining a safe, healthy, and productive workplace free from alcohol and drug misuse. To uphold this commitment, all employees are expected to report to work in a mental and physical condition that supports sound judgment, reliable performance, and the safety of both coworkers and the public.

A. Prohibition of Alcohol and Illegal and Unauthorized Drugs.

1. No employee may use, possess, distribute, sell, or be under the influence of alcohol, illegal drugs or inhalants, including drugs which are legally obtainable but which were not legally obtained, and/or prescribed or over-the-counter drugs which are not being used as prescribed or as intended by the manufacturer, while on City premises, while on duty, while conducting City-related business or other City activities off-premises, while driving a City-owned or leased vehicle, or while operating or using other City-owned or leased property or equipment.
2. The use of alcohol by a City employee during a business lunch is prohibited, even though the person with whom the employee is having lunch may be consuming alcohol.
3. An employee on duty or conducting City business, including City-related business entertainment, may not drive his or her own personal vehicle while under the influence of alcohol.
4. No employee in his or her work-related capacity should ever be impaired because of the use of alcohol.
5. City employees may not bring alcoholic beverages on City premises, including parking lots adjacent to City work areas, and may not store or transport alcohol in a City-owned or leased vehicle.
6. Any employee reporting to work under the influence of illegal drugs or alcohol (.02 Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) or higher) may be disciplined, up to and including termination.

B. Prohibition of Alcohol and Illegal and Unauthorized Drug-related Paraphernalia.

1. The use, possession, distribution, and sale of drug-related paraphernalia while on City premises, while on duty, while conducting City-related business or other activities off premises, while driving a City-owned or leased vehicle, or while operating or using other City-owned or leased property or equipment is prohibited.
2. Drug-related paraphernalia includes material and/or equipment designed for use in testing, packaging, storing, injecting, ingesting, inhaling or otherwise introducing illegal or unauthorized drugs into the body.

C. Permissive Use of Prescribed and Over-the-counter Drugs.

1. The legal use of prescribed and over-the-counter drugs is permitted while on City premises, while on duty, while conducting City-related business or other activities off premises, while driving a City-owned or leased vehicle, or while operating or using other City-owned or leased property or equipment so long as it does not impair an employee's ability to perform the essential functions of their job, including operating a vehicle and use of City property or equipment effectively and in a safe manner that does not endanger the employee, citizens, or other individuals.
2. Examples of impairment include, but are not limited to, drowsiness, dizziness, confusion, and/or disorientation.
3. More stringent definitions and requirements apply to the Public Safety (Fire and Police) Departments.

D. Fire and Police Department Employees.

1. Certain City Police Department employees may be required to be in possession of alcohol and/or drugs in carrying out their job duties. Such employees will be exempted from certain portions of this policy under certain limited conditions.
2. Additional guidelines may be established by Fire and Police Department operating procedures.

E. Mandatory Disclosure by Employees. Employees taking prescription medication and/or over-the-counter medication must report such use to either their Department Director or to the City Manager if there is a reasonable likelihood the medication will impair the employee's ability to perform the essential functions of his or her job.

F. On-call Employees.

1. Any employee scheduled to be on call, and is called out, is governed by this policy.
2. Employees scheduled to be on call are expected to be fit for duty upon reporting to work.

3. Sometimes, an employee who is not scheduled to be on call may nevertheless be called out. If this or any other situation occurs where the employee called out is under the influence of alcohol or has a presence in the system of drugs, such that reporting to work would result in a violation of this policy, the employee must so advise the appropriate supervisor on duty. The employee will not be required to report to work.

G. Mandatory Reporting of Arrests and Convictions.

Employees must notify their immediate supervisor and the Department Director, in writing, of any alcohol or drug-related arrest and/or convictions (including a plea of nolo contendere) or deferred adjudication, whether on or off-duty, no later than twenty-four (24) hours after the arrest and/or conviction.

H. Off-duty Conduct.

The City may take disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment, if an employee's off-duty use of or involvement with drugs or alcohol is damaging to the City's reputation or business, is inconsistent with the employee's job duties, or when such off-duty use or involvement adversely affects the employee's job performance.

I. Searches.

1. All searches must be authorized and conducted under the direction of the Director of Human Resources and/or the City Manager and or their designee.
2. The City may conduct unannounced searches for illegal drugs, and/or drug paraphernalia and/or alcohol in City facilities and/or on City property.
3. An employee's consent to a search of their work area is required as a condition of continued employment.
4. Entering the City's property constitutes consent to searches.
5. Employees are expected to cooperate in the conducting of such searches. Employees who refuse to cooperate with a search may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.
6. The City will inform the employee that they may request objective oversight during a search (i.e., disinterested witness).
7. Searches of employees' personal property which includes, but is not limited to, bags, briefcases, desks, computers, phones, work areas, lockers, and vehicles (while on City property) may be conducted when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that an employee is in violation of this Policy and/or when circumstances and/or workplace conditions justify them.
8. Drugs discovered on City property will be turned over to the appropriate law enforcement agency. Any action taken by law enforcement agencies will be completely independent of this Policy.

J. Rehabilitation/Treatment. It is the City's desire to assist employees who voluntarily request assistance with alcohol or drug dependency. For City support and assistance, however, an employee must acknowledge the problem and seek and accept counseling and/or rehabilitation before it impairs job performance and/or jeopardizes the employee's employment.

1. Employees with drug or alcohol problems that have not resulted in, and are not the immediate subject of, disciplinary action may request approval to take a leave of absence to participate in a rehabilitation or treatment program. (An employee may not enroll in a rehabilitation or treatment program in lieu of disciplinary action.) The leave of absence may be granted in the City's sole discretion. Factors considered by the City in deciding whether to grant leave include: the length of the employee's employment with the City; the employee's prior work and disciplinary history; the employee's agreement to abstain from the use of the problem substance and follow all other requirements of the rehabilitation/treatment program; the reputation of the program and the likelihood of a successful outcome; the employee's compliance with City policies, rules, and prohibitions relating to conduct in the workplace; and the resulting hardship on the City due to the employee's absence. Unless otherwise required by law, it is the City's policy to grant such a leave of absence only once during the course of an employee's employment with the City.
2. The cost of any rehabilitation or treatment may be covered under the City's group health insurance policy. In any case, the employee is responsible for all costs associated with any rehabilitation or treatment program.
3. During time off for a City-approved rehabilitation or treatment program, the employee must use any available PTO leave, compensatory time off, or other accrued paid leave time.
4. If the employee successfully completes the prescribed rehabilitation or treatment, the City will make reasonable efforts to return the employee to the prior position or one of similar pay and status. However, employment with the City following a City-approved leave for rehabilitation or treatment is conditioned on the following:
 - a) Initial negative test for drugs and/or alcohol before returning to work;
 - b) A written release to return to work from the City-approved rehabilitation or treatment facility/program;
 - c) Periodic and timely confirmation of the employee's on-going cooperation and successful participation in any follow-up or ongoing counseling, testing, or other treatment required in connection with the City-approved rehabilitation or treatment program, if applicable;
 - d) In addition to any testing required in connection with the employee's ongoing treatment or follow-up to treatment, all employees who participate in rehabilitation or treatment under this section will also be required to submit to periodic and/or random testing by the City during the two years following the employee's return to work following treatment;

- e) The employee must sign a formal written agreement to abide by the above conditions, as well as any other conditions deemed appropriate by the Director of Human Resources. The employee must meet with the Director of Human Resources to discuss the terms of continued employment and sign a formal agreement before returning to work.

K. Policy Violations. Violations of this policy will generally lead to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment and/or required participation in a substance abuse rehabilitation or treatment program. The Police and Fire Departments may have stricter disciplinary rules regarding violation of this policy. Employees with questions or concerns about substance dependency or abuse are encouraged to discuss these matters with their supervisor or the Director of Human Resources to receive assistance or referrals to appropriate resources in the community.

L. Testing. All applicants to whom a conditional offer of employment has been made will be required to submit to testing for alcohol and illegal and unauthorized drugs. A positive test result, refusal to test, or attempts to alter or tamper with a sample or any other part of the test, will render the applicant ineligible for consideration of employment with the city.

1. Testing of Employees.

- a) Employees may be tested for alcohol and/or illegal and unauthorized drugs after a workplace injury or accident or “near miss,” when reasonable suspicion exists, or in connection with any required treatment or rehabilitation. The City may conduct random testing on employees holding safety-sensitive positions.
- b) Police and Fire Department employees are also subject to any applicable Departmental rules and regulations regarding illegal and unauthorized drug and alcohol testing.
- c) For purposes of this policy, reasonable suspicion is a belief based on articulable observations including but not limited to (e.g., observation of alcohol or drug use, apparent physical state of impairment, incoherent mental state, changes in personal behavior that are otherwise unexplainable, deteriorating work performance that is not attributable to other factors, a work-related accident or injury, evidence of possession of substances or objects which appear to be illegal or unauthorized drugs or drug paraphernalia) sufficient to lead a supervisor to suspect that the employee is under the influence of illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol. Supervisors who refer an employee for reasonable suspicion testing must document the specific factors that support reasonable suspicion testing (e.g., the who, what, when, where of the employee’s behavior and other symptoms, statements from other employees or third parties, and other evidence supporting the reasonable suspicion testing).
- d) Tests will be paid for by the City. To the extent possible, testing will normally be done during the employee’s normal work time.
- e) Any employee who refuses to be tested, or who attempts to alter or tamper with a sample or any other part of the testing process, will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

- f) A positive test result is a violation of the City's Drug and Alcohol Use Policy and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Any employee who is terminated for violation of the City's Drug and Alcohol Use Policy is ineligible for future employment with the City.

2. Testing Procedures.

- a) All testing must normally be authorized in advance by both the employee's Department Director and the Director of Human Resources. If the Department Director is unavailable within a reasonable period of time, the Director of Human Resources may, with sole discretion, authorize the testing of an employee. If the Director of Human Resources is unavailable within a reasonable period of time, the Department Director may, with sole discretion, authorize the testing of an employee. For reasonable suspicion testing, testing may not be authorized without the supervisor's documentation of the articulable factors which led the supervisor to suspect that the employee is under the influence of illegal or unauthorized drugs or alcohol. Testing should be arranged as soon as possible after the supervisor's observations.
- b) If an employee's conduct resulted in a work place accident, injury or "near miss," or reasonable suspicion exists to believe that the employee has violated the City's Drug and Alcohol Use Policy, the employee will be provided with transportation to the testing facility. A supervisor or other designated City representative may be required to stay with the employee during the testing process. The City may, in its discretion, reassign the employee or put the employee on administrative leave until the test results are received. The City will make arrangements to have the employee transported home after the testing. Failure of the supervisor to ensure the employee completes a post-accident or "near miss" incident will result in disciplinary action up to an including termination of the supervisor.
- c) All substance abuse testing will be performed by an approved laboratory or healthcare provider chosen by the City. All positive test results will be subject to confirmation testing.
- d) Test results will be maintained in a confidential file separate and apart from the employee's personnel file. Any medical-related information will be confidential and accessible only by the Director of Human Resources, supervisors, and managers on a need to know basis, including those who have a need to know about necessary restrictions on the work or duties of an employee and any necessary accommodation; first aid and safety personnel when appropriate; government officials; insurance companies as may be necessary to provide health or life insurance to employees; by court order or as otherwise legally mandated; and as necessary to protect the interests of the City.