



# **SUBSTANCE USE GUIDELINES**

Approved by: Academic Coordinating Committee

Authorizer: Vice President, Finance and Corporate Services

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## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide a framework to regulate the use of alcohol, cannabis, drugs and other substances at Conestoga College. Conestoga will ensure that it complies with provincial and federal legislation that regulates the use of both legal and illegal substances.

In so doing, Conestoga recognizes the risks associated with substance use, and also acknowledges that individual members of the college community may have complex and sometimes addictive relationships with alcohol, cannabis and drugs. The Ontario Human Rights Code (Section 10) includes drug and alcohol addiction as a disability; and Conestoga is committed to educating members of the college community on harm-reductive use and prevention through educational programming and individualized support. Conestoga recognizes its duty to accommodate under the *Human Rights Code*, and will comply with its obligations in that respect.

## **SCOPE**

These guidelines apply to all members of the college community, including students, employees of Conestoga, contractors, leasehold tenants, the general public, and any group or persons renting or using college facilities.

## **DEFINITIONS**

**Alcohol:** Refers to any beverage containing any percentage of alcohol.

**Cannabis:** includes, but not limited to, dried cannabis, cannabis oil, edibles, and cannabis plants.

**College Community:** All students, employees of Conestoga, contractors, leasehold tenants, the general public, and any group or persons renting or using college facilities.

**College Property:** All buildings or property owned or leased by Conestoga, including the student residences.

**Substance:** For the purposes of these guidelines, the term 'substance' broadly includes, without limitation, any stimulant, intoxicant, nervous system depressant, hallucinogen, or other chemical substance, compound or combination when used to induce an altered state, including any otherwise lawfully available product used for any purpose other than its intended use (e.g., the misuse of prescription drugs, non-prescription medications, or household products). This definition includes cannabis, alcohol, illicit drugs, recreational drugs, prescription drugs, and over-the-counter medications.

**Harm Reduction:** Programs and practices that aim primarily to reduce the adverse health, social and economic consequences of the use of legal and illegal substances without necessarily reducing consumption.

**Responsible Use Guidelines:** Educational materials that advise individuals to engage in the safe use of substances so as to minimize potential harm to self or others.

## **GUIDELINES**

1. The possession, consumption, sale or distribution of alcohol is only permitted in those Conestoga College venues as licensed in accordance with the Ontario *Liquor Licence Act*, RSO 1990, c L.19.
  - a. In venues and at events where alcohol is sold or distributed, the event sponsor is required to display Responsible Use Guidelines at each point of sale and/or distribution.
2. Conestoga College prohibits the possession, use, consumption, manufacturing, sale or distribution of illicit drugs on college property. Further, the manufacturing, sale or distribution of drug paraphernalia on campus is prohibited.
3. The possession of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications with the intent to deliver, sell or manufacture is prohibited.
4. Possession of up to 30 grams of cannabis is permitted on college property, in accordance with the *Cannabis Act*, SC 2018, c 16.

5. The burning of cannabis is prohibited on all college property. Further, the consumption or growing of cannabis, production of cannabis edibles and/or rolling of cannabis cigarettes are also prohibited.
6. The distribution of any substance, as defined in these guidelines, to a minor is strictly prohibited on college property.
7. Individuals holding a current prescription from a qualified health-care practitioner with respect to medical cannabis and who request the ability to use medical cannabis on college property, must first seek the approval of the appropriate college office responsible for academic and/or workplace accommodations.
  - a. Students must submit their request to Student Accessibility Services; employees must submit their request to Human Resources.
  - b. Individual requests will be considered in accordance with Conestoga's Accessibility Policy/Procedure for the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* and Accommodation for Employees with Disabilities procedure.
8. Individuals whose use of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications, on or off college property, could compromise their capacity to safely participate in their academic program or execute their workplace duties, are expected to consult with their professor or supervisor to discuss potential alternate arrangements. For clarity, Conestoga will comply with its duty to accommodate in addressing the use of prescription drugs and over-the-counter medications on college property.
9. In the event that an individual is experiencing a medical emergency resulting from an opioid overdose, Campus Safety and Security at all college posts will facilitate appropriate emergency medical response. Individual members of the college community who are appropriately trained and resourced to provide a naloxone-based emergency medical intervention may do so voluntarily.
10. **Exceptions:** Conestoga College acknowledges the traditional burning of substances that form a part of Aboriginal culture and heritage. Conestoga's Aboriginal Services department provides the supports to ensure that the use of such medicines is done in the safest possible and most respectful manner.

## RESPONSIBILITIES

1. All members of the college community shall comply with these guidelines at all times.
2. Within the scope of their responsibilities, all employees have a general duty to ensure compliance with these guidelines.

3. The main focus of guideline enforcement will be voluntary compliance through education, signage and awareness.

## **GUIDELINES ON BEHAVIOURAL STANDARDS AND ACTS OF NON-COMPLIANCE**

1. Conestoga acknowledges that behaviours arising from acute or prolonged substance use can be similar to behaviours associated with other health-related conditions. For example, fatigue, lack of concentration, and altered sensory capacity are common to a range of conditions not associated with substance use. As such, interventions on disruptive behaviour in the academic setting or workplace ought to focus on the behaviour itself rather than on the assumed or known cause of the behaviour.
2. All members of the college community are expected to intervene in a respectful and caring manner when they believe that an individual's behaviour may be the result of substance use, and could compromise their capacity to fully participate in their academic program or in the workplace.
3. It is the responsibility of all employees to signal available supports to students and/or employees if they believe an individual needs assistance to address behaviours that have a negative impact on the individual's capacity to participate in an academic program or in the execution of workplace duties. Employees may obtain support from Human Resources, while students may obtain support from Student Success Services.
4. In situations where an individual's behaviour, regardless of whether or not it is suspected to be the result of substance use, could pose a risk to the safety of themselves or others in the academic setting or the workplace, the faculty member or supervisor reserves the right to limit the individual's participation until such time as safe participation can be resumed. For clarity, any student or employee who is under the influence of a substance will not be allowed entry into college shops.
  - a. Any complaints relating to such decisions should be addressed through Conestoga's complaint resolution processes. Students may address their concerns through the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities; employees may address their concerns through Human Resources or their respective Bargaining Unit.
5. Where the behaviour of a student or an employee is disruptive to the academic or workplace setting, the matter may be reviewed under the relevant code of conduct.

6. Students enrolled in academic programs that are subject to the provisions of a professional regulatory body, whose behaviour could pose a safety risk to themselves or others, may be subject to investigation and/or disciplinary action as required by the respective code of ethics, standards of practice, and/or legislation that governs the activity of learners in regulated professions.

**Revision Log:**

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Academic Coordinating Committee - Approved