



United Nations  
Educational, Scientific and  
Cultural Organization

## Administrative Circular AC/HR/69

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in French and in English

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### Non-smoking policy/Alcohol policy

1. The purpose of this circular is to specify current measures relating to the non-smoking policy, further to the recommendations of IOS, and to introduce provisions relating to the consumption of alcohol and use of drugs. This policy is introduced in the interest of promoting staff health and well-being at work.

2. The updated paragraphs of item 16.11 of the Human Resources Manual, as approved by the Director General, are as follows;

#### Non-smoking policy

3. UNESCO applies a strict non-smoking policy to all users of UNESCO premises including all UNESCO employees, members of delegations and NGOs, visitors and contractors while on UNESCO premises except in limited designated areas. This policy also applies to electronic cigarettes.

4. For the purpose of this Manual item, employees include: staff members, personnel employed under a service contract, a short-term contract or a consultancy contract, personnel on loan/secondment, interns, volunteers and occasional workers.

5. The policy applies to all UNESCO premises, at Headquarters, in field offices and Category I Institutes, including property rented or occupied by third parties. UNESCO premises encompass all general circulation areas such as corridors, stairs, lifts, foyers, reception and toilet areas; the library; meeting rooms; offices; catering outlets (including all restaurants and cafeterias); outside grounds and UNESCO vehicles.

6. ADG/ADM will designate a very limited number of smoking areas on outside grounds, at Headquarters, where smoking is tolerated. These areas will be communicated by an Information Circular. Directors/Heads of Field Offices and Directors of Category I Institutes may designate, as appropriate, a smoking area on the outside grounds of the UNESCO office, with prior consultation of ADG/ADM.

7. It is up to each employee to respect the smoking ban and to contribute to a healthy workplace.

8. Staff members breaking the smoking ban and found smoking outside the designated areas may be subject to disciplinary action.

9. All smokers wanting help to give up smoking are invited to contact the Medical Service, which will provide assistance to encourage and sustain individual efforts.

## **Alcohol Policy**

10. The consumption of alcohol (including spirits, wine, beer) is strictly forbidden on UNESCO premises, with the exception of alcohol consumed in dedicated food and beverage areas such as the restaurant and the cafeteria (s), as well as in reception areas during events, and provided that such consumption is moderate and reasonable.

11. Special measures apply to staff and employees in functions such as:

- Security, firemen, drivers and receptionists;
- Workshops where heavy and/or dangerous equipment and/or materials are used;
- Kitchen and personnel of the restaurant services;

Separate instructions shall be issued by the responsible authority to the concerned personnel.

12. At Headquarters, alcohol may exceptionally be consumed on UNESCO premises during gatherings/events. Such gatherings should take place with the prior approval and under the responsibility of the supervisor concerned, who shall ensure that alcohol consumption is moderate and reasonable.

13. Chief ADM/SEC may take appropriate measures, including ordering the ending of the gathering, in case of disturbance to good order.

14. Directors/Heads of Field Offices/Director of Category I Institutes shall issue instructions applicable to their office, in compliance with United Nations Department of Safety and Security (UNDSS) instructions.

## **Use of drugs**

15. The use of drugs is strictly forbidden on UNESCO premises, in all duty stations.

## **Prevention**

16. Employees and supervisors who wish to address alcohol/substance abuse issues are encouraged to seek advice and support from the Medical Service.

## **Measures in case of non-respect of the rules on alcohol/drugs**

17. At headquarters, in case of abnormal behavior or obvious misconduct by employees on UNESCO premises, during and after working hours, and which appears to be linked to alcohol and/or drug consumption, Chief ADM/SEC (or Deputy for HQs) may order alcohol and/or drug testing, to be undertaken by security staff with specific training.

18. Employees subject to testing can be assisted by another staff member and are allowed to request a counter test. In case of refusal to take the test, such refusal shall be duly documented.

19. Such a procedure shall remain confidential. Chief ADM/SEC may refer such cases to the Chief Medical Officer and/or to IOS in view of investigation and possible disciplinary action.

20. In the Field, Directors/Heads of Field Offices/Director of Category I Institutes may implement similar procedures under their responsibility by designating a focal point for such procedures. Any procedure of this kind should be cleared by Chief ADM/SEC at HQ, in consultation with HRM.

**Effective date :**

21. This Circular takes effect on the date of its publication.

For the Director-General:

Hong Kwon  
Director,  
Bureau of Human Resources Management