

Alcohol and Drug-Free University Policy

Policy number: 123
Policy owner: Human Resources

Date of initial publication: August 17, 2023
Date of latest revision: N/A

SECTION I. PURPOSE

This policy is enacted in compliance with the federal Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act of 1989 and the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988. The University of St. Thomas seeks to foster moral responsibility and a culture of care that supports the well-being of all community members.

SECTION II. SCOPE AND APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all students and all employees, including faculty, staff, and student workers.

SECTION III. DEFINITIONS

When used in this policy, the following terms have the following meanings:

- a. **Alcohol** means alcoholic products persons under 21 are prohibited from possessing and/or consuming under state law.
- b. **Drugs or Controlled Substances** mean drugs and other substances regulated and/or prohibited under state and/or federal law, including the federal Controlled Substances Act. These substances include but are not limited to illicit drugs such as heroin, cocaine, methamphetamine, LSD, MDMA (Ecstasy), as well as certain prescription medications like opioids (e.g., oxycodone, hydrocodone) and stimulants (e.g., Adderall) when used without a valid prescription. Drugs or Controlled Substances also means all cannabis products, whether lawful or not.

SECTION IV. INDIVIDUAL USE POLICY

Students and employees are prohibited from engaging in the illegal possession, manufacture, use, or distribution of alcohol, drugs or controlled substances, and drug paraphernalia on all University property (indoors and outdoors), in University-supplied vehicles, and as part of University activities and business.

A. Alcohol and Drugs - Students

No student under the age of 21 may use or possess alcohol.

- Students of legal drinking age may possess and participate in responsible consumption of alcohol in university residence halls, in accordance with Residence Life policies.
- Students of legal drinking age living off-campus may participate in responsible consumption in accordance with city and state laws and ordinances. Abuse of these privileges may result in student conduct proceedings by the University.
- Students must comply with the University's [Alcoholic Beverages Policy](#).

The use, possession, manufacturing, and/or trafficking of illegal drugs is prohibited. The University reserves the right to report illegal drug use and may refer a student to criminal or civil authorities in cases regarding trafficking or intent to distribute illegal drugs.

The abuse, misuse, sale, or distribution of prescription or over-the-counter medications is also prohibited. This includes the use of prescription medications not prescribed to the individual by a licensed healthcare provider.

Failure to abide by the above expectations will be addressed through the student conduct process and will result in consequences under the [Student Conduct Code](#), which identifies other alcohol- and drug-related expectations and the potential consequences for violations.

B. Alcohol and Drugs - Employees

The University's [Workplace Conduct Policy](#) prohibits the following while on University property or as a part of any University-sponsored event or University-funded activity:

- The unlawful possession, use or distribution of alcohol, drugs, or drug paraphernalia and the possession, use or distribution of cannabis;
- Being under the influence of illicit drugs or impaired by alcohol or cannabis; and
- The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of controlled substances in the workplace.

Violations of these expectations will result in disciplinary sanctions under the Workplace Conduct Policy, which identifies other alcohol- and drug-related expectations and the potential consequences for violations. Additionally, employees must comply with the University's [Alcoholic Beverages Policy](#).

C. Cannabis - Students and Employees

Although Minnesota state law permits adults aged 21 years or older to possess and consume cannabis under certain circumstances, federal law still generally prohibits the possession, use, or distribution of cannabis on St. Thomas's campus. Therefore, the use, distribution, or possession of cannabis, including products containing THC (such as certain CBD products), is not permitted on St. Thomas property.

SECTION V. RISKS AND SANCTIONS

Alcohol and drug misuse carries a range of short- and long-term health effects and risks, including physical impairment, altered thinking and judgment, addiction, and disease. Information about these risks can be found on the [National Institutes of Health's](#) website.

Abuse may negatively impact a person's education, career, finances, and personal relationships. In addition to disciplinary consequences under applicable University policies, illegal use, distribution, or possession of alcohol or drugs could lead to criminal prosecution and penalties under local, state, and federal law, including fines and imprisonment (depending on the offense). Convictions may also result in the denial of driving privileges and government benefits. Below are links to relevant criminal laws and penalties for alcohol and drug offenses:

- [Federal Controlled Substances Act, 21 U.S. 801 et al](#)
- [Minnesota controlled substances laws and sanctions](#)
- [Minnesota law – underage alcohol offenses](#)
- [Minnesota law – violations and penalties related to liquor laws](#)
- [Minnesota law – driving while impaired, including underage drinking and driving](#)

SECTION VI. ASSISTANCE FOR THOSE SEEKING HELP

St. Thomas encourages members of its community who want or need help to seek assistance.

The [Center for Well Being](#) offers clinical and educational services to students seeking help for issues related to their drug and/or alcohol use. The University encourages members of its community affected by or concerned for another person's alcohol or drug abuse to seek confidential assistance at the Center for Well Being. Professional staff can help the concerned individual plan a strategy to address the specific issue.

Employees may seek assistance through the University's Employee Assistance Program. For information about the University's Employee Assistance Program, please refer to St. Thomas's EAP Information, available on OneStThomas. In addition, any member of the University community who is concerned about use, abuse and rehabilitation is strongly encouraged to contact their family physician or health plan.

Lastly, St. Thomas students are expected to care for themselves and others in the St. Thomas community. See the University's [Good Samaritan Policy](#) regarding helping an individual impaired by alcohol or drug consumption.