

# **Alcohol at Social Events Policy**

## **Introduction:**

From time to time, the Association, whether at the National, Divisional or Branch level, may host social events either directly for members or where members may be invited to attend. During these social events the Association expects its members to conduct themselves responsibly, and to act with the same level of courtesy and conduct expected during regular business hours. This includes avoiding over-consumption of alcohol.

## **Summary Statement and Scope:**

This Policy applies to all Association-related activities at which alcohol is served or sold. The Association permits the use of alcohol when it is served and used in a safe, responsible, and legal manner. Although alcohol is sold or served at some Association-sponsored events, alcohol availability and consumption plays a minor role at these events and the expectation is that consumption of alcohol will be limited, professional and reasonable. Reasonable steps must be taken to keep drinkers safe and sober, and to prevent behaviour that could jeopardize their own and other people's safety, including:

- driving while impaired
- engaging in harassment or violence
- engaging in behavior that is unprofessional or could negatively reflect upon the Association and its reputation.

## **Compliance**

Compliance to this Policy is mandatory. Non-compliance may lead to disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the Association.

## **Policy Statements**

### **1 Expectations of Members**

- 1.1 Members attending Association sponsored events are subject to all policies regarding conduct, ethical behavior, violence and harassment and are subject to the disciplinary/corrective actions in the event of any misconduct/breach of policy.
- 1.2 When alcohol is available at an Association sponsored event, or when an Association sponsored event occurs in an establishment where alcohol is available, members choosing to consume alcohol are expected to use reasonable judgement and moderate their alcohol consumption.
- 1.3 If any member determines that they have over-consumed alcoholic beverages to the point where their ability to operate a motor vehicle would be impaired, they must avoid driving while under the influence, and should obtain alternate means of transportation.

- 1.4 Do not combine consumption of alcohol and potentially dangerous activities such as driving, boating, swimming or skiing.
- 1.5 Members must accept responsibility for their own alcohol consumption and moderate their intake of alcohol. Members are expected to co-operate with the Association's efforts to ensure their safety.

## **2 Social Occasion Event Sponsorship**

- 2.1 The Association is considered the social occasion event sponsor when, as an organization, it is identified as the body that organizes, plans, and hosts the event, such as convention.
- 2.2 If an individual member, or group of members, organizes a social occasion event with no official involvement, support or endorsement of the Association, the event is considered a private gathering and is not subject to this Policy.

## **3 Approval for Alcohol Service at Social Occasion Association Events**

- 3.1 Any Association sponsored social occasion event at which alcohol is available must be pre-approved by the National Office in writing.
- 3.2 The National Office which approved the event, along with the host, will designate at least one member (additional members for larger events) to act as the event coordinator. The event coordinator's responsibilities are outlined in our Members Social Host guidelines provisions set out herein.

## **4. Social Host Guidelines for Members Hosting Alcohol-Related Activities**

- 4.1 Every year we plan Association sponsored events, including Holiday Celebrations, with the objective of having a safe and memorable experience with our members. Everyone planning an event must consider the safety of the people attending. It is not necessary to forbid alcohol consumption, or to eliminate such events altogether, but below are some tips and precautions you can take to reduce our potential legal liability, and ensure these events are safe and enjoyable.

## **5. Planning**

- 5.1 Remind members that Association policies on member behaviour remain in full force at all events (ie/harassment, violence policies apply).
- 5.2 Plan transportation options in advance so intoxicated guests can be taken home safely. Before the event, remind members they should not drive home if they have been drinking alcoholic beverages. Consider pre-arranging free transportation (ex. taxi chits), arrange overnight accommodation (at a discount rate if possible), or ask members to appoint a designated driver who agrees to consume only non-alcoholic beverages immediately before and during the event. Consider paying for designated driver non-alcoholic drinks.
- 5.3 Communicate your transportation plan to members before the event.
- 5.4 Inspect the venue (even if hosting at your home) to ensure that it is safe (eg. improve stairway lighting, reduce tripping hazards).

## **6. Managing**

- 6.1 Ensure that event staff do not drink immediately before or during the event.
- 6.2 Ensure that the bartender has been trained to avoid over-serving and serving under-age customers.

## **7. Serving**

- 7.1 Remind all servers to stop serving anyone who is visibly intoxicated.
- 7.2 Provide a variety of non-alcoholic beverages for designated drivers and other guests.
- 7.3 Provide snacks and nutritious foods during the event, and avoid salty snacks.
- 7.4 Consider limiting the number of drinks a member can have by giving each member a limited number of drink tickets at the beginning of the event and discourage members from transferring unused alcohol tickets to other members.
- 7.5 Do not offer an open self-serve bar.

## **8. Supervising**

- 8.1 Ensure alcohol is not served to guests who appear intoxicated.
- 8.2 Designate at least one member who will not drink at the event. By refraining from drinking, this individual will be better able to anticipate problems, supervise the event, and intervene to avoid risks.
- 8.3 Take reasonable and appropriate measure to deal with someone who exhibits signs of intoxication (such as taking away their car keys, providing transportation home, make a hotel room available, etc.).

## **Conclusion**

The Association has a special relationship with its members that has been recognized in law. We are not merely a “social host”, but closer to a “commercial host”: this heightened duty requires the Association to take positive steps to ensure the safety of its members. Therefore, in situations where alcohol is provided, served, or allowed, and the Association must be particularly diligent to ensure the safety of our members.