

Alcohol benchmarks

To be recognised for this health priority area, workplaces must meet the benchmarks in the green boxes. Below each benchmark are strategies to help achieve it. The strategies in the blue boxes are mandatory, while the white boxes contain suggested strategies.

Healthy culture

The organisational culture promotes responsible alcohol consumption through supportive leadership, employee participation and shared decision making.



Policies are in place to support responsible alcohol consumption¹. These should be consistent with and reference other relevant policies e.g. Occupational Health and Safety and Mental Health and Wellbeing.

An effective policy should:

- outline clear responsibilities with regard to when it is considered appropriate and not appropriate to consume alcohol in relation to work
- outline provisions for those having difficulties with alcohol²
- be developed in consultation with employees
- be promoted to all employees (e.g. through induction to ensure that new employees are aware of the policy and procedures in relation to alcohol within the workplace)
- be implemented across the organisation
- be regularly monitored and reviewed.

When alcohol is provided, employees and managers are jointly involved in encouraging responsible consumption.

For example:

- working together to develop ideas for responsible alcohol consumption
- ensuring staff inductions include information on how appropriate alcohol consumption is being encouraged and promoted
- identifying ways to address the factors that influence inappropriate alcohol use in the workplace.

1. Responsible consumption is considered to be within the recommended number of standard drinks as per NHMRC guidelines:
<http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/your-health/alcohol-guidelines>

2. For example, Employee Assistance Programs, online, telephone or face to face support such as Counselling Online, Lifeline, SANE Australia, Directline

Healthy culture *continued...*

Management supports employees by:

- ensuring responsible consumption is encouraged
- promoting key messages through forums and meetings
- ensuring that individuals' choices to drink or not drink are respected and not stigmatised.

When providing alcohol, the workplace provides a positive work environment that promotes responsible consumption.

For example:

- the workplace culture does not encourage drinking above the recommended number of standard drinks¹
- all levels of management and employees support the responsible consumption of alcohol and actively model appropriate behaviours
- the workplace avoids encouraging consumption as part of events, celebrations, awards, gifts, fundraising etc.

Healthy physical environment

The physical workplace environment promotes responsible alcohol consumption.



The organisation addresses the physical environment where it can influence harmful alcohol consumption.

Safety measures are implemented at workplace events³ in regard to alcohol provision.

For example:

- food and drink provision (e.g. responsible service of alcohol⁴, serving food at events, providing low and no alcohol options and free water^{5,6}, appropriate pricing, restricting availability and accessibility of alcohol, no drink promotions or other activities that support rapid consumption)
- food and drink provision complies with the Healthy Choices: Healthy Eating Policy and Catering Guide for Workplaces⁷
- safe transport (e.g. providing information about public transport options, discounts for designated drivers, key or designated driver register, free calls for taxis)
- consideration of personal safety for employees (e.g. individuals leaving venue alone).

3. Workplace events include functions as well as work meetings e.g. meetings with clients

4. *Liquor Control Reform Act 1998*

5. <http://www.vcglr.vic.gov.au/home/liquor/standard+licence+obligations/free+drinking+water+in+premises/>

6. http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/9229/Workplace_amenities_CC.pdf

7. <http://www.health.vic.gov.au/nutrition/>

Health and wellbeing opportunities

Resources, information and opportunities are provided to increase knowledge and skills for responsible alcohol consumption.



Relevant information about responsible alcohol consumption (e.g. standard drinks, NHMRC Alcohol Guidelines) and relevant workplace policies is accessible in suitable locations (e.g. noticeboards), relevant formats (e.g. multiple languages) and at suitable times (e.g. recruitment and induction).

Local support services are promoted to employees and their families, and they are encouraged to access these services.

Opportunities for education and skill development to promote responsible alcohol consumption are provided for employees, where possible.

For example:

- what is considered harmful alcohol consumption and the effects of alcohol on health, safety and work performance, and how to manage alcohol consumption
- manager specific training, such as how to identify inappropriate alcohol use and how to manage alcohol issues in the workplace.

Healthy community connections

The organisation engages with the wider community to support responsible alcohol consumption.



Promote participation in sporting organisations that are *Good Sports*⁸ accredited.

The organisation does not engage in sponsorship, marketing or advertising of food and drinks that are inconsistent with the Healthy Food Charter.

The workplace and workforce participate in awareness raising events consistent with policies to support responsible alcohol consumption (e.g. Febfast⁹ and Dry July¹⁰).

When external venues and catering organisations provide food and drink for functions outside the workplace, they are encouraged to align with the workplace alcohol policy.

Please note: The onus is on workplaces to be aware of and consider specific legislation for their industry in relation to alcohol consumption when implementing these benchmarks.

8. <http://goodsports.com.au/find-a-club/>

9. <http://febfast.org.au/>

10. <http://au.dryjuly.com/>