

Alcohol & Drug Testing – A Guide for Managers

The Council's approach to the support of alcohol and drugs is set out in our [policy](#).

To undertake the Council's Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programme the Council has employed the facilities of Abbott Toxicology - a commercially accredited collection company and a properly accredited and experienced laboratory working to stringent quality standards that provide confidence in the analytical results obtained.

The alcohol test will consist of an on-site breath analysis using a calibrated electronic meter.

Drug testing is a multi-stage process in which a urine sample is collected and submitted for laboratory analysis.

Abbott Toxicology operate a 24 hour UK Mainland response service to collect samples for drug and alcohol testing. Information on what to expect during a test is contained [here](#).

When to consider requesting a test

With cause testing will apply to any employee across all areas of the Council. When there is cause to believe that an individual's behaviour and/or performance at work is impaired by drugs/alcohol, they may be required to undertake the drug/alcohol testing procedure.

Some examples of circumstances where this *may* be appropriate are:-

1. Obvious signs of psychological and/or physical impairment.
2. Recognition by managers, supervisors or colleagues of symptoms affecting work performance.
3. Complaints from the public indicating that alcohol/drugs may be a factor.
4. The discovery of items in possession of an individual that could indicate involvement with alcohol/drugs.

If a manager is concerned that an employee's performance is impaired as a result of drug or alcohol use, it is recommended that the manager speaks to the employee in the first instance to determine whether a test is likely to be required. Should the decision to take a test be made, the employee should be informed and advised of what it will entail. Should the employee wish to arrange a colleague or representative to accompany them, they may do so, although it should not prevent the testing process moving forward.

Arranging a Test

Approval to request a test can **only** be made by a Chief Officer or above. The manager should contact the Chief Officer (this can be a Chief Officer from a different Service area if necessary). If, following an explanation of the details associated with the employee, a decision is made to proceed with the test, the Chief Officer should contact one of the following officers for the test to be arranged.

Linda Cullen	Employment and Policy Manager	07534 268810	CullenLi@northlan.gov.uk
Lynn McKenzie	Senior Employment and Policy Officer	07973 729219	McKenzieL@northlan.gov.uk
Lindsay Millar	Employment and Policy Officer	07973 727910	MillarL@northlan.gov.uk
Angela Smith	Employment and Policy Officer	07973 726460	SmithAngela2@northlan.gov.uk
Tracy Simpson	Employment and Policy Officer	07583 032047	SimpsonTr@northlan.gov.uk

The following information will be required from the Chief Officer when requesting a test:

- Name and address of location where test is required.
- Contact name at the site. This individual will meet the Collecting Officer from Abbott Toxicology on arrival.

Details on the facilities required can be found [here](#).

Alcohol Testing

The alcohol test will measure against national drink driving limits - 22 microgrammes of alcohol per 100 millilitres of breath. The procedure is as follows:

The Collecting Officer will start to complete a Breath Alcohol Test Report form. The employee will be asked the following questions:

- Is it more than 20 minutes since you last took anything by mouth (including tea, water, coffee and chewing gum)?
- Is it more than 10 minutes since you last smoked?

The employee will be asked to select a mouthpiece that will then be attached to the breathalyser.

The employee will be asked to stand up straight and the Collecting Officer will stand opposite holding onto the breathalyser.

The employee will be asked to provide a constant blow of breath into the mouthpiece (similar to blowing up a balloon).

The employee will need to keep blowing until the Collecting Officer confirms a sufficient breath sample has been collected. The Collecting Officer will read and record the final reading (taken from the print-out) on the Chain of Custody Form and Breath Alcohol Test Report Form.

If for any reason, the employee is unable to undertake the test in this manner, adjustments to the process will be made, as required.

Drug Testing

Drug testing will be undertaken via urine testing. In line with advice from Abbott Toxicology, the following drugs will be tested for: Amphetamines (including Methamphetamines and MDMA), Benzodiazepines, Cannabis, Cocaine, Ketamine, Methadone, Opiates, Tramadol. Before testing, the Collecting Officer will establish whether the employee is currently taking any prescribed or over the counter medication which may show up in the results. This will be taken into full consideration when considering test results. The procedure will be as follows:

The employee will be asked to select a sample collection cup.

The cup will be opened and the Collecting Officer will advise that the employee needs to provide at least 60ml of urine.

The employee will be shown to the collection facilities.

The employee will be asked not to flush the toilet until your sample has been handed to the collector.

Our collector will remain within the toilet facility whilst the employee provides a sample. The cubicle door will be closed to ensure complete privacy; however the Collecting Officer will be standing outside the cubicle door.

Please be aware that taps (if situated in the toilet cubicle), must remain taped whilst the employee provides a urine sample.

Once the sample has been handed back to the Collecting Officer, they will check the temperature of your sample (which must be within 32–38°C).

Following the provision of the sample, taps and soap will be made available to allow the employee to wash.

If for any reason, the employee is unable to undertake the test in this manner, adjustments to the process will be made, as required.

Refusal to Donate a Sample for a Drug or Alcohol test

In the event that an individual refuses to take a test, or to have the results of the test disclosed to the Council, an initial discussion will be held with the individual and their manager/supervisor to ascertain any reasons for non-compliance, and every effort will be made to explain the procedure and address any concerns raised. Prior to the discussion the individual to be tested will be advised that a Trade Union representative or other work colleague may accompany them. This individual will only be acting as a witness not a

representative. If the individual to be tested requests a Trade Union representative to act as a witness and no such representative is available at the time, the procedure will not be delayed to accommodate this. The individual to be tested will be reminded that a work colleague may also be asked to attend as a witness. If the individual still refuses to take a test or to have the results disclosed to the Council, they will be asked to sign a declaration indicating their refusal to comply with the procedure. This is attached at Appendix One.

The Waiting Period

After the call out has been activated, it may take Abbott up to two hours to arrive to make the collection. It is recommended that the employee to be tested is taken to a suitable waiting area. They should be placed under continuous supervision by an impartial third party until the collecting officer arrives.

If the employee makes a request for a cigarette break, then reasonable timings should be taken into consideration as above. The request cannot be denied but the donor should be accompanied at all times. The employee will be requested to sign a declaration to confirm that he/she has not smoked for at least 10 minutes prior to the test as part of the breath testing collection process

If the employee does not wish to stay on site, the manager **cannot** detain them. The manager must advise them that they are refusing to take the test and the procedure outlined above will apply. If the manager suspects that the employee is under the influence of alcohol or drugs, the employee should be discouraged from driving and attempts should be made to drive them home/arrange a taxi. If, however, the employee insists on driving or leaves in their own car before alternative arrangements can be made, the manager will have no alternative but to contact Police Scotland. If the employee indicates an intention to leave in their own transport, they should be told that the manager will contact Police Scotland. Police Scotland can be contacted on 101.

Next Steps

If you have requested a test, this will be routed through the Employee Relations team who will contact you to discuss what should happen next. If you do not get to the stage of requesting a test (because the employee has chosen to leave the premises), please contact one of the named individuals in Employee Relations (above) as soon as possible for more information and support. The normal investigation process under the appropriate Disciplinary Policy will apply.

North Lanarkshire Council

Refusal to Participate in Testing Process

This form should be used only for refusals. Consent to participate in the testing process will be obtained from Abbott Toxicology.

Service	
Employee Name	
Manager Name	
Location	
Date of Requested Test	

I, _____, confirm that on this day, _____, I was asked to give my consent to an alcohol/drug (cross out as required) test. Please accept this signed declaration that I have refused my permission and will not provide a test.

Signed _____ (Employee) Date _____

Signed _____ (Manager) Date _____