



## GUIDE 10: ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

Defence is committed to maintaining a youth-safe environment. This guide provides information on restrictions surrounding alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances during Defence youth engagement activities.

This guide aims to help personnel understand:

- understand the risks that youth face associated with alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances
- their responsibilities and obligations surrounding the use and management of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances
- reporting requirements.

This guide should be read in conjunction with the Defence [Youth Manual](#).

### Risk management

Alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances can be addictive in nature and cause adverse effects on health<sup>1</sup>. The potential adverse health effects can impact how youth behave and their ability to make rational and safe decisions. Youth face specific risks in relation to alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and other drugs. Rates of risky behaviours are higher among young people than the broader population<sup>2</sup>.

Commanders, managers and supervisors must assess activities and events, and ensure that procedures are in place to prevent youth from buying and/or consuming alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances when on Defence property or at Defence sponsored events.

Commanders, managers and supervisors are required to take reasonable precautions to identify situations that may contribute to alcohol and prohibited substance related harm in young people. They are obligated to take appropriate action to prevent, reduce and manage the risk of harm appropriately.

### **Responsibilities and obligations**

During Defence youth engagement activities, youth must comply with all relevant state or territory legislation. The possession, supply, sale or use of alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes or prohibited substances by anyone under 18 years of age is a criminal offence.

Youth impaired by alcohol or other prohibited substances are in breach of the youth safe code of conduct.

Youth are prohibited from actively participating in fundraising activities where alcohol and/or tobacco constitute the prize.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://aifs.gov.au/resources/policy-and-practice-papers/impact-vaping-adolescent-mental-health>;  
<https://www.health.gov.au/topics/alcohol/alcohol-throughout-life/alcohol-and-young-people>

<sup>2</sup> [Injuries in children and adolescents 2021–22, Adolescence \(13–18\) - Australian Institute of Health and Welfare](#)



It is illegal for Defence personnel, contractors and volunteers to assist youth with the purchase of, or access to alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes, prohibited substances or other adult classified products.

The consumption of alcohol, tobacco and prohibited substances by adults who are managing or supervising youth during the conduct of Defence youth programs is prohibited. Adults are permitted to smoke legal substances when participating in youth engagement activities. However, discretion should be exercised to ensure this occurs out of the visibility of youth where possible. Smoking should be managed in accordance with [Defence's Smoke-free Workplace policy](#).

## Reporting

Managers, commanders and supervisors are responsible for reporting alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances violations as appropriate. Disciplinary action determined by the Group or Service may follow.

Failures to comply with legal restrictions on alcohol, tobacco, e-cigarettes and prohibited substances must be reported to the relevant state or territory police.

Youth protection complaint and event/incident management must be reported in accordance with Defence Youth Manual Section 3, Chapter 3 and relevant Service procedures, where applicable.

Breaches of Defence's youth safe code of conduct should be managed in accordance with Defence Youth Manual Section 2, Chapter 2.

All reporting must be managed in accordance with Defence Privacy Policy and Defence Youth Manual Section 1 Chapter 2.

## Further Assistance

For further information and assistance contact [defence.youth@defence.gov.au](mailto:defence.youth@defence.gov.au)