

**Drink Spiking Policy**

**Date Created:**

**Date of last review: NB Policies should be reviewed annually.**

**Expected Standards**

There are 4 licensing objectives of equal importance:

* The prevention of crime and disorder
* Public safety
* The prevention of public nuisance
* The protection of children from harm

As a business, we want to ensure all of our customers can enjoy our venue free from harm. We are committed to protecting the most vulnerable in society by ensuring that our staff are equipped to deal with a person’s care and safety. This policy sits with our Safeguarding and Vulnerable Persons Policy.

**What to look out for?**

Drink spiking is illegal and carries a sentence of up to ten years in prison. If a robbery, sexual assault or other criminal behaviour has taken place, the sentence will be even longer.

Drink spiking is when alcohol or drugs are put in a person's drink without their knowledge or consent. Remember, any drink can be spiked, including soft drinks, juice, water or alcohol.

Drink spiking is linked to crimes such as sexual assault and theft. Young women are more commonly targeted.

You have a legal duty of care to all patrons. This means you must take drink spiking seriously.

A drink that has been spiked may not look, smell, or taste any different. Most drugs take effect within 15-30 minutes and symptoms will usually last for several hours.

Visually it is difficult to tell if a drink has been spiked. Substances used for spiking usually have no taste, odour or colour.

The effects of drink spiking vary depending on what drug has been used -There are many symptoms of spiking some of which are similar to someone being very drunk.

**Symptoms could include:**

* Mental confusion or memory loss
* Hallucinations or paranoia
* Seizures
* An unusually long hangover or a severe hangover when you had little or no alcohol to drink.
* Disorientation/ visual problems
* Inability to communicate clearly
* Paranoia
* Poor coordination/ loss of balance
* Poor visibility
* Unconsciousness
* Loss of bladder control
* Nausea
* Vomiting

**What should you do if someone in your venue thinks that they have been spiked?**

* **Listen** to them, provide support and avoid any judgement. Always believe what the person is telling you.
* **Inform** your venue manager and the Head Door supervisor.
* **Stay** with the victim and keep talking to them
* **Try and obtain a name** and a contact number for the individual in case they decide to leave, the police will have a way of contacting them to check on their welfare.
* **Help the individual to a place where they feel safe**, away from crowds. [Enter location] Drink spiking is scary and the person needs to be reassured they are safe.
* **If they feel unwell, you should seek medical attention immediately.** If you suspect spiking, inform the medical staff that you believe they have been spiked.
* **Test, Report, Secure. (For venues with testing kits- edit if no testing kits)**
* If they still have their drink, test it using one of the testing kits
* If positive: **ACT QUICKLY**- If negative – give the customer a fresh drink
* Seize & secure it for ***evidence*** and keep it somewhere in view of an individual or camera.
* Call the police – 999
* Keep the victim with you as the police will need to speak to them.
* Check CCTV to establish if perpetrator in the venue
* Collect CCTV & Worn Body Camera evidence if available.

**This section is for all venues with or without testing kits:**

* **Report the incident to the police by dialling 999,** especially if you believe the perpetrator is still within your venue.
* If there is a **suspect** on site **identify them to the police** or if safe detain them
* **Secure any claimed drink, container and or residue.** This will be essential evidence. Put somewhere secure ideally under camera for evidential purposes.
* **Complete your venue incident book fully and in detail.** This is especially important where the individual does not want help or support to show you have tried to undertake support.
* Drugs can leave the body in as little as 12 hours after consumption so it’s important they receive help and get tested quickly.
* **Do not let the person try to go home alone**. Make sure they are with someone they know and trust.

**How to discourage/prevent drink spiking in your venue**

**Staff**

* Consider signing up to [input details of local schemes here e.g. the Devon and Cornwall Police/BBN/Pubwatch #Spike Aware scheme].
* All staff should be aware that drink spiking can happen and should be alert at all times.
* All staff can help prevent drink spiking by not pouring double or triple shots.
* Be aware of how many drinks have been ordered and how many customers are on the table.
* Be aware of a purchaser trying to pour one drink into another at the bar.
* Encourage removal by staff of unattended drinks
* Review our policy of not permitting drinks in outside smoking areas or toilets (if your licence allows) so that customers are not forced to leave drinks unattended. If this is not possible, consider how you can monitor unattended drinks.
* If you provide jugs of drink and drink sharing, (VIP booths) consider how to more closely monitor these areas.
* Be vigilant for suspicious behaviour/ customers - [edit here: management, glass collectors, door staff] to floor walk & move around the venue.
* Advertise any Welfare campaigns that we have in our venue such as [edit here to fit your venue, Anti Drink Spiking posters, Ask for Angela, Search policy]. This will reassure customers and deter perpetrators. Please make sure that there are enough posters in prominent places to pass the message across.
* Consider giving key trained staff coloured arm bands or lanyards to help identify them to both staff and customers [input here details of staff and colour of lanyards]
* Do not sell or promote alcohol in a way that leads to rapid consumption.
* Be aware of unusual requests, such as beer with a shot of vodka.
* Decline patron requests to add alcohol to another person’s drink.

**Customers**

Encourage customers to:

* Always get their own drink and watch it being poured.
* Not to accept drinks from strangers.
* Never leave drinks unattended or drink a drink that has been left unattended.
* Never assume a friend is merely drunk - ensure they get home safely.
* Avoid drinking for open communal jugs or bowls (like punch bowls) at parties.
* Be wary if someone buys them a drink and it is not the type of drink they asked for.
* Avoid sharing or swapping drinks.

**If a customer believes they have been spiked by a needle in addition to following guidance on reporting a spiking incident, medically you should:**

* Encourage the wound to bleed if possible, ideally by holding it under running water.
* Wash the wound with running water and plenty of soap. Do not scrub or suck the wound.
* Dry the wound and cover it with a waterproof plaster or dressing.
* There is a small risk of infection from needle sticks so you may need further medical treatment or testing, like post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) or antibiotic treatment. If you have not already sought emergency medical attention, call 111 or speak to your GP as soon as possible for advice.

**Please sign this document to acknowledge that you have understood this policy and what you are required to do.**

Date: …………………………………………………………………

Trainer’s Name: ……………………………………………... Trainer’s Signature: …………………………………….

Trainee’s Name: …………………………………………….. Trainee’s Signature: ……………………………………