

COMMANDER'S SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY



Marine Corps policy is **ZERO TOLERANCE** for illegal drug use.

A Marine under the influence of drugs or alcohol is a detriment to good order and discipline and a potentially lethal hazard to others on the battlefield, in the work space, on liberty, or behind the wheel of a vehicle.

Therefore, any Marine caught using or selling drugs while attached to the Battalion will be prosecuted under the UCMJ and processed for separation from the Marine Corps. Keep in mind, separation from the Marine Corps for drug use can limit a person's future prospects in the civilian work force.

Experience has shown that random inspections of unit areas combined with the use of detection dogs can deter Marines from retaining drugs in their vehicles or in the barracks. Additionally, urinalysis tests have been proven to deter, identify, and confirm illegal drug use. I will use these tools sensibly to identify drug users and when I find drug users, I will prosecute them.

I expect all Marines to be vigilant for drug users. If you have knowledge of the use, sale, or distribution of drugs or other illegal substances by any member of this command, or any other service member, you have an obligation to report it to the chain of command.

Substance abuse is not limited to the use of illegal drugs. Alcohol, prescription medications, and over the counter drugs can be just as dangerous as illegal drugs when they are used in excess and abused in ways not consistent with their intended purpose. Drug and alcohol abuse is dangerous because it reduces a person's capacity to think clearly and safely execute their duties at work and fulfill their personal and professional responsibilities.

In my experience, a large number of off-duty incidents result from excessive consumption of alcohol or illegal drug use. I have seen too many good Marines get into serious trouble due to bad decisions made after consuming alcohol or drugs. I've known many Marines who did things they will regret forever while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Sadly, I've known a few Marines whose deaths can be attributed to drugs or alcohol.

For these reasons, those who drink alcohol will be of legal drinking age and will have plans in place to ensure their safety and the safety of those around them. **When it comes to off-duty activities, I expect each of you to look out for each other as you would for your own family members.**

Finally, be aware that the Marine Corps has programs available to assist those suffering from alcoholism or struggling with alcohol or substance abuse. For further information, contact the battalion Substance Abuse Control Officer (SACO) **AT (703) 614-8932.**

Semper Fidelis,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew R. Winthrop".

ANDREW R. WINTHROP
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps