



**Biennial Review of Rochester Institute of Technology's Alcohol and Other Drug Programs
and Policies**

2021-2023

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I. Introduction

The Drug-Free Schools and Campuses Regulations (EDGAR, part 86) require that, as a condition for receiving funds or any other form of financial assistance under any federal program, an institution of higher education (IHE) must certify that it has adopted and implemented a program “to prevent the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees.”

Developing a program that complies with the regulations requires an IHE to:

1. Annually notify each employee and student, in writing, of standards of conduct; a description of appropriate sanctions for violation of federal, state, and local law and campus policy; a description of health risks associated with (Alcohol and Other Drug) AOD use; and a description of available treatment programs.
2. Develop a sound method for distributing annual notification information to every student and employee each year.
3. Prepare a biennial report on the effectiveness of its AOD programs and the consistency of sanction enforcement.
4. Maintain its biennial review report on file that is made available by the U.S. Department of Education upon request.

RIT utilizes a comprehensive framework to address alcohol and other drug use by implementing the following strategies: policy, education, coalitions/collaboration, social life, academics, enforcement, intervention and data/assessment.

II. Alcohol and Other Substances University Wide Task Force

The Alcohol and Other Substances University Wide Task Force is comprised of individuals from Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, Human Resources, and Public Safety. Key informants serve on the task force to assist in the trend-tracking of current alcohol and other substance concerns. The programming aspects of alcohol and other substances awareness, education, and prevention efforts are the responsibility of the Health Promotion office.

The mission and charge of the Alcohol and Other Substances University Wide Task Force are as follows:

Mission:

The AOD Task Force will comprehensively address harm associated with alcohol and substance use and actively monitor trends from a University-wide perspective. This group will ensure that RIT policies are up to date and relevant as new information and changes to NYS law come into effect.

Charge:

- Review current trends on campus and in the surrounding area as they relate to alcohol and other substances

- Bi-annual policy review for students, faculty, and staff
- Review of resources available for students, faculty and staff
- Review transports to hospital that are alcohol or other substance related
- Identify high-risk times of year for all community members
- Discuss a comprehensive, university wide approach to prevention, education, and enforcement

Key informants include students, representatives from Student Government, Conduct, Public Safety, Clubs and Organizations (including Fraternity and Sorority Life), Athletics, and Residential Life.

University/Department Representation
Health Promotion
Public Safety
The Center for Residence Life
Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution
Human Resources
Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf (SAISD)
NTID Athlete Development
Intercollegiate Athletics
Student Government Representative
Center for Campus Life including Fraternity and Sorority Affairs

III. Procedures for Distributing Alcohol and Other Drug Notification to Students and Employees

Each year RIT takes a multi-dimensional approach to disseminating information on policies and services related to alcohol and other drugs for employees and students. RIT's Better Me program strives to educate employees on health and wellness-related programs and services, and the Wellness area within Student Affairs provides resources, information, services, and courses for students. Better Me and Wellness regularly distribute materials via email to employees and students.

The Annual Security & Fire Safety Report is made available to the university community and visitors each fall and distributed to employees and students via RIT Message Center.

(<https://www.rit.edu/publicsafety/sites/rit.edu/publicsafety/files/documents/2023AnnualSecurityReport.pdf>)

This annual publication includes:

- drug and alcohol laws and policies
- active bystander information
- crime statistics and other resources

Additionally, students are sent an electronic link to the student Alcohol and Other Drugs Policy (D18.1) each fall as well as an educational email providing them with resources on alcohol education, cannabis education, and other substance education.

Human resources has online links to the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) resources that are updated annually (<https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/policies/procedures/eap.html>) as well as links to the current Faculty/Staff Alcohol and Drug Policy (C 15.2). Employees are also sent an informational e-mail providing information about the drug free workplace statement. A copy of the e-mail can be found in Appendix V. Employees are directed to the Human Resources website for more information and/or to view the complete Biennial Alcohol and Other Drug Programs and Policies document.

Other resources include:

RIT's Biennial Review of Alcohol and Other Drug Policies and Programs

<https://www.rit.edu/fa/humanresources/content/procedures>

RIT Division of Student Affairs

<https://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/>

RIT Human Resources

<https://www.rit.edu/humanresources/>

Programs and Services for Students and Employees (locations and contacts)

Served	Resource	Services:	Locations:	Phone:
Students	Student Health Center	Medical care, medication, information, referral	August Center Building 23-A	585.475.2255
Employees	Employee Assistance Program (EAP)	Support and referral Services for RIT employees and members of their families		844.572.9730 TDD: 800.697.0353 Online: guidanceresources.com
Students & Employees	RIT Public Safety		Grace Watson Hall Building 25	585.475.2853 585.475.6654 (TTY)
Students	RIT Counseling and Psychologi		Hale-Andrews Student Life Center	585.475.2261 585.475.6897 (TTY) Online: https://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/

	cal Services		Building 23	
Students	RIT Center for Student Conduct		Student Alumni Union Building 4	585.475.5662 (V/TTY)
Employees	Human Resources		Eastman Hall Building 1	585.475.2424
Students	Health Promotion	Educational programming and early intervention	Hale-Andrews Student Life Center Building 23	585.475-6599

IV. RIT Policies (Policy Inventories)

RIT has a number of policies and programs in place to maintain and promote a healthy community. Each are described in this section, including a link to the policy.

A. Policies for Students

1. ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS POLICY (RIT POLICY D18.1)

Policy D18.1 provides students with an overview of responsibilities, legal terms, and potential responses for violations. See for full policy: <https://www.rit.edu/policies/d181>

- Student Rights and Responsibilities: <https://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studentconduct/rights-responsibilities/student-rights>

2. C15.0 POLICY ON UNIVERSITY EVENTS WITH ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

RIT's shared governance process and adopted, effective July 1, 2017.

See <https://www.rit.edu/policies/c150#scope>

This policy includes an event registration form.

3. STUDENT-ATHLETE ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS EDUCATION AND TESTING PROGRAM

While not a policy, RIT's Center for Intercollegiate Athletics has devised a program that aims to provide a drug and alcohol-free environment for intercollegiate athletic programs. This policy was reviewed and revamped to better align with NCAA policy during the summer and fall of 2022, implemented in spring of 2023:

https://ritathletics.com/documents/2023/2/21/CIA_Drug_and_Alcohol_-_Updated_February_2023.pdf

4. RIT HOUSING TERMS AND CONDITIONS

RIT Housing Guidelines highlight expectations regarding alcohol and other drugs (14.02):

<https://www.rit.edu/housing/2023-2024-terms-conditions#14-compliance-with-laws>

B. Policies for Employees

1. FACULTY/STAFF ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY (RIT POLICY C15.2)

Policy C15.2 provides employees with definitions regarding alcohol and drug use in the workplace, procedures for alleged violations of the policy, and information on support services available. Full policy: www.rit.edu/policies/c152

C. Policies for Both Students and Employees

1. C16.0 TOBACCO-RESTRICTED UNIVERSITY POLICY

Policy C16.0 applies to all students, faculty, staff, administrators, vendors, and visitors while on RIT-managed properties located in the United States.

Full policy: www.rit.edu/policies/c160

2. POLICIES LIBRARY

Faculty, Staff, Students and visitors can find RIT policies on several websites:

Alcohol and Drug Policies

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/c152>

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/c160>

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d181>

RIT Governance Policy Library

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/policies/governance>

Drug-Free Schools

https://www.rit.edu/fa/grms/compliance/statutes/drug_free_1989.html

Consumer Information/Right to Know

<https://www.rit.edu/fa/compliance/content/consumer-information#heoa2248>

V. RIT Programs (Program Inventories)

A. Programs for Students

Each year, RIT offers a number of educational programs targeting a broad spectrum of wellness issues including alcohol and other substances.

In the spring of 2021 Health Promotion worked to create a comprehensive alcohol and cannabis education university wide campaign, called Party PAWS. Since the programs creation we continue to expand on the education offered and programs developed in include new research that is applicable, accurate and digestible for our community.

Rooted in harm reduction philosophy, all alcohol and cannabis educational programs provide an opportunity to explore research about these substances and what use looks like on our campus. When educating, we explore ways to consume safely and responsibly. The consumption of alcohol is prohibited by RIT Code of Conduct and against NYS law if you are under the age of 21. Additionally, cannabis is prohibited on campus, illegal at the federal level, and is against the RIT Code of Conduct.

Our comprehensive approach to alcohol and cannabis prevention and intervention focuses on early introduction of education and skill-building through Party PAWS, introducing you to key information to help you identify practical strategies to reduce harm and seek help or resources when needed. Additionally, we strive to correct misperceptions that many students hold about college alcohol, cannabis, tobacco, and other drug use to reduce harmful consequences. Our goal is to support our students in achieving their personal, professional, and academic potential.

Party PAWS Overview

Party PAWS is a comprehensive education and awareness program created to help students of the RIT community better understand alcohol and cannabis use. We aim to share relatable and reliable education to help students make informed and responsible decisions if they choose to consume.

PAUSE to check in with yourself before consuming more.

ASSESS what's happening - take some time to take it all in.

WHY are you choosing to have another? Don't mindlessly consume.

SOLVE for the situation. Make an informed decision about what to do next.

Party PAWS content is implemented through several communications and in-person strategies. Content is shared prior to and throughout high risk weekends/times of the semester and periodically through the academic year. An example of our 21st birthday card can be found in appendix III.

Our Wellness Peer Educators facilitate programs related to harm reduction strategies for alcohol and other drugs and our Health Promotion Coordinator facilitates programs around risk management, harm reduction, substance abuse, Good Samaritan Protocol, and resources available on campus. The full campaign and education areas covered can be found at: www.rit.edu/studentlife/party-paws.

Students also have access to our **Balancing Alcohol and Substance Use to Improve College Success (BASICS) program**. BASICS is a service used by students to explore alcohol and other substance use. The program uses a harm reduction approach designed to:

- Promote a non-judgmental environment to help students explore their alcohol/substance use
- Reduce risky behavior and harmful consequences of alcohol/substance abuse
- Identify changes that could help students reduce their risk
- Provide important information and skills for risk reduction as it relates to alcohol/substance use

Furthermore, students have access to additional clinical and behavioral health support for substance use concerns in the Student Health Center and Counseling and Psychological Center. Unique to RIT is a dedicated department for students within the Deaf and Hard of Hearing community, Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf (SAISD) who solely provided education and counseling around substance use for students within that community.

A review of 2021-2023 programming and additional training can be found in Appendix I.

B. Programs for Employees

All regular employees are eligible for the RIT's Employee Assistance Program (EAP). The employee's spouse/partner and eligible children are also covered under the EAP.

The EAP is confidential and provided at no charge to eligible employees. RIT offers this benefit, through Guidance Resources[®], as part of the employee benefits program. EAP offers:

Confidential Counseling. This no-cost counseling service helps employees address stress, relationships, and other personal issues. It is staffed by Guidance Consultants – highly trained masters and doctoral-level clinicians who will listen to concerns and refer to in-person counseling and other resources for issues such as stress, anxiety, depression, relationship/marital conflicts, problems with children, job pressures, grief and loss and substance abuse.

Counselors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Each eligible family member is eligible for up to six (6) counseling sessions (phone and in-person combined) per person, per calendar, year per issue (number of sessions approved is based on counseling need so it

may be less than six). If further sessions are needed, employees pay the cost of the visits in full.

Managers, working with Human Resources, may recommend an employee's participation in the EAP to address unacceptable employee performance or behavior.

Additionally, RIT promotes the health and well-being of employees through the Better Me wellness initiative by offering fitness classes, preventative checks, nutrition counseling, one-on-one coaching and group programs: <https://www.rit.edu/fa/betterme/>

VI. Process/Structures for Maintaining Consistency in Enforcement

RIT is committed to the core value of "Integrity and Ethics," as written in policy P04.0 Core Values. The spirit of this value is maintaining consistency in enforcement of university policies, including policies related to alcohol and other drugs.

Per D.18.1, RIT strives to diligently follow all local, state, and federal laws. Students and student organizations are subject to local, state, and federal laws regarding alcohol and drug use, and the university will not protect individuals or groups from law enforcement with respect to drugs and alcohol use or abuse.

There are a number of "enforcement" bodies regarding alcohol and other drugs, the primary being the Public Safety Department. Additionally, the Center for Residence Life assists Public Safety in enforcement of these policies as they relate to students living in University-managed residential units. The Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution is the guiding department that adjudicates alleged violations of the alcohol and other drugs policy for students and is responsible for assigning disciplinary statuses consistently. Annually, training is conducted for staff (including student para-professional staff) to educate on current policies, enforcement, and consistency.

For the Public Safety Department, internal department policies and procedures provide supervisors and officers with guidelines when enforcement action is required. Descriptions of how alcohol and drug policies are enforced are as follows:

RIT community members can report drug and alcohol policy violations to Public Safety by calling 585-475-3333, texting 585-205-8333, using the [TigerSafe](#) app, or Public Safety [Confidential Tipline](#). If a person is found to be in violation of the alcohol and other drug policy on campus, an investigation commences which is documented and forwarded to either Student Conduct (students), or Human Resources (faculty/staff). Non-campus members accused of drug and alcohol policy violations are banned from RIT if there is preponderance of evidence to do so.

- When alcohol is found in an underage student's residence hall room, the student is asked to pour the alcohol down the drain with a public safety officer as a witness. A statement of fact is written and attached to the incident report. Efforts are made to determine where the alcohol was obtained and appropriate action is taken, including notification to the Monroe County

Sheriff's Office (MCSO) and/or the New York State Liquor Authority when a local retail establishment is identified.

- When illegal drugs, or the suspicion of illegal drug use is investigated, a thorough investigation commences and confiscated drugs are turned over to the MCSO. Efforts are made to determine where the drugs were obtained and this information is shared with MCSO. If it appears drug sales are occurring on campus, a thorough investigation ensues and local law enforcement is advised. All documentation is shared with law enforcement as well as RIT's Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution (students), and Human Resources (faculty/staff) for appropriate disposition.
- Public Safety patrols campus grounds where community members reported obtaining illegal drugs. The same process is followed as above when community members are found to be in possession of illegal drugs and alcohol (when minors are involved).

The following number of students were referred to RIT's Conduct Office for liquor law and drug law violations (as defined by the U.S. Department of Education) in residential areas on campus, this information can also be found online at

(<https://www.rit.edu/publicsafety/sites/rit.edu/publicsafety/files/documents/2023AnnualSecurityReport.pdf>):

Academic Year	Reported Offense	Reported Offenses On campus
2020	Liquor Law Violations Referred For Disciplinary Action	93
	Drug Law Violations Referred For Disciplinary Action	35
2021	Liquor Law Violations Referred For Disciplinary Action	79
	Drug Law Violations Referred For Disciplinary Action	27

2022	Liquor Law Violations Referred For Disciplinary Action	51
	Drug Law Violations Referred For Disciplinary Action	45

VII. Current Projects

A. Modifications for D.18.1 Alcohol and other Drug Policy implemented Spring 2022

The Center for Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, Health Promotion Department, The Center for Residence Life, and Substance and Alcohol Intervention Services for the Deaf (SAISD) worked collaboratively to revamp the policy. The team's objective was to review and revamp the policy to ensure it is comprehensive of common violations, language, and potential future trends. Modification were approved by University Council on April 13, 2022.

B. Modification for Student-Athlete Alcohol and Other Drugs Education and Testing Program, implemented spring 2023

While not a policy, RIT's Center for Intercollegiate Athletics has created a program that aims to provide a drug and alcohol-free environment for the intercollegiate athletic programs. This program was reviewed to better align with NCAA drug and alcohol testing program, update in 2022.

C. Review and modifications to RIT's Tobacco-Restricted University Policy (C16.0).

The policy will be discuss at an upcoming University Council meeting to address gaps in the policy and a plan moving forward. The Health Promotion Coordinator has begun working with Student Government to address concerns related to smoking on campus and has begun to compile additional resources for students that can be broadly distributed. More resources are needed to move this initiative forward.

c. Continued work on Party PAWS to include more information on cannabis education, safe and responsible consumption due to dispensaries continuing to open around or within a reasonable distance to the University.

VIII. Discussion

A. RIT's Alcohol and Other Drug Program: Strengths and Weaknesses

Strengths

RIT has many strengths regarding its alcohol and other drug policies and programs. The University's holistic approach to enhancing wellness for all students and employees sets a strong foundation for drug and alcohol policy and programming.

RIT is committed to the ongoing creation of proactive educational programs for students. The hiring of the Health Promotion Coordinator with a specialty in alcohol and other drug education has played a key role in aligning prevention, education efforts to ensure students are receiving, and engaging in prevention education related to AOD throughout their time at RIT.

Additionally, the cross-divisional relationships that have been created and continue to be strengthened, help ensure that programs and information are relevant to all students and inclusive of many topics.

Weaknesses

More work can be done to move policy change forward. We have continued the conversation related to RIT's Tobacco-Restricted University Policy (C16.0) however, an action plan needs to be created to move this initiative forward.

IX. Summary and Conclusion

RIT uses a comprehensive approach when addressing alcohol and other drug use on-campus, focusing on policy, education, coalitions/collaboration, social life, academics, enforcement, intervention and data/assessment. RIT follows evidence-informed recommendations to ensure that RIT students, faculty and staff are provided with information and resources that promote a safe and healthy environment; one that attempts to mitigate risk as it pertains to alcohol and other drug use.

Several future goals and initiatives regarding alcohol and other drug education are currently being developed. Because alcohol and other drug issues are always evolving and changing, new strategies are needed, and RIT's plan will be expanded as appropriate.

RIT will continue to develop, evaluate, assess, and pursue the best practices for the campus to create a safe and healthy environment for the entire RIT community.

Appendix I
Programs for Students

Program facilitated by Wellness Peer Educators:

Party PAWS	Party PAWS - General	1. By the completion of the program, students will be able to explain the goal Party PAWS campaign. 2. By the completion of the program, students will be able to locate the Party PAWS website.
Party PAWS	Sober Curious	1. Aims to promote sober behavior, provide health alternatives to drinking alcohol, and promote sober culture through the facilitation of weekend events, and activity journal 2. Increase awareness of resources 3. Create a community for sobriety to thrive.
Party PAWS	Responsible Cannabis Use	1. By the completion of the program, students will be able to correctly identify the "universal symbol" for cannabis products in NYS. 2. By the completion of the program, students will be able to list one resources where they can look up legal dispensaries in NYS
Party PAWS	Know Your Edible	1. By the completion of the program, students will be able to describe an appropriate serving size of edibles for a first time user. 2. By the completion of the program, students will be able to state how long it may take someone to feel the effects of an edible.
Party PAWS	Blood Alcohol Content	1. By the end of the program, students will be able to define Blood Alcohol Content. 2. By the end of the program, students will be able to list at least two factors that affect Blood Alcohol Content. 3. By the end of the program, students will be able to recognize various body responses to amounts of alcohol consumed.
Party PAWS	Good Samaritan Policy	1. By the end of the program, students will be able to explain what the Good Samaritan Policy is.
Party PAWS	The Pour	1. By the completion of the program, students will be able to list at least three harm reduction strategies. 2. By the completion of the program, students will be able to explain how many ounces are in a serving of liquor, wine and beer. 3. By the completion of the program, students will be able to list at least two signs that someone is experiencing alcohol poisoning.

Appendix II

Outcomes for Conduct Violations

Tier 1

Alcohol and Cannabis Education workshop (ABC's of BAC, THC, CBD)

Learning Outcomes:

1. Describe University Policies and NYS laws about alcohol and substance use, parties, and bystander interventions.
2. Identify and discuss low, moderate, and high-risk drinking and cannabis situations and what to do in those situations.
3. Describe campus norms and how alcohol and substance use can affect the community.
4. Articulate personal, academic and/or career goals and personal values and describe how their alcohol use may impact those goals and values.

Tier 2

Balancing Alcohol and Substance Use to Improve College Success (BASICS)
(2 session model).

Balancing Alcohol and Substance Use to Improve College Success (BASICS)

BASICS is a service used by students to explore alcohol and other substance use. The program uses a harm reduction approach designed to:

- Promote a non-judgmental environment to help students explore their alcohol/substance use
- Reduce risky behavior and harmful consequences of alcohol/substance abuse
- Identify changes that could help students reduce their risk
- Provide important information and skills for risk reduction as it relates to alcohol/substance use

BASICS involves two sessions with a trained BASICS facilitator:

- **Session I**—Students will learn about the program, reflect on and explore their current usage, discuss current harm reduction strategies in place and be provided information on how to access a web-based questionnaire (personalized feedback report).
- **Session II**— Students will receive a personalized feedback report about their use of alcohol and other drugs and together we explore what their responses look like in real life. We discuss if they would like to do anything differently, identify other harm reduction strategies, discuss support systems, and explore interest and confidence in ability to change any behaviors. Lastly we provide additional resources if they would like to continue the conversation.

Appendix III

21st Birthday Email



Happy Birthday!
from Health Promotion



**(this e-mail is sent to all students who have 21st birthdays this month)*

Any birthday can be exciting and fun but there is a special association made when turning 21 - you are now able to legally purchase and consume alcohol. To some, this is what they have been waiting for; to others, this may be nothing special. However you view it, you now have the option, legally, to consume alcohol in a safe and responsible way!

We hope you take this information into consideration if you choose to consume alcohol:

Pace and Space

When you do drink, pace yourself. Sip slowly. Have no more than one standard drink (12 oz. beer, 1.5 oz. hard liquor at 80 proof, 5 oz. wine) with alcohol per hour. Have "drink spacers"—make every other drink a non-alcoholic one, such as water, soda, or juice.

Keep Track

Keep track of how much you drink. Find a way that works for you: text yourself every time you have a drink, keep the tabs of beers cans or bottle tops, or check-in with a friend when ordering another drink. Making note of each drink before you drink it may help you slow down when needed.

Eat!

Don't drink on an empty stomach. Eat some food so the alcohol will be absorbed into your system more slowly.

Know your "no, thank you"

People may want to buy you drinks all night, but sometimes you may have already had enough. Have a polite, convincing "no, thanks" ready.

Don't drink alcohol? Still consider the following when celebrating the big **TWO-ONE**.

Being an active bystander can be just as important in keeping our community safe as implementing harm reduction strategies! If you see something that has the potential to be risky, dangerous, harmful, hurtful, or plain unhealthy - speak up! Tigers Care and because we care we intervene when we see something just not right. Don't feel comfortable directly intervening? Contact Public Safety at **585-475-3333** or call an RA if needed!

We hope you enjoy your day!

Sincerely,
The Health Promotion Department
Wellness



Learn more at
rit.edu/studentlife/party-paws

