

ACCBO Marijuana Policy Statement, 2016

With the legalization of marijuana, ACCBO has been receiving calls from CADC's, who are not in recovery from addiction, inquiring if they can consume marijuana and maintain their certification as an alcohol and drug counselor.

The ACCBO Code of Ethics, Principle 2 & 4, requires that all certified members "maintain respect for institutional policies" and "shall be fully cognizant of federal laws and laws of Oregon, governing the practice of alcoholism and drug abuse counseling."¹

Principle 2: Responsibility

The ACCBO certified counselor shall espouse objectivity and integrity, and maintain the highest standards in the services the member offers.

- a. The ACCBO certified counselor shall maintain respect for institutional policies and management functions of the agencies and institutions within which the services are being performed, but will take initiative toward improving such policies when it will better serve the interest of the client.

Principle 4: Legal and Moral Standards

The ACCBO certified counselor shall uphold the legal and accepted moral codes which pertain to professional conduct.

- a. The ACCBO certified counselor shall be fully cognizant of all federal laws and laws of Oregon governing the practice of alcoholism and drug abuse counseling.

If a certified individual is in recovery from a substance use disorder, both ACCBO and Oregon Administrative Rule require individuals to maintain abstinence from alcohol and drugs, other than those "prescribed" by a licensed medical professional.²

Additionally, all certified individuals, whether they are in recovery or not (CRM, PRC, CADC, CGAG, CGRM, CPS), who are employed by an organization bound by federal regulations pertaining to the Mental Health & Substance Abuse Block Grant and Medicaid Waiver are subject to Drug Free Workplace policies in compliance with the Federal Schedule of Drugs.³

While ACCBO does not perform routine drug testing or monitoring of employees on behalf of their employer's Drug Free Workplace policies, ACCBO will process complaints against certified individuals who are not in compliance with these workplace policies, when employers or certified members make those reports to ACCBO.

If you are working within an institution with Drug Free Workplace policies pertaining to the Block Grants and Medicaid Waiver, or otherwise in compliance with the Federal Schedule of Drugs, and you violate these policies, ACCBO will investigate those complaints as a potential violation of Principle 2 and Principle 4 of the Code of Ethics. The nature of the violation is characterized as not respecting institutional policies, and not upholding federal laws to which these institutions are bound.

If you are not aware of your agency’s Drug Free Workplace policies, it is incumbent upon you to make yourself “cognizant” of those policies.

Additionally, ACCBO encourages all certified alcohol, tobacco, gambling and other drug professionals to avoid consumption of these products, except in circumstances where prescription drugs are legally prescribed for medical purposes.

The United States has the highest per capita psychoactive drug consumption in the world. The United States makes up less than 5% of the world’s population, while consuming over 50% of the world’s illegal drugs.⁴ The economic cost of alcohol and drug consumption is over \$700 billion per year, in lost productivity, medical care, auto crashes, workplace accidents, foster care, etc.⁵⁻⁷ The 2016 United Nations World Drug Report has recently labeled the United States as having the highest drug overdose death rate in the entire world.⁸

ACCBO encourages all certified professionals to act as role models for their clients, and to promote healthy; gambling, tobacco, alcohol and drug free lifestyles consistent with our mission.

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1. *The ACCBO Code of Ethics*, <http://accbo.com/ethics.php>
 2. 309-019-0125, *Specific Staff Qualifications and Competencies*, (11), Stat. Auth.: ORS 161.390, 413.042, 428.205 - 428.270, 430.256, 430.640
 3. Oregon Health Authority, *Health Services Division*
 4. Joseph Califano, former United States Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare and the founder and chairman of The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University. *High Society—How Substance Abuse Ravages America and What To Do About It*, PublicAffairs Press, 2007
 5. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress. A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health; 2014. www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/50-years-of-progress/full-report.pdf (PDF, 38MB)
 6. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Excessive Drinking Costs U.S. \$223.5 Billion*. www.cdc.gov/features/alcoholconsumption/. Updated April 17, 2014. Accessed March 9, 2015.
 7. National Drug Intelligence Center. *National Drug Threat Assessment*. Washington, DC: United States Department of Justice; 2011. www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs44/44849/44849p.pdf (PDF, 8MB)
 8. United Nations, *World Drug Report 2016*