



Policy: Student Alcohol and Drug Policy	Applicability: MMC Students
Policy Owner: Division of Student Affairs	Approved By: Office of the President
Effective Date: January 27, 2020	Last Reviewed:
Next Review:	Contact: 615.327.6435

PURPOSE: To maintain a safe and productive environment that promotes the health and well-being of students, faculty, staff, and patients at Meharry Medical College.

POLICY: Meharry Medical College (“College and/or MMC”) strives to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all. Therefore, the College prohibits being under the influence of, or the unlawful use, manufacture, possession, sale, distribution or dispensing of drugs or drug paraphernalia (“controlled substances” as defined in the Controlled Substances Act, 21, U.S.C 812) and alcohol on the College property or during College sponsored or sanctioned activities. This includes off-campus clinical training and rotation sites. Individuals who engage in illegal activity or the improper use of alcohol and drugs are harmful to themselves, the wellbeing of others, the College’s mission, and patient safety during clinical training.

A sustained finding of violation of this Policy as determined by the Student Code of Professional Conduct policy (“Student Code of Conduct”) will result in dismissal. All decisions are subject to appeal procedures as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct policy.

DEFINITIONS:

Controlled substances: A drug or other substance that is tightly controlled by the government because it may be abused or cause addiction. The control applies to the way the substance is made, used, handled, stored, and distributed. Controlled substances include opioids, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, and anabolic steroids.

Controlled substances with known medical use, such as morphine, Valium, and Ritalin, are available only by prescription from a licensed medical professional. Other controlled



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substances, such as heroin and LSD, have no known medical use and are illegal in the United States.

STUDENT SELF-REFERRAL: The College understands that alcohol and drug abuse is a treatable condition and as an academic health science center, is dedicated to “Service to All Mankind.” The College acknowledges that it has a responsibility to facilitate preventive activities and offer treatment to students who are affected by alcohol and other drug abuse issues. MMC favors early intervention and strongly encourages all students with drug and/or alcohol problems to seek help voluntarily. MMC’s Counseling Service Center will make treatment and referral services available to students upon their request. Treatment programs are administered or facilitated through the Tennessee Health Related Boards Peer Assistance Program (PAP). MMC respects the confidentiality rights of a student and will assist them to continue their education and employment, if possible. MMC also respects the rights of patients and is committed to protecting them from harm that may be caused by students who are abusing or are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Therefore:

1. Any student who is referred, volunteers, or is admitted into the Peer Assistance Program, will be removed from clinical training and placed on a Leave of Absence until the College certifies the student has successfully completed the program and currently meets the Technical Standards of the College.
2. Students who fail to cooperate and/or complete the program may be dismissed due to failure to meet the Technical Standards of the College.
3. The student’s respective school, in conjunction with the Division of Student Affairs, will take into consideration the student’s academic and professional



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status and the student's compliance with the recommended actions.

4. College policy prohibits discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. This Policy proposed to be consistent with that commitment and in compliance with applicable law, including the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

DRUGS AND ALCOHOL TESTING: Students are subject to drug and alcohol testing: pre-enrollment, pre-clinical, clinical, reasonable suspicion (See Student Substance Abuse Process) and random testing.

POLICY VIOLATIONS:

Examples of policy violations include, but are not limited to, any of the following:

a. Failure of:

- i. Any drug/alcohol test
- ii. Mandatory drug/alcohol testing
- iii. Drug/alcohol test during routine medical screening MMC or affiliated sites
- iv. Reasonable suspicion drug/alcohol testing
- v. Random drug/alcohol testing

b. A written/verbal self-disclosure to faculty or College official by the student of drug/alcohol abuse.

SANCTIONS:

If a student is found in violation of this Policy as determined by the Student Code of Conduct, they will be dismissed. All decisions are subject to appeal procedures as outlined in the policy.

2. A student who refuses to submit to mandatory drug/alcohol test will be immediately dismissed.

READMISSION: Students who have been removed from clinical training and placed on a Leave of Absence while seeking treatment may seek readmission to the program after having



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successfully completed a Peer Assistance Program as discussed in the “Student Self-Referral” section. Although no formal College disciplinary action may be taken immediately after the violation, the individual impaired students will be required to participate in the Peer Assistance Program or another alternative resolution through a process or restriction not prescribed within the Student Professional Code of Conduct; and must establish that the individual student has addressed issues that contributed to the misconduct. Students entering the Peer Assistance Program or approved alternative treatment program, must consent to the treatment program disclosing information relevant to their treatment and successful completion of the program to the appropriate College officials.

1. Eligibility

a. Successful Completion of Peer Assistance Program

i. A student placed on a Leave of Absence due to a violation of this policy may be eligible for readmission to their respective program according to the procedures outlined in the Student Code of Conduct policy, and based on any applicable requirements of the program’s respective accrediting body.

ii. If reinstated, the student must at his/her own expense, provide a negative drug/alcohol test result and satisfactory documentation of successful completion of any interventions required by the College.

iii. Random drug screens may be required by the College during the remainder of the student’s enrollment. The student shall be responsible for the cost of all drug screening required by the College.

iv. After completion of the Peer Assistance program, an aftercare monitoring program may be mandated.

v. Upon the successful completion of a Peer Assistance Program and/or aftercare monitoring, a student may petition the College for expungement of the disciplinary record.

2. Students are not eligible for participation in Peer Assistance Programs or approved alternative treatment, if they are determined to have:



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a. Engaged in the unlawful manufacture, possession, distribution, or dispensing of drugs or alcohol on College property during College sponsored or sanctioned activities or at a clinical training area.

b. Previously failed a drug/alcohol test or participated in a Peer Assistance Program.

c. Entered into an alternative resolution agreement

d. Been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony drug crimes; or

e. Engaged in other serious violations of the Standards of Conduct (e.g. physical or sexual assault, property destruction, disorderly behavior, theft, second incident of misconduct involving alcohol or drugs).

ADDITIONAL ACTION BY SCHOOLS: Each school may have its own requirements for Technical Standards and professionalism. The individual School may initiate proceedings to determine compliance with professionalism requirements or attainment of the minimum Technical Standards. This may happen at any time, independent of any pending criminal charges, campus disciplinary processes, or state regulatory or administrative actions.

NOTICE REGARDING LEGALIZATION OF MARIJUANA: Although some states may have legalized the recreational or medical use of marijuana, use of marijuana is strictly prohibited. Further, possession, use of, being under the influence of, or having any detectable levels of marijuana or cannabidiol (CBD) in their system at any time or location, ever, during the student's tenure in the program, is a violation of this College policy; the Student Code of Conduct; the College Drug Free policy; federal laws including the Controlled Substance Act and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act; and not the least, presents a clear threat to patient safety. (See Appendix A)

EXHIBITS:

Student Alcohol and Drug Policy

Appendix A

Student Substance Abuse Process



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Appendix A

Policy on Drugs and Alcohol

Meharry Medical College (“College and/or MMC”) strives to maintain a safe and healthy environment for all. Therefore, the College prohibits being under the influence of, or the unlawful use, manufacture, possession, sale, distribution or dispensing of drugs or drug paraphernalia (“controlled substances” as defined in the Controlled Substances Act, 21, U.S.C 812) and alcohol on the College property or during College activities, including off-campus clinical training and rotation sites. Individuals who engage in illegal activity or the improper or illegal use of alcohol and drugs are harmful to themselves, the wellbeing of others, the College’s mission, and patient safety during clinical training.

A sustained finding of violation of this Policy as determined by the Student Code of Professional Conduct policy (“Student Code of Conduct”) will result in dismissal. All decisions are subject to appeal procedures as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct policy.

Federal and state laws provide additional penalties including fines and imprisonment (Federal Drug Free Workplace Act; Federal Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, 21 USC § 841, et seq., Tenn. Code Anno. §39-6-401 et seq.) Meharry Medical College policies and local regulations also provide for action for drug and alcohol offenders, which may include referral for local prosecution or requiring the satisfactory participation in an approved drug or alcohol assistance or rehabilitation program.

In recent years some states have legalized the recreational or medical use of marijuana. However, use of marijuana is strictly forbidden. Further, possession, use or being under the influence, or have any detectable levels of marijuana in ones system at any time or location, ever, during a student’s tenure in the program, is a violation of this College policy; the Student Code of Professional Conduct, and federal laws including the Controlled Substance Act and the Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act. Additionally, it presents a clear threat to patient safety.

Please note the use of CBD, even if sold legally, may contain sufficient levels of THC to produce a valid positive test.

Conduct Standards

A student or student organization may be disciplined for the following types of misconduct:



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- Using, manufacturing, possessing, distributing, selling, dispensing, or being under the influence of drugs or drug paraphernalia, if prohibited by federal, state, or local law; using or possessing a prescription drug if the prescription was not issued to the student; or distributing or selling a prescription drug to a person to whom the prescription was not originally issued.
- Consuming, possessing, distributing, manufacturing, selling, dispensing, or being under the influence of alcoholic beverages, if prohibited by federal, state, or local law.

Disciplinary Sanctions

The College will impose disciplinary sanctions on students who violate College standards of conduct. Students should also be aware that violation of federal, state, or local law may subject them to criminal prosecution. Conviction may result in fines, imprisonment, and revocation or loss of eligibility to receive federal student aid (grants, loans, or work-study) and other privileges.

College imposed discipline may include sanctions up to and including dismissal, in addition to referral for criminal prosecution. Disciplinary sanctions may include required participation in a treatment, counseling, or other approved rehabilitation program.

Financial Assistance

Students convicted of drug offenses committed while receiving Title IV federal funding may be ineligible for federal financial aid for one or more years from the date of conviction. For additional information, visit www.studentaid.ed.gov.

Resources

Meharry is an institution whose mission is commitment to healing. The College recognizes that alcohol and other drugs abuse is a preventable and treatable condition and as stewards of healing, the College has the responsibility to facilitate prevention activities and offer treatment to students who are affected by alcohol and other drug abuse issues. Meharry encourages all students with drug and/or alcohol abuse problems to seek help voluntarily and favors the earliest possible intervention. Meharry will make referral services available to students upon their request.



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Aid to impaired students' programs are administered or facilitated through the approved Tennessee Health Related Boards Peer Assistance Program (PAP). These programs can be coordinated through the College's Counseling Services.

CBD Frequently Asked Questions

What is CBD?	Can you have a positive drug test from using CBD products?
CBD is short for cannabidiol and is a compound found in cannabis, which has gained popularity over the last few years for purported therapeutic properties. Advocates claim to see positive changes when combating anxiety, seizures, and other issues, but the product and claims have not been validated by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA)	Yes. Although most CBD products claim to have less than 0.3% THC, which is classified as hemp, the products remain unregulated making the assertion of THC levels unreliable and the users vulnerable to a positive drug test.
Are there medical benefits to using CBD products?	Is it possible to obtain a prescription for CBD products from a physician or other healthcare provider?
The FDA states, "Unlike drug products approved by the FDA, unapproved CBD drug products have not be subjected to FDA review as part of the drug approval process, and there has been no FDA evaluation regarding whether they are safe and effective to treat a particular disease, what the proper dosage is, how they interact with other drugs or foods, or whether they have dangerous side effects.	Other an one prescription drug product (https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-drug-comprised-active-ingredient-derived-marijuana-treat-rare-severe-forms) to treat rare, severe forms of epilepsy, the FDA has not approved any other CBD product, and there is very limited available information about CBD, including about its effects on the body. Meharry strongly encourages students not to risk a disruption in their academic and professional progression.



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