



Marine Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Squadron 3  
(VMU-3)



## Policy on Substance Abuse

15 April 2016

- Policy.** My policy on substance abuse is clear; there is zero tolerance for it. It is counter to our core values in every way. Substance abuse is defined as *“The **wrongful use, possession, manufacture, distribution, or introduction** onto a military installation, vessel, vehicle, or aircraft used by or under the control of the armed forces by any person subject to this Order, of natural substances (e.g. fungi), chemicals (e.g. chemicals wrongfully used as inhalants), propellants, or prescribed or over-the-counter drugs or pharmaceutical compounds with the intent to induce intoxication, excitement, or stupefaction of their own central nervous system, or that of another, is prohibited”*.
- Mission Accomplishment.** Substance abuse is a selfish act that detracts from mission accomplishment.
- Accountability.** Marines and Sailors will try to rationalize substance abuse and blame others to justify their actions; however, Marines and Sailors are responsible for their own actions at all times and will be held accountable for them.
- Faithful service.** Substance abuse is not an honorable early out method. Instances of substance abuse can be processed for separation. Substance abuse will affect your characterization of service, your benefits, and your career post-service.
- Escape.** Substance abuse is not the answer to dealing with life’s challenges, it may appear to offer temporary escape, but in the long term it compounds your challenges.
- Effects.** Substance abuse could have short and long term health effects. Illicit drugs are not regulated by any organization. There is no telling what harmful substances could be in them or how it will affect you. Why risk it?
- History and Tradition.** The Marine Corps has a rich history that includes origins of foundation in a tavern. This fact does not excuse you from being accountable for your actions today. Do not mistake the standards of 1775 with today’s standards. The Marine Corps has evolved over 240 years. The America we serve today has higher expectations of conduct and behavior for its Marines than it did in 1775 and does not care that you were “born in a bar”.
- Trust.** Substance abuse erodes trust amongst your fellow Marines. Trust is vitally important for a team to succeed. Without the trust of your fellow Marines, you are not a productive member of the team.
- Honor.** Keep your honor clean. If the United States’ population was represented by the attendance of 60,000 people at a football stadium, 30 people in the crowd would represent the entire Marine Corps. We are an extremely small percentage of the total U.S. population. It is an honor to serve in the Marine Corps. It is not honorable to throw away all of your hard work for instant gratification that will have lasting impacts on your life. Substance abuse impairs judgement and lowers inhibitions. This combination often times leads to other crimes and misconduct that will have negative impacts on your life and career. You have worked too hard to earn the title Marine to throw it all away.
- **High standards.** You chose the Marine Corps because it has high standards and is the best warfighting organization in the world. The Marine Corps chose you because you can uphold those standards. The Marine Corps does not have time, patience, or tolerance for actions such as substance abuse that our counter to our warfighting ethos. It will quickly separate you and move on to training other Marines and winning battles with them.

Semper Fidelis,

LtCol Wayne Phelps  
Commanding Officer  
VMU-3