

Freedom of Information request reference number: 6874.1

Date of response: 22/09/2022

Request:

Please can you confirm the following:

- 1) Would you be suspended if you fail a drugs test for cannabis at a Routine Periodical Medical if you have proof that it has been prescribed by a doctor?*
- 2) Are you aware of any Firefighters (operational or non-operational) that have disclosed that they use medical cannabis?*
- 3) Would the Firefighter have to disclose this to the employer other than at an occupational medical appointment?*
- 4) Would the Firefighter in question remain anonymous as this is private medical information?*

Response:

Please find responses to your questions in turn below:

1) Would you be suspended if you fail a drugs test for cannabis at a routine periodical medical if you have proof that it has been prescribed by a doctor?

The LFB Alcohol & drugs policy (PN550) states in paragraph 3.2: "No employee should report for work with traces of illegal drugs in their body systems. The London Fire Commissioner has zero tolerance of illegal drug consumption." Therefore, if an employee provides a test at a Routine Periodical Medical which is positive for cannabis and this is confirmed by the laboratory, they will normally be suspended from duty while an investigation is carried out in accordance with the Brigade's disciplinary procedure.

2) Are you aware of any Firefighters (operational or non-operational) that have disclosed that they use medical cannabis?

No.

3) Would the Firefighter have to disclose this to the employer other than at an occupational medical appointment?

The LFB Alcohol & drugs policy (PN550) states that employees should advise their line manager of any medications/ prescription or otherwise that are being taken and may impact the employee's ability to perform their role. The policy does contain a list of legal substances which are known to cause side-effects that are not compatible with firefighting. This would be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

4) Would the Firefighter in question remain anonymous as this is private medical information?

If medical cannabis was prescribed and being used as prescribed with no safety concerns, Occupational Health (OH) would provide advice directly to the individual but this would not be shared with the organisation. It is however likely that OH would encourage the individual to make their line manager aware of their usage. If the individual shared with OH that they were using cannabis legally and regularly in a way that would impact the employee's safety and the safety of those they are working with/for then they would advise the individual of their duty to share this information with the Brigade.

We have dealt with your request under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. For more information about this process please see the guidance we publish about making a request on our website: <https://www.london-fire.gov.uk/about-us/transparency/request-information-from-us/>