

ALCOHOL PREVENTION ENHANCEMENT SITE

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MEDICAL AMNESTY IN KENTUCKY

What is Medical Amnesty?

On April 4, 2013, Kentucky joined sixteen other states by enacting a Medical Amnesty Law. This new law grants immunity from prosecution for certain alcohol related offenses when an individual requests emergency medical assistance for him/her self or someone else due to alcohol over consumption, or acts along with another person in requesting emergency medical assistance.

Why grant Medical Amnesty?

Unintentional alcohol-related injuries, are the leading cause of death for young people in the U.S. In 2009, nearly 1 in 4 KY high school students reported consuming five or more drinks in a row (binge drinking) in the past 30-days putting them at risk for alcohol poisoning and potentially fatal consequences (CDC 2011).

People may not seek medical assistance in alcohol poisoning situations for fear of arrest or police involvement (Cornell University 2002). Medical Amnesty removes the barriers to calling 911.

KY Law protects you when you "DO THE RIGHT THING" in an alcohol emergency

Medical Amnesty requires a person to:

Provide his or her full name and all other relevant information requested by emergency medical personnel or law enforcement; Remain with the individual needing medical assistance until professional medical assistance is provided; Cooperate with emergency personnel and law enforcement officers.

A person who meets the above qualifications shall be protected from the following criminal offenses:

- (a) Alcohol intoxication under KRS 222.202(1);
- (b) Drinking alcoholic beverages in a public place under KRS 222.202(2);
- (c) Offenses related to possession of alcoholic beverages by a minor under 21 years of age under KRS 244.085;
- (d) Providing alcohol to minors under 21 years of age or assisting minors under 21 years of age to purchase alcohol under KRS 244.085 or 530.070.



DO THE RIGHT THING

If you suspect alcohol poisoning, CALL 911

About 50,000 people suffer from alcohol poisoning each year, and some die as a result
OJJDP Juvenile Justice Bulletin, September 2012

One of the most dangerous causes of alcohol poisoning is binge drinking. *Mayo Clinic 2008*

Teens and college students, most of whom are first-time or inexperienced drinkers, are the most likely to binge drink. 90% of all alcohol consumed by youth 12-20 years of age is in the form of binge drinking. *Center for Disease Control (CDC)*

THE A-B-C-D-ES OF RECOGNIZING ALCOHOL OVERDOSE

- **AWAKE:** Attempt to wake the person up. Call out their name, shake them, or pinch their skin. If they don't respond, turn and keep the person on their side, so that they do not choke on their vomit.
- **BREATHING:** Check the person's breathing. If there are fewer than eight full breaths in one minute or more than 10 seconds between and inhale and an exhale, their respiratory system is slowing down rapidly and they need immediate medical attention.
- **CIRCULATION:** Check the person's pulse. If you cannot find a pulse on the wrist, it may be because the person was lying on their arm and to find a pulse you need to check their neck. Also check to see if skin is cold, clammy, or blue or grayish in color.
- **DO NOT LEAVE THE PERSON ALONE, EVER!** Keep them lying on their side so they do not choke on their vomit.
- **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE:** If you discover ANY of the above problems, stay with the person and have someone else call 911. Stay with the person until help arrives. Be prepared to give the emergency medical personnel as much information as possible, including any drugs or medications the person might have taken.

What **NOT** to do: Don't just let them "sleep it off"! They may not wake up!!



"Do the right thing." Calling 911 is not a crime.