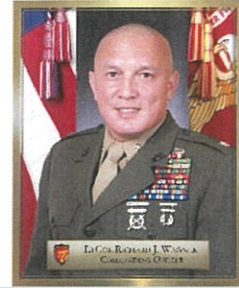




III MEF Support Battalion Commanding Officer's Policy Statement on *Substance Abuse*



Substance abuse is a nationwide issue found in all sectors of our lives. However, as Marines, we are held to a higher standard and need to demand the best of ourselves, of our fellow Marines and Sailors. Substance abuse effects morale, unit cohesion, degrades performance, effectiveness, and unit readiness. It is contrary to our core values, and the actions of substance abusers can result in serious injury to civilians, members of this Battalion, themselves or damage to equipment.

My policy is simple – **ZERO TOLERANCE; always do the right thing!**

- To be blunt: Any Marine or Sailor determined to be abusing will be charged under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (UCMJ) through Non-judicial Punishment (NJP), Courts Martial, and processed for separation from the Marine Corps.
- To be clear: There will be no leniency!

The goal of III MEF Support Battalion is to provide well-trained, physically fit and mentally alert Marines and Sailors in a drug and alcohol free environment where they can successfully accomplish their assigned duty. Marines and Sailors that abuse drugs and alcohol will negatively impact on the successful attainment of this objective.

Substance abuse destroys the health of personnel, their careers, and eventually their families. **Substance abuse is also not limited to the use of illegal drugs.** Prescription medications, over-the-counter drugs, and alcohol abuse can be just as dangerous when used in ways not consistent with their intended purpose. The effects of various drugs and alcohol impair a person's capacity to think clearly, assess risk appropriately and act responsibly. Abuse can quickly become a significant contributor to domestic abuse, sexual harassment, injury, and death. Recognize the significance of this potentially lethal ingredient. Poor decision making and irresponsible behavior in our profession have unnecessarily killed others over the years.

We are professionals and will be held accountable for our actions. Those that choose to abuse drugs or alcohol rarely do so alone. In many cases, peers know of the abuse and decide to do nothing. Those who tolerate substance abuse in others and do nothing are **culpable!** Moral courage and intestinal fortitude to identify those abusing will be a test each of you. Pass this test by getting help for the individual, thereby preventing potential negative results of your inaction. Consider the proper choices to be a career decision and a life-saving skill.

We will utilize an aggressive compulsory Urinalysis Testing Program. This system will ensure annual drug screening of all Marines and Sailors, regardless of rank. We will randomly test at least ten percent of our unit on a monthly cycle. Expect a smaller number of personnel tested on a random and more frequent basis. The intent is to reduce predictability and to increase your reasons not to do drugs.

If you are concerned about someone you believe to have a substance abuse problem, obtain help through your medical provider, professional addiction counselor or command Substance Abuse Control Officer (SACO). There are a variety of programs available to help our Marines and families. The Battalion SACO can provide anyone who needs it the help to keep drugs and alcohol from destroying their lives, and can be reached at DSN (315) 623-4804.

The Marine Corps' core values of honor, courage, and commitment enable our success when at home or in battle. Honor your service by staying drug and alcohol free. Have the courage to intervene to prevent someone from making a poor life-changing decision. Every member of III MEF Support Battalion is essential to this command and critical to our mission success. Degrading our readiness and combat effectiveness due to unprofessional behavior of abusing drugs or alcohol is not acceptable. Finally, possess the commitment to a lifestyle that will promote your best performance.

And remember, take care of each other and everything else will take care of itself.

Semper Fidelis,

Richard J. Wagner
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Commanding Officer
III MEF Support Battalion