

Drink Spiking Awareness and Prevention Toolkit

Recognising Signs of Spiking, Legal Responsibilities, and Managing Incidents Effectively

Introduction

Drink spiking is a serious crime that poses significant risks to public safety. Security officers play a crucial role in preventing, identifying, and responding to incidents of drink spiking in bars, clubs, and public venues. This toolkit provides essential guidance on recognising the signs of spiking, understanding legal responsibilities, and implementing effective incident management strategies.

1. Understanding Drink Spiking

1.1 What is Drink Spiking?

Drink spiking refers to the act of adding drugs, alcohol, or other substances to someone's drink without their consent. It is commonly done with the intention of:

- **Theft:** Targeting victims to steal personal belongings.
- **Assault:** Committing sexual or physical assault.
- **Pranks:** Done for amusement, often by acquaintances.

1.2 Common Substances Used in Drink Spiking

- **Alcohol Overdosing:** Adding extra alcohol to make someone intoxicated quickly.
- **Sedatives:** Such as Rohypnol or GHB, which can cause drowsiness and unconsciousness.
- **Stimulants:** Including MDMA or ketamine, which can cause confusion and agitation.



1.3 Legal Consequences of Drink Spiking

- In the UK, drink spiking is illegal under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861, with penalties of up to 10 years in prison.
 - If a crime is committed after drink spiking, such as assault, theft, or rape, additional severe charges apply.
 - Venue Responsibilities: Licensed venues must take preventive measures or risk losing their alcohol licence under the Licensing Act 2003.
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2. Recognising the Signs of Drink Spiking

2.1 Symptoms of a Spiked Drink

Security officers should be trained to recognise these symptoms in individuals:

- Sudden dizziness or confusion.
 - Unusual drowsiness or passing out.
 - Difficulty speaking, standing, or moving.
 - Nausea or vomiting without excessive alcohol consumption.
 - Unexplained memory loss or blackouts.
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2.2 Spotting Suspicious Behaviour

- Unattended drinks being tampered with.
 - Individuals persistently pressuring others to drink.
 - People acting overly intoxicated compared to their actual alcohol intake.
 - Individuals attempting to leave with an intoxicated person who appears unwell.
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3. Preventing Drink Spiking in Venues

3.1 Proactive Security Measures

- Increased Surveillance: Security officers should monitor patrons closely, especially near the bar area.
- Bag and Pocket Searches: If permitted, conduct random bag and pocket checks at entry points.
- Encouraging Safe Drinking: Staff should remind customers not to leave drinks unattended.



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3.2 Safety Protocols for Bars and Clubs

- Use Drink Covers & Testing Kits: Encourage venues to provide drink safety covers and test kits.
- Clear Reporting Procedures: Ensure bar staff know how to report suspected spiking cases.
- Visible Security Presence: A strong security presence can deter potential offenders.

4. Managing Drink Spiking Incidents

4.1 Immediate Response Steps

- Stay with the individual and assess their condition.
- Move them to a safe area and ensure they are not left alone.
- Call for medical assistance if the individual becomes unresponsive.
- Gather witness statements and identify possible suspects.
- Secure CCTV footage for evidence.

4.2 Reporting and Documentation

- Complete an incident report with detailed information.
- Notify police immediately if a crime has occurred.
- Assist law enforcement by providing any CCTV footage or witness statements.

5. Legal Responsibilities of Security Officers

5.1 Duty of Care

- Security officers have a legal and ethical duty to protect patrons.
- Failure to act appropriately can result in legal consequences for the venue and security staff.

5.2 Compliance with Licensing Laws

- The Licensing Act 2003 requires venues to maintain a safe environment.
- Security teams must be trained to handle drink spiking cases.

5.3 Cooperation with Law Enforcement

- Always report incidents to the police.
- Provide accurate information to assist investigations.



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