Free spiking-awareness briefing

Crewbright printable guide | Reviewed 11 November 2026

A free introductory briefing for pub, venue and event teams. Read the three sections, discuss the scenario and connect the response to your local welfare arrangements.

Recognition, immediate support and reporting. Clinical treatment and specialist security duties require the relevant competence. This is a free staff briefing resource.

Understand the concern

Spiking involves giving someone a substance without their knowledge or consent, including adding alcohol. A person may report a changed drink or suddenly feel unusually confused or unwell. Symptoms alone cannot confirm the cause. Take the report seriously, ask what help the person needs and contact the welfare or duty team. Their immediate wellbeing comes first.

Arrange safe support

Stay with the person or arrange a trusted staff member to help. Move to a safer, quieter place if appropriate and safe. Call 999 for collapse, breathing difficulty or another serious emergency, and follow the call handler's instructions. Help identify trusted companions; verify the person's wishes where possible. Handing someone to an unfamiliar person who claims to be a friend can create further risk.

Report and preserve

Follow the venue's police reporting arrangements promptly. Tell the manager about the time, location and relevant observations. Protect drinks or containers from disposal and ask authorised staff to preserve relevant CCTV. Leave evidence handling to the agreed procedure. Record facts securely and keep information out of social media. A negative result from a consumer drink test cannot establish that a person is safe or remove the need for medical help.

Discuss this fictional situation

A guest says their drink tasted different and is becoming very confused. Another guest, unknown to staff, offers to take them outside.

Contact the welfare team and seek medical help, using 999 for a serious emergency. Keep support with the guest, establish trusted companions and preserve the drink through the manager. Report the concern promptly through the venue's police procedure.

Complete your local briefing

Identify the duty or welfare lead and backup.

Confirm how staff summon urgent medical help and guide responders to the location.

Explain the venue's safe-support and reporting arrangements.

Show how authorised staff preserve relevant records.

Further guidance

Official guidance for venues and festival organisers

Official NHS emergency guidance

Explore the pub and night-time training pathway

Latest guidance: https://crewbright.co.uk/resources/free-spiking-awareness-briefing/