



ALCOHOL

Social Criteria Investment Screen

AUTHORITY

Authority: The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) has laid out its concern for health in a social statement “Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor” [2003], acknowledging that health is central to our wellbeing, caring for it is a matter of shared stewardship and adequate support for public health is a critical advocacy priority. Given its inordinate effect on life expectancy, alcohol abuse represents a public health issue. Historically, the ELCA’s predecessors have expressed concern about the widespread misuse of alcohol. In the present, the ELCA’s social statement on criminal justice and the messages on gender-based violence, suicide prevention, and commercial sexual exploitation all recognize alcohol addiction as a catalyst for social ills.

WORDING OF SCREEN

Wording of screen: The ELCA shall not knowingly make any investment in firms which are involved in (e.g. 10% or more of revenue is derived from) the production or marketing of alcohol products for human consumption.

DEFINITION OF PROBLEM

Definition of Problem: Excessive alcohol use led to approximately 88,000 deaths and 2.5 million years of potential life lost (YPLL) each year in the United States from 2006 - 2010, shortening the lives of those who died by an average of 30 years.¹ Alcohol impairment accounted for nearly 30% of all traffic-related deaths in 2016² and alcohol use factors into numerous social ills such as violent crime³ and domestic violence.⁴

1 <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm>

2 https://www.cdc.gov/motorvehiclesafety/impaired_driving/impaired-driv_factsheet.html

3 Twenty to 25 percent of the victims of violent crime said the perpetrator used alcohol. https://www.bjs.gov/content/acf/apt1_crimes_by_type.cfm

4 Alcohol increases the duration and severity of domestic violence. https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/world_report/factsheets/fs_intimate.pdf

Corporate Social Responsibility in the ELCA uses the tools of screening of investments, shareholder advocacy and community investing to work with corporations, calling them to ensure that people are treated fairly and with dignity and to create sustainable communities.

More at [ELCA.org/CSR](https://www.elca.org/CSR).

Recognizing that various investors will implement this along a continuum, for the purpose of this screen investment might include companies that produce alcohol for human consumption. It could also include companies selling, promoting and marketing in this industry or supplying key component elements to the industry.

SOCIAL POLICY AND STUDIES

Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor (ELCA social statement, 2003)

The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries (ELCA social statement, 2013)

“Commercial Sexual Exploitation” (ELCA social message, 2001)

“Gender-based Violence” (ELCA social message, 2015)

“Suicide Prevention” (ELCA social message, 1999)

HISTORICAL DOCUMENTS

“Chemical Comforters and Drug Dependency” (The American Lutheran Church, 1972)

“Health, Life, and Death: A Christian Perspective” (The American Lutheran Church, 1977)

“A Ministry of Healing Health and Health Care Today” (ELCA, 2001)

“Pastoral Counseling and the Alcoholic: A Study Paper of the Lutheran Church in America” (Lutheran Church in America, date unknown)

APPROVED by the ELCA Church Council – April 21-23, 1990

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