



MANAGING DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE AT WORK

OVERVIEW

Being aware of signs of drug and alcohol misuse in the workplace is crucial for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for employees. Here's a breakdown of the issues and what to look out for:

- **Unexplained or Frequent Absences:** Employees who frequently call in sick or are absent without a valid reason may be struggling with substance misuse. Consistent tardiness or unexplained absences could be a red flag.
- **Change in Behavior:** Keep an eye out for significant changes in behavior, such as mood swings, irritability, or sudden aggression. These changes may indicate that an employee is struggling with substance misuse.
- **Unexplained dips in Productivity:** A noticeable decrease in work quality or productivity without a clear explanation could be a sign of drug or alcohol misuse. This could include missed deadlines, incomplete tasks, or a decline in overall performance.
- **More Accidents or Near-Misses:** An increase in workplace accidents or near-misses could indicate that employees are under the influence of drugs or alcohol. This is particularly concerning in roles that involve operating machinery or handling hazardous materials.
- **Performance or Conduct Issues:** Employees struggling with substance misuse may exhibit poor judgment, erratic behavior, or difficulty following company policies and procedures. This could manifest as conflicts with coworkers, insubordination, or violations of safety protocols.

It's important to note that these signs can also be indicative of other issues, such as stress, illness, or personal problems. However, if you notice multiple warning signs or if an employee's behavior significantly deviates from their usual conduct, it may be worth addressing the issue directly.

Implementing a comprehensive drug and alcohol policy, providing education and support resources, and encouraging open communication can help create a workplace culture that prioritizes health and safety while effectively addressing substance misuse issues.

DEVELOP A POLICY

Developing a comprehensive drug and alcohol policy is essential for maintaining a safe and productive workplace, especially in safety-critical environments. Here's a framework for creating such a policy:

- Begin by stating the purpose and objectives of the policy. This should emphasize the organization's commitment to providing a safe and healthy work environment for all employees and the importance of preventing drug and alcohol misuse.
- Clearly define the scope of the policy, including which employees it apply to, the types of substances covered (e.g., illegal drugs, alcohol, prescription medications), and the situations in which the policy is enforced (e.g., during work hours, on company premises).
- Outline the specific behaviors that are prohibited under the policy, such as using, possessing, distributing, or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while on duty. Clarify that compliance with the policy is a condition of employment.
- Detail the procedures for drug and alcohol testing, including the circumstances under which testing may be conducted (e.g., pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion), the methods of testing (e.g., urine, blood, breathalyzer), and the consequences for refusing to undergo testing.
- Specify the consequences for violations of the policy, which may include disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment. Ensure that the consequences are applied consistently and fairly across all employees.



DIALOGUE WITH YOUR EMPLOYEES

Consulting with employees is a vital aspect of creating an effective drug and alcohol policy and fostering a supportive workplace culture. Here's how you can involve employees in this process:

- 1. Survey or Focus Groups:** Consider conducting anonymous surveys or organizing focus groups to gather feedback from employees about their perceptions of drug and alcohol use in the workplace, their concerns, and their suggestions for addressing these issues.
- 2. Feedback Sessions:** Hold open forums or feedback sessions where employees can express their thoughts and concerns about drug and alcohol policies and initiatives. Encourage honest communication and assure employees that their input is valued.
- 3. Policy Development:** Involve employees in the development of drug and alcohol policies by seeking their input on elements such as testing procedures, consequences for policy violations, and support services available to employees struggling with substance misuse.
- 4. Training and Education:** Provide training and education sessions on drug and alcohol awareness, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a safe and healthy work environment. Encourage employees to share their experiences and insights during these sessions.
- 5. Support Resources:** Ensure that employees are aware of the support resources available to them, such as employee assistance programs (EAPs), counseling services, and peer support groups. Solicit feedback on the effectiveness of these resources and make adjustments as needed.

By involving employees in the process of developing and implementing drug and alcohol policies, you do not only demonstrate your commitment to their well-being but also empower them to contribute to a safer and more supportive workplace environment.



CONTINUATION FROM DEVELOP A POLICY

- Address the confidentiality of drug and alcohol test results and the privacy rights of employees. Assure employees that their personal information will be handled confidentially and only shared with authorized individuals on a need-to-know basis.
- Outline the organization's commitment to providing education and awareness programs on drug and alcohol misuse, including the risks associated with impairment, the signs of substance misuse, and available support resources.
- Describe the support resources available to employees who may be struggling with substance misuse, such as employee assistance programs (EAPs), counseling services, or referral to treatment programs. Emphasize the organization's willingness to support employees in seeking help and returning to work.
- Specify the process for ensuring compliance with the policy, including regular audits of testing procedures and review of disciplinary actions. Commit to periodic reviews of the policy to ensure it remains current and effective.
- Require employees to sign an acknowledgment form indicating that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with the drug and alcohol policy.

SCREENING AND TESTING FOR DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

Screening and testing for drugs and alcohol are important components of a comprehensive drug and alcohol policy, particularly in safety-critical workplaces. Here's how you can approach screening and testing effectively:

- 1. Pre-Employment Screening:** Consider conducting pre-employment drug and alcohol screening for all prospective employees. This helps to ensure that individuals entering the workforce are not already struggling with substance misuse issues. Clearly communicate this requirement to all applicants during the hiring process.
- 2. Random Testing:** Implement a program of random drug and alcohol testing for current employees. Random testing helps to deter substance misuse and ensures that employees understand that compliance with the policy is required at all times. Be transparent about the procedures for selecting employees for testing and ensure consistency in the application of random testing.
- 3. Post-Accident Testing:** Require drug and alcohol testing for employees involved in workplace accidents or incidents where impairment could have been a contributing factor. This helps to determine whether substance misuse played a role in the incident and informs appropriate disciplinary action or corrective measures.
- 4. Reasonable Suspicion Testing:** Train supervisors and managers to recognize the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol misuse, such as erratic behavior, slurred speech, or impaired coordination. If a supervisor has reasonable suspicion that an employee is under the influence, they should follow established procedures for initiating drug and alcohol testing.
- 5. Return-to-Duty and Follow-Up Testing:** Require employees who have violated the drug and alcohol policy to undergo return-to-duty testing before being allowed to resume their duties. Additionally, implement follow-up testing for a specified period afterward to monitor compliance and ensure ongoing sobriety.
- 6. Testing Methods:** Choose appropriate testing methods based on the needs and requirements of your workplace. Common testing methods include urine analysis, breathalyzer tests for alcohol, and saliva or hair follicle tests for drugs. Ensure that testing procedures comply with legal regulations and industry standards.
- 7. Confidentiality and Privacy:** Protect the confidentiality and privacy of employees undergoing drug and alcohol testing. Limit access to test results to authorized individuals involved in the testing process and ensure that results are securely stored and handled.

World No Tobacco Day 2024 (WNTD)

THEME: PROTECTING CHILDREN FROM TOBACCO

World No Tobacco Day is observed annually on May 31st. It's a day dedicated to raising awareness about the health risks associated with tobacco use and advocating for policies to reduce tobacco consumption worldwide. The campaign aims to educate people about the dangers of smoking, both to individuals and to society as a whole, and to encourage governments to implement effective measures to control tobacco use. This includes policies such as increasing tobacco taxes, implementing smoke-free laws, and offering support for those who want to quit smoking. Parents are to educate their children about the dangers of taking alcohol.

CONTINUATION FROM SCREENING AND TESTING FOR DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

- Training and Education:** Provide training for employees on the purpose and procedures of drug and alcohol testing, as well as their rights and responsibilities under the policy. This helps to alleviate concerns and ensures that employees understand the importance of compliance.
- Compliance with Legal Requirements:** Familiarize yourself with relevant laws and regulations governing drug and alcohol testing in your jurisdiction or industry. Ensure that testing procedures comply with these requirements to avoid legal complications.
- Documentation and Record-Keeping:** Maintain accurate records of all drug and alcohol testing activities, including test results, chain of custody documentation, and any follow-up actions taken. This documentation may be important for demonstrating compliance with the policy and legal requirements.

By implementing a structured program of screening and testing for drugs and alcohol, you can effectively deter substance misuse in the workplace, promote a culture of safety, and protect the well-being of your employees and the broader community.

TIPS OF MANAGING DRUG ABUSE

These steps outline a comprehensive approach to overcoming drug abuse and addiction, focusing on both treatment and ongoing support for recovery. Here's a breakdown of each step:

- 1. Acknowledgment and Acceptance:** Recognizing the presence of a drug abuse or addiction problem is the critical first step towards recovery. This involves acknowledging the issue and accepting that change is necessary.
- 2. Exploring Treatment Options:** There are various treatment options available, including counseling, therapy, medication-assisted treatment, and residential rehabilitation programs. It's essential to explore these options and find the approach that best fits your needs.
- 3. Seeking Support:** Recovery from addiction often requires support from others. This can include joining support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, seeking counseling or therapy, and involving family and friends in your recovery journey.
- 4. Learning Healthy Coping Mechanisms:** Finding healthy ways to cope with stress and difficult emotions is crucial for maintaining sobriety. This can involve engaging in activities such as exercise, mindfulness practices, hobbies, and spending time with supportive individuals.
- 5. Identifying Triggers:** Understanding the triggers that contribute to drug use is essential for avoiding relapse. Triggers can include people, places, emotions, and situations that increase the likelihood of drug use. By identifying and avoiding these triggers, individuals can better manage cravings and stay on the path to recovery.
- 6. Managing Cravings:** Cravings for drugs are a common part of the recovery process. Learning techniques to cope with cravings, such as distraction techniques, relaxation exercises, and reaching out for support, can help individuals resist the urge to use drugs.
- 7. Building a Meaningful Life:** Recovery from addiction is not just about abstaining from drugs; it's also about creating a fulfilling and meaningful life. This can involve setting goals, pursuing interests and passions, building healthy relationships, and finding purpose and meaning in daily activities.
- 8. Dealing with Relapse:** Relapse is a common part of the recovery process for many individuals. It's essential not to see relapse as a failure but rather as an opportunity to learn and grow. Developing strategies for coping with relapse, seeking support, and recommitting to recovery can help individuals move past setbacks and continue their journey towards sobriety.

ASK DR METETE

QUESTION: I have a colleague who is constantly taking drugs, when asked he will say he is having cold, this makes him look so weak and can't even deliver on his task. This makes me to receive query due to his incompetence. It has become a norm and it's also affecting my mental health.

ANSWER: You need to report this to the management so it does not affect your output at work.

ABNM HR EVENTS

Are you looking for employment in the any organization?

- Training Duration (6-8 weeks)
 - Certificate after training
 - Hands on Training
- Criteria for registration
- Must be able to read and write
 - For Chefs (must have attended culinary school)

Training Positions

- Caregiver/Nanny
- Security guard
- Driver
- Chef
- Kitchen Assistant
- Waiter/Waitress
- Barman/Mixologist
- Customer Service and other professional positions

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