

What Every Employer Should Know About Marijuana & The Workplace

What's the Big Deal About Employee Marijuana Use?

Economic loss from employee drug use is one of many negative impacts to the workplace.



Consider this:

The National Institutes of Health report that drug abuse costs the U.S. \$246 billion annually in lost revenue via lack of productivity, employee turnover, increased medical costs, more accidents and absenteeism (NHTSA).

The average small business owner suffers losses up to \$7,000/month due to employee drug use.

Employees who use marijuana have 55% more industrial accidents. 75% more absenteeism and 85% more workplace injuries than other employees (Abbie).

Marijuana is an impairing substance. The user experiences reduced motor coordination, short-term memory loss and altered reaction time which has destructive workplace effects. High doses can cause paranoia and psychosis¹². Employers, employees and customers are negatively impacted when workplace safety is threatened by an impaired employee. Higher THC potencies yield longer lasting "highs" that may affect the entire work day.



Detecting Employees Who Are Under-the-Influence

Know your employees. The best tool in your toolbox is to be aware of the difference between normal behavior and that which appears to be impaired

Attend annual trainings on the signs and symptoms leading to a reasonable suspicion drug test and trends in drug use.

Decisions to test should be made on the specific contemporaneous, articulable observations concerning the appearance, behavior, speech, or body odors of the employee.

"I used marijuana one time, 30 days ago!"

One-time marijuana use cannot be detected 30 days after use via urinalysis. Detectable THC in a urine drug screen indicates regular or chronic marijuana use and the science tells us that normal functions are compromised³. Lab-based oral fluid tests can detect marijuana intake in the past 24 hours and is quite useful for determining recent employee drug use.

What Employers Can Do

- Create a culture of safety for your employees, customers and community.
- Update your workplace drug & alcohol policy, making sure it is clear on violations and consequences. Your policy should include all forms of drug & alcohol testing that you intend to use.
- Be aware of specific state laws and keep your policy compliant.
- Employees company-wide must be made aware of the workplace drug & alcohol policies and procedures. This is an on-going conversation that should occur on a regular basis.
- Enforce your policies consistently and fairly.



EMPLOYEE DRUG TESTING PROGRAMS WORK



According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, employees who are in a mandatory drug testing program have 50% less drug use rates than employees who are not. In fact, random drug testing programs have been proven to significantly reduce workplace accidents as much as 70% (NIDA).

¹ <http://www.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/research/job185drugs/cannabis.htm>

² <http://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/drugfacts/marijuana>

³ Workplace Drug Testing in the Era of Legal Marijuana, p. 9, DuPont, Robert et al., Institute for Behavior and Health, Inc. Rockville, MD, 2015