

Paying Attention to Behavioral Indicators of Drug or Alcohol Use on the Job

Many of you may know of employees who might come to work under the influence of alcohol and cause an accident. Many of you are concerned about the recreational or medical marijuana laws in our state, which might affect the county's liability for employees who come to work on drugs. Did you know that the best way to avoid employee involvement without getting into complicated legal liability issues is to train your supervisors and employees on reasonable suspicion drug testing?

A public employer may discipline any employee who comes to work under the influence if that employee is acting in a way that is detrimental to the performance of their duties. Make sure your supervisors know to use the reasonable suspicion checklist and are able to identify common behavioral indicators of drug or alcohol abuse on the job.

- Do you know that improper use of drugs or alcohol on the job can be a topic for discipline even if you cannot do "random testing" on the job?
- Do you know the legally required procedure for evaluating unusual or apparently impaired behavior on the job to establish job-related performance issues?
- Do you know that "random testing" may not be used on ALL county employees without risking an expensive lawsuit?

- Do you know that using testing limits or methods that are not required by state or federal authority can subject a County or public employer to additional defense costs?
- Do you know that documenting an employee's impaired judgment, impaired performance, or telltale signs of drug or alcohol use while on the job can support a supervisor's decision to send an employee for a fitness for duty test?
- Have you been trained on how to be alert for signs of drug or alcohol abuse on the job, how to analyze your observations, and how to create documentation of impaired work performance? If not, you need to attend a free training on these topics.

What This Means to Counties

Call to schedule free "Drug and Alcohol Recognition for Supervisors" and "Reasonable Suspicion Drug & Alcohol Training for Supervisors" training today. CTSI offers drug and alcohol awareness and recognition courses for CDL and non-CDL employees. Call Dana Mumey at 720-465-3122 to inquire about any of these courses. Review your county-wide policies periodically, to make sure you use the right type of testing for different employee groups. 