

Reasonable Suspicion Guidelines & Tips For Supervisors

As a supervisor it's your responsibility to hold the line against substance abuse in the workplace and insure that your organization's policy is followed to the letter treating everyone equally no matter how the employee responds to your actions.

The testing program is designed to protect everyone by getting rid of alcohol and drugs from the workplace—not people.

Supervisor Intervention Tips:

Do Not.....

- Diagnose
- Moralized
- Be overly sympathetic
- Cover up
- Talk about with others

Do.....

- Know the policy
- Focus on job performance
- Be specific
- Be respectful
- Document

Steps to a Reasonable Suspicion Determination

Observe, Identify, and Investigate

Observe, Identify and Investigate poor performance that may be related to substance abuse. Look for Appearance, Behavioral, and Performance Indicators.

Document

Document your observations. Don't Diagnose. If possible get a second supervisor as a witness.

Remove the Employee

Remove the employee from performing safety sensitive tasks immediately if you feel they pose a treat to themselves or others. Waffling can cost lives.

Confirm

In a private place ask the employee for an explanation of their behavior, and remind them of the DOT rules and/or your policy.

Confront

Based on your written observations ask them to take a test. Give them a choice to comply. If they refuse remind them a refusal is treated as a positive, and then document the refusal.

Notify the Collection Site

Notify the collection site you are sending an employee for testing. It is a good idea to also notify your Designated Employer Representative (DER).

Escort the employee to the testing site

Escort the employee to the testing site and arrange for transportation home.

Stick to the Plan in Your Policy

Stick to the plan in your policy. Treat everyone equally. Document the entire event as soon as possible but no later than the end of the shift.

The Most Important Part of Your Substance Abuse Testing Program... Integrity

Reasonable Cause Script:

“(_____), as you know the Company has a Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Policy and as an employee of the Company you have agreed to abide by its policy to prevent drug and alcohol abuse in the workplace.

At this time, as your supervisor I am instructing you that you must submit to a reasonable cause drug screen and/or breath test at this time.

A company representative will go with you to the collection facility.”

Suspected employee is not allowed to drive himself/herself in a Company vehicle to the collection site location. If an employee leaves the premises in a private vehicle against the supervisor’s instruction, the Designated Employer Representative or Supervisor may consider notifying local authorities. Check your company policy for further guidance.