



The Supervisor Connection

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The National Drug-Free Workplace Alliance
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Being Proactive – What Supervisors Can Do to Prevent Workplace Accidents

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Drug Free America Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization committed to developing, promoting and sustaining global strategies, policies and laws that will reduce illegal drug use, drug addiction, drug-related injury and death.

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From time to time supervisors ask what they can do to prevent workplace accidents. While there is no “one-size fits all” answer, there are a number of things that can be emphasized to prepare for and respond to workplace accidents.

Review your company’s drug free workplace policy

Be sure to know the company policy including specifically what is prohibited and what the consequences will be for violations. As a supervisor, it is your responsibility to interpret policies to your staff and to be vigilant in upholding them.

Focus on the health and safety of employees

Focusing on safe and healthy workplace practices can provide you as the supervisor with a significant return for your effort. A small investment of time and resources can have a tremendous impact on employee morale which leads to improved productivity. (See “Health and Safety Program Suggestions” on Page Two)

Familiarize yourself with procedures addressing employee behavior and accidents

Written procedures will provide solid guidance for you in how and when to handle adverse employee behavior. Understanding your company’s disciplinary protocol will help you anticipate and carry out appropriate action in a fair and consistent manner. Often, adverse behavior incidents precede the first observation of a physical sign or symptom of substance abuse. Always review protocol steps every time a property accident or human injury incident occurs. Documentation of verbal warnings as well as written warnings provides a “paper trail” if an employee’s behavior continues to spiral downward, requiring more serious action.

Seek supervisory training to keep your skills sharp and current

Whether your company offers this “soft skill” training or not, it is in your best interest to keep yourself proficient in this area. Because you are “up close and personal” with employees on a daily basis, it is essential to have the knowledge and confidence to carry out your supervisory duties. Supervisory topics

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such as communication, counseling, etc., should be included. Annual training refreshers keep the knowledge current.

Know the signs and symptoms of substance abuse

Being familiar with the physical signs and symptoms of substance abuse is important in a drug free workplace. Free training is available for all supervisors. (See inset below).

Drug test employees for property damage as well as human injury accidents

Often, property damage is viewed as “the cost of doing business.” What if the damage is the result of an impaired employee? Identifying that risk early may well save your company untold future expense or liability. In addition, the cause of an accident may be attributable to another employee. Ensure you consider all parties involved for substance testing.

Utilize a random drug testing program as another measure of deterrence

Random testing programs have been proven “best practice” methods for deterring drug use on the job. Random testing gives employees a reason to say no or to consider their actions.

Checklists

See the next page for two sample checklists to utilize when there has been employee behavior concern or there has been an accident.

For more information...

For more information, or to receive assistance with your drug free workplace program, please contact Karen Belanger at (727) 471-0009 or kbelanger@dfaf.org.

Health and Safety Program Suggestions

- Encourage healthy lifestyles including diet and exercise.
- If your employer allows it, invite wellness experts from your local clinic or hospital to screen employees for health related concerns (obesity, high blood pressure, cholesterol, etc.).
- Invite equipment manufacturers, safety specialists or insurance experts to provide safety updates for all employees.
- Encourage smoking cessation for those employees who smoke.
- Reward employees for reaching company or personal health and safety goals.
- Utilize your company’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP) benefit if offered.
- Consult with wellness experts to provide additional workplace wellness suggestions.

AT NO COST SECURE YOUR BUSINESS



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or contact us at (727) 471-0009

Reasonable Suspicion Checklist

- Ensure that supervisors are practicing good supervisory documentation with all workplace issues. Often, employees who are drug users or alcohol abusers will have documented adverse workplace behavior before the situation leads to making a reasonable suspicion drug or alcohol testing referral.
- If there is a suspicion of drug or alcohol use in the workplace, the employee's immediate supervisor and another manager or supervisor should independently complete the *Reasonable Suspicion Checklist* form (located in your original program materials). The checklist forms should be compared and a decision made as to whether or not to drug or alcohol test the employee.
- The supervisor should have the "*Custody and Control*" or lab form prepared ahead of time and must make appropriate arrangements to transport the employee to the laboratory collection site and then ensure the employee is safely transported home following the test. Never allow an employee to drive if you suspect the employee may be under the influence of drugs or alcohol. Ensure that the employee has photo identification.
- If the test results are positive, be sure to provide the employee with a list of treatment providers in your area. Per Florida statutes, you are required to notify the employee in writing of the positive results of the test. You are also required to notify the employee in writing as to the reasons he was asked to get a reasonable suspicion drug test.

Post-Accident Checklist

Post accident testing guidelines:

- When there is a death.
- When an employee receives a traffic citation.
- When an employee is involved in a vehicle accident requiring one or more vehicles to be towed from the scene.
- When there is bodily injury requiring notification of your workers' compensation insurance carrier.
- When an employee has caused significant equipment or property damage causing the company to notify its insurance carrier.
- When there is evidence suggesting that an employee contributed to an accident involving another employee.

If applicable, ensure that appropriate medical care is provided to the employee. If the employee is transported to the hospital or medical clinic, contact your drug testing administrator for further instructions.

Document all details about the accident as they become available to you. If the accident is on the premises of your company, obtain statements from witnesses or other employees if applicable.

Post accident drug testing should occur within 2 hours of the accident if possible, but otherwise within 32 hours. Post accident alcohol testing should be conducted within 2 hours, but not more than 8 hours post accident.

If a test cannot be conducted within the appropriate time frame, a supervisor should document the reason in the employee's personnel file and report this to management immediately.

As a condition of employment, employees are expected to submit to the testing. If they refuse, they are subject to termination.

Employees producing positive drug test results are subject to termination and non-coverage of health care expenses by Workers' Compensation.