

## THE TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE

### ALCOHOL AND DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

Revised February 4, 2021

#### **PURPOSE:**

The Township of Woodbridge (hereinafter referred to as the Township), subscribes to the belief that the abuse of alcohol and/or drugs by Township employees is incompatible with the Township's obligation to seek to provide a safe and productive work environment and its responsibility to the public to ensure their safety and trust in the Township. The Township further believes that healthy, drug-free employees are a greater asset to the Township, to society and to themselves. Accordingly, the Township hereby establishes the following policies and procedures for all employees. Employees who hold a Commercial Driver's License ("CDL") who perform safety-sensitive functions as defined under Department of Transportation ("DOT") regulations, or who can be called upon to perform safety-sensitive functions are also subject to a separate policy that complies with Department of Transportation regulations for Commercial Drivers, in addition to this policy. Sworn and non-sworn employees of the Woodbridge Police Department are subject to a separate policy concerning employee drug screening that complies with the Attorney General's Law Enforcement Drug Testing Policy.

#### **TOWNSHIP POLICY:**

**It is the responsibility of employees to maintain personal health so they are physically and mentally capable of performing in the workplace. The abuse of drugs or alcohol is an unsafe and counterproductive practice which will not be tolerated at The Township of Woodbridge. NOTE: In this policy, the terms "abuse and substance abuse" will be used to mean the use or abuse of or dependency on illegal drugs, alcohol, or drugs that can be prescribed but are used in a manner inconsistent with the prescription.**

**Any Township employee reporting for work and found to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs or using drugs or alcohol while at work, in the possession of, manufacture of, selling, offering for sale, trading, or providing illegal drugs or alcohol will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination. This policy is in effect for all employees while on Township property, to include the parking lots, or while engaged in Township business. (Township sponsored activities which may include the responsible service of alcoholic beverages are not included in this provision provided abuse does not occur).**

**In an effort to insure that the Township of Woodbridge is an "Alcohol and Drug Free Workplace", a drug testing program will be in effect for all employees. This program will provide for pre-employment, post-accident, reasonable suspicion, return to duty, and follow-up testing. The Township has retained an agent to manage and administer the testing program.**

**Any employee reporting for work impaired is unable to properly perform required duties**

and will not be allowed to work. If possible, the supervisor will first seek another trained supervisor's opinion of the employee's status. The supervisor will subsequently consult privately with the employee about the observation. If, in the opinion of the supervisor, the employee is considered impaired, the employee will be required to be tested for alcohol and illicit substances, depending on the supervisory determination of the observed impairment. (Under no circumstances should an impaired employee be allowed to drive).

Prescription drugs prescribed by the employee's physician may be taken during working hours. However, the employee is responsible for knowing the side effects of the prescription drugs, and knowing if such side effects may adversely affect the employee's safe and effective work performance. The employee is required to notify the supervisor if the use of properly prescribed prescription drugs may adversely affect the employee's work performance. Moreover, such prescription drugs must be used only as prescribed. The abuse of prescription drugs will not be tolerated.

#### **PRE-EMPLOYMENT TESTING:**

All prospective employees applying for a position will be required to undergo a pre-employment test for the presence of alcohol and illicit drugs. Receipt by the Township of a negative test result is required prior to engaging in any safety sensitive function or an offer of employment. A positive test result will disqualify an applicant from further consideration at that time. Failure to obtain a Township physician-verified negative test result will render the prospective employee ineligible for hire.

Failure to keep an appointment with the agent, which was previously agreed to by both the prospective employee and the agent, will be viewed as an attempt to elude the testing or alter its results. No further consideration for employment will be given the prospective employee at that time.

#### **REASONABLE SUSPICION TESTING:**

All employees are subject to a fitness for duty evaluation, to include urine and breath testing, when there is reasonable suspicion to believe that the employee is in violation of this policy. A reasonable suspicion referral for testing will be made on the basis of documented, objective facts and circumstances which are consistent with the long and short term effects of substance abuse.

Examples of reasonable suspicion include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Physical signs and symptoms consistent with substance or alcohol abuse.
- Information received from credible sources regarding the use and/or abuse of controlled substances, alcohol, or drugs.
- Evidence of the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of controlled substances, alcohol, or drugs.

Reasonable suspicion testing determinations will be made by a supervisor or Township official who is trained to detect the signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use and who can

reasonably conclude that an employee may be adversely affected or impaired in his/her work performance due to substance abuse. If another trained supervisor or Township official is immediately available, he/she will verify that there is reasonable suspicion before the employee is transported to the agent's facility. Upon a decision to initiate a test, the Union will be notified, which notification shall not interfere with the testing process in any way.

**NOTE:** Employees are cautioned that various over-the-counter and prescribed medications can adversely affect ability to operate vehicles and other equipment. It is the employee's responsibility to report to work each day fit for his or her duties.

Employees who are deemed to require a fitness for duty evaluation based on reasonable suspicion will be sent to a health facility of the Township's choice. The attending physician will make every attempt to determine the cause of the observed behavior including authorization of an alcohol or drug test. Employees will be placed on paid medical leave chargeable to their sick leave until the results of the examination are received by the Township. Receipt of a negative drug or alcohol test result and, where applicable, a doctor's statement that the employee is fit for duty is required prior to continued employment. Employees who are returned to duty by this means will be reinstated without prejudice and without loss of sick leave. If the reasonable suspicion drug test results in a negative dilute, then the employee must retake the drug test within 24 hours of notification. If the employee does not retake the test within 24 hours of notification, the drug test will be considered a refusal to test and a positive test. If the second drug test results in a negative dilute, then the drug test will be considered a positive test.

Employees who are medically determined to be temporarily unfit to perform their duties, but who test negatively for alcohol or drugs, will be returned to duty when they obtain the original examining doctor's written statement that they are fit for duty. Where applicable, if such employee has tested negatively for alcohol or drugs, but the Township has independent concerns about his/her ability to safely and effectively perform his/her job functions, and he/she has not been determined to be fit for duty, he/she will be placed on a paid leave of absence, pending the results of the fitness for duty examination by the Township's physician. If the fitness duty examination needs to be rescheduled due to the employee, then any further leave of absence will be unpaid and the employee can use his/her accrued time.

**POST ACCIDENT TESTING:**

Any employee involved in an accident on the job, will be required to submit to a post-accident alcohol and drug test if:

1. The driver involved in the accident received a citation for a moving violation;
2. There is a fatality as a result of the accident;
3. There is bodily injury to any person who, as a result of the injury, immediately received medical treatment away from the scene of the accident;
4. One or more motor vehicles incurred disabling damage as a result of the accident, requiring the motor vehicle to be transported away from the scene by a tow truck or other motor vehicle; or
5. Circumstances could reasonably suggest that the employee contributed to

such accident.

When a post-accident test is indicated the Township will make every effort to have said test performed within two hours of notification of the accident, or if circumstances warrant additional time, documentation will be made to ensure proper steps have been taken to complete the testing process. Employees must remain drug and alcohol-free prior to the administration of the test.

Receipt by the Township of a negative alcohol and drug test result is required prior to return to duty. If the drug test results in a negative dilute, then the employee must retake the drug test within 24 hours of notification. If the employee does not retake the test within 24 hours of notification, the drug test will be considered a refusal to test and a positive test. If the second drug test results in a negative dilute, then the drug test will be considered a positive test. A positive test result may disqualify an employee from further employment or reinstatement at the time or any time in the future.

#### **RETURN TO DUTY TESTING:**

##### **EMPLOYEES WHO TEST POSITIVE:**

Any employee who tests positive for alcohol or illicit substances, and who is not terminated, will not be permitted to return to work until they have met the following:

1. The employee must be evaluated by an Employee Assistance Professional ("EAP").
2. The employee must comply and complete all recommendations made by the EAP and be able to document same.
3. The employee must submit to a return-to-duty test and a proof of a negative test result must be received by the Township.

When the employee is cleared to return to work, he/she will be required to pass an alcohol and drug test. Upon receipt of a negative finding, if an employee is allowed to return to work he/she will be subject to follow-up testing as recommended by the EAP and this policy. If the drug test results in a negative dilute, then the employee must retake the drug test within 24 hours of notification. If the employee does not retake the test within 24 hours of notification, the drug test will be considered a refusal to test and a positive test. If the second drug test results in a negative dilute, then the drug test will be considered a positive test. The cost of the follow-up testing will be equally split between the Township and the employee.

#### **FOLLOW-UP TESTING:**

Any employee returning to work with the Township after being disqualified for a positive alcohol or drug test or returning to work after a leave of absence for voluntary substance abuse treatment will be subject to random drug and alcohol screening performed by the Township for a period of a minimum of twelve (12) months following the employee's return to work, in accordance with the EAP's recommendation. Thereafter, the employee may be subject, at the EAP's discretion, to follow-up testing for up to thirty-six months following the

employee's return to work. At the expiration of the thirty-six-month period, the employee shall be subject to drug and alcohol testing in accordance with the general provisions of this policy. An employee who tests positive on a follow-up random drug/alcohol test shall be subjected to immediate termination. If a follow-up random drug test results in a negative dilute, then the employee must retake the drug test within 24 hours of notification. If the employee does not retake the test within 24 hours of notification, the drug test will be considered a refusal to test and a positive test. If the second drug test results in a negative dilute, then the drug test will be considered a positive test.

#### **DISCIPLINARY ACTION:**

Notwithstanding the above, the Township reserves the right to take disciplinary action against an employee for a positive drug or alcohol test. An employee who tests positive on a **random drug/alcohol test** may be subject to disciplinary action, but will not be terminated for testing positive on the first random drug/alcohol test. A first offense under a **random drug/alcohol test** shall result in a minimum of a thirty (30) day suspension. A first offense shall remain on an employee's record for a ten (10) year period. An employee shall be subjected to immediate termination for a second offense during the ten (10) year period. Employees who test positive to other types of drug and alcohol screening conducted in accordance with this policy may be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### **TESTING PROCEDURES:**

Instructions for employees regarding the collection of the urine specimen are attached as Appendix A. The employee must give his consent to be tested. Collection will be done at a collection site designated by the agent/Township. A proper chain of custody shall be maintained. Return to duty and follow-up testing will be conducted under direct observation.

#### **DRUG TESTING:**

The drug testing process will look for the presence of the following substances: Amphetamines, Methaqualone, Barbiturates, Benzodiazepines, Cocaine, Marijuana (Cannabinoid), Methadone, Opiates (Codeine/Morphine/Hydromorphone/Hydrocodone), Oxycodone/Oxymorphone, Phencyclidine, and Propoxyphene.

Drug testing is by urinalysis using split samples. Split sample testing requires the specimen be divided into two separate bottles during the collection process. These two bottles are designated as (1) the primary specimen which shall contain no less than 30 ml. of urine, and (2) the "split" specimen which shall contain no less than 15 ml. of urine. Upon arrival at the laboratory the primary specimen will be opened and tested. In the first screening test, immunoassay techniques are used to screen urine specimens for classes of drugs. In the second or confirmation test, any positive results found in the first screening will be confirmed using the tandem technique of gas chromatography/mass spectrometry (GC/MS) which positively identifies and quantifies the presence of drugs. No test result will be reported by the laboratory to the Medical Review Officer ("MRO") as a non-negative drug test result unless both the initial screening test and the confirmation test are positive.

The laboratory shall report the test results and accompanying documentation to the MRO who shall evaluate the chain of custody, urine custody form, and test results. If a test is reported non-negative by the laboratory, the MRO will interview the employee to make an independent evaluation of whether the test should be reported as negative or positive. In the event the MRO's determination is to verify the positive laboratory result, the MRO will report the results of a drug test only to the Township's designated agent. If the drug test results in a negative dilute, then the employee must retake the drug test within 24 hours of notification. If the employee does not retake the test within 24 hours of notification, the drug test will be considered a refusal to test and a positive test. If the second drug test results in a negative dilute, then the drug test will be considered a positive test.

Should an interview with the employee be necessary, the MRO will make two attempts on consecutive business days to call the employee. Should the MRO fail to make contact, he/she shall contact the Township's designated representative to request that the employee contact the MRO.

The Township's designated representative shall inform the employee of the MRO's request in a confidential manner. Failure to respond within 24 hours of being informed by the Township's representative will be noted by the MRO when positive test results are reported. If the MRO and the Township's designated representative are unable to contact the employee, the employee will be placed on unpaid medical leave pending dismissal. It is the employee's responsibility to provide a phone number at which he/she can be contacted on the chain of custody form.

For employees subject to DOT drug testing, where testing is appropriate under DOT regulations and under this policy, the DOT specimen shall be collected first, prior to collection of the specimen to be tested under this policy.

#### **ALCOHOL TESTING:**

Alcohol testing must be done using an evidential breath testing device (EBT) approved by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). This testing can only be performed by a Breath Alcohol Technician (BAT) that is certified in the equipment being used.

Two breath tests are required to determine if a person has a prohibited alcohol concentration. A screening test is conducted first. Any result less than 0.02 alcohol concentration is considered a "negative" test and no further testing is required. If the initial screening shows an alcohol concentration of 0.02 or greater, a second or confirmation test is required. The confirmation test must be taken 15 minutes after the initial screening. During that 15 minute period the employee being tested is to remain with the Breath Alcohol Technician and must refrain from eating, drinking, smoking, or belching. After the 15 minute waiting period a second breath test will be performed. The results of the second test stand and become the official test result.

If the confirmation test result shows an alcohol concentration of 0.02 or less, the official test result is negative and no action is required. If the result of the confirmation test is 0.02 or greater the employee is subject to further action by the Township as follows:

1. If the tested employee's alcohol concentration is between 0.02 and 0.039, the employee will be transported home or must otherwise arrange for transportation and will be released from work for the remainder of the shift, and may be referred to an EAP.
2. If the tested employee's alcohol concentration is 0.04 or higher, he/she must immediately be transported home or must otherwise arrange for transportation and will be released from work until he/she (a) has been evaluated by an EAP; (b) has complied with any recommended treatment; and (c) has taken and passed a return-to-duty alcohol test (result must be less than 0.02). The employee is then subject to unannounced follow-up testing as recommended by the EAP. (See Follow-up Testing in this policy).

Applicants and employees are expected to report for alcohol and drug testing as required by this policy and in accordance with Township testing procedures. Employees are to report to work with no alcohol or illegal drugs in their bodies. **Any refusal to submit to alcohol breath testing or urinalysis drug testing as directed by supervisory personnel will be considered a refusal-to-test and may subject the employee to disciplinary action up to and including termination.**

#### **CONFIDENTIALITY OF TEST RESULTS:**

The results of any drug test will be reported and recorded in a confidential manner to the extent practicable and consistent with law. A copy of the individual's test results will be available upon request.

#### **QUALITY ASSURANCE OF TESTING PROGRAM:**

Any employee who receives a positive test result will have the right to ask the Township's MRO, during the time of the confirmation interview, to re-test the split sample at a SAMHSA certified laboratory of the MRO's choice.

#### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE RELATED BEHAVIOR:**

Any employee engaging in the manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession or use of any prohibited substances on Township premises, in Township vehicles, or while on Township business is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of any prohibited substances by any employee in any manner which affects the employee's job performance, or which may cause the public or a government or corporate body to lose confidence in the Township's ability to perform its responsibilities is strictly prohibited, will not be tolerated, and may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination. Law enforcement officials could be notified, as appropriate, where criminal activity is suspected. Any employee convicted of violating a criminal drug statute must notify the designated Township representative or Department Head within five days of such conviction.

Any employee who refuses to comply with a request for drug or alcohol testing shall be

considered as having produced a positive test result and may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination. Any employee who provides false information in connection with a test, or who attempts to falsify test results through tampering, contamination, adulteration, or substitution, shall face disciplinary action up to and including termination. In the event that the laboratory detects any substance which has been added to the sample to interfere with the normal testing process this will be considered a "refusal to test" and the same sanctions will apply.

The Township reserves the rights to inspect, investigate, and search for controlled substances at any time, without prior notice, on or in any and all Township premises and vehicles. The Township agrees not to search personal items contained in an employee's locker or to search the employee. All coolers are subject to inspection. If personal items need to be searched, the Township reserves the right to call the police. Refusal to cooperate with any inspection, investigation, or search that is authorized by a Township representative shall result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.

#### **EMPLOYEES VOLUNTARILY SEEKING HELP:**

The Township strongly encourages an employee with a drug/alcohol abuse problem to voluntarily step forward to tell the Township.

The Township will assist in referring the employee to appropriate assistance programs. Employees entering volunteer programs shall be eligible to use accrued time. Employees who have exhausted all accrued time can utilize an unpaid leave of absence for a reasonable period of treatment as provided by Township policy. Employees returning from volunteer programs must meet with an EAP counselor and abide by their recommendations to include return-to-duty and follow-up testing procedures and requirements under this policy.

It is crucial to note that the accommodations in this section apply only when an employee voluntarily comes forward. If a substance abuse problem is disclosed to the Township only after there has been (1) a positive drug or alcohol test, (2) a violation of a Township rule or standard, (3) a violation of law, or (4) a violation of this policy, the same conditions outlined in the return-to-duty section of this policy apply. If an employee fails to remain drug free after the first voluntary rehabilitation, he/she could be discharged.

#### **TRAINING:**

Supervisory employees will receive training on identifying those individuals who might be impaired by the use of drugs or alcohol.

#### **EMPLOYEE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

Each employee shall be given a copy of this policy. He/she must acknowledge receipt and understanding of the policy as a condition of employment. This acknowledgment is attached as Appendix D. Please sign and make sure to return this form to Human Resources.

## APPENDIX A

### DONOR'S CHECKLIST FOR DRUG TESTING

Please take a few minutes to read the following information, which describes your role in the collection process.

- Present required photo identification to the collector. If you do not have a photo ID, an employer representative will be asked to identify you.
- You may ask the collector to show his/her identification.
- Remove any unnecessary outer garments, e.g., coat, jacket. All personal belongings (e.g., purse, brief-case) must remain with outer garments. You may ask for a receipt.
- When instructed by collector, wash and dry your hands.
- You will be provided a sealed specimen bottle or collection container, or the collector may unwrap it in your presence. You will be allowed to select your specimen kit from a box full of like, sealed specimen kits.
- You may provide the specimen in the privacy of a stall or otherwise partitioned areas that allows for individual privacy.
- After providing the specimen to the collector, he/she will divide the sample into two separate bottles.
- You should initial the security tape on the specimen bottles to certify that it is your specimen. These sealed bottles will then be placed in a security bag or security box. These will be sealed with security tape in your presence.
- You should observe the entire collection procedure.
- You should complete the information on the custody and control form.
- You should NOT list medications/prescriptions on any other copy of the form except the copy which you are given for your records.

**The results of the laboratory analysis will be forwarded to our MRO. If the laboratory results are negative, the MRO will notify the employer. If the laboratory results are positive, the MRO will contact you at the phone number you provided to give you the opportunity to discuss the test results.**

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INFORMATION REGARDING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE TOWNSHIP'S ALCOHOL AND DRUG POLICY**

The Township has retained Prevention Specialists, Inc. as its agent to manage and administer the testing program.

The Designated Employer Representative is Marianne Horta, or such other person as designated by the Township.

The laboratories utilized for testing under this policy include but are not limited to Lab Corp. and Medtox.

Comprehensive Assistance & Referral for Employees (EAP): 908-497-3954.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **ATTACHMENTS**

Attached are the following materials:

1. Direct Observation Procedures
2. Drug Laboratory Cutoff Levels
3. Dangers of Drugs and Alcohol

## TOWNSHIP OF WOODBRIDGE DIRECT OBSERVATION PROCEDURES

1. Directly observed collections will be authorized and required when:
  - The employee attempts to tamper with his or her specimen at the collection site
    - The specimen temperature is outside the acceptable range
    - The specimen shows signs of tampering – unusual color/odor/characteristic
    - The collector finds an item in the employee’s pockets or wallet which appears to be brought into the site to contaminate a specimen
    - The collector notes conduct suggesting tampering
  - The Medical Review Officer (MRO) orders direct observation because:
    - The employee has no legitimate medical reason for certain atypical laboratory results
    - The employee’s positive or refusal [adulterated/substituted] test result had to be canceled because the split specimen test could not be performed (e.g. split not collected)
  - The employer orders direct observation for a Follow-Up test or a Return-to-Duty test
2. The observer will be the same gender as the employee.
3. If the collector is not the observer, the collector will instruct the observer about the procedures for checking the employee for prosthetic or other devices designed to carry “clean” urine and urine substitutes and for watching the employee urinate into the collection container.
  - The observer requests the employee to raise his or her shirt, blouse, or dress/skirt, as appropriate, above the waist, just above the navel; and lower clothing and underpants to mid-thigh and show the observer, by turning around, that the employee does not have such a device.
  - If the Employee has a Device: The observer immediately notifies the collector; the collector stops the collection; and the collector thoroughly documents the circumstances surrounding the event. The collector notifies the DER. This is a refusal to test.
  - If the Employee does Not Have a Device: The employee is permitted to return clothing to its proper position for the observed collection. The observer must watch the urine go from the employee’s body into the collection container. The observer must watch as the employee takes the specimen to the collector. The collector then completes the collection process.
4. Failure of the employee to permit any part of the direct observation procedure is a refusal to test.

### DRUG LABORATORY CUTOFF LEVELS

<b>DRUG</b>	<b>LAB CUTOFF INITIAL TEST</b>	<b>LAB CUTOFF CONFIRMATION</b>
Amphetamines	1000 ng/mL	500 ng/mL
Methaqualone	300 ng/mL	300 ng/mL
Barbiturates	200 ng/mL	200 ng/mL
Benzodiazepines	200 ng/mL	200 ng/mL
Cocaine	300 ng/mL	150 ng/mL
Marijuana (Cannabinoid)	50 ng/mL	15 ng/mL
Methadone	300 ng/mL	300 ng/mL
Opiates (Codeine/Morphine/Hydromorphone/Hydrocodone)	300 ng/mL	300 ng/mL
Oxycodone/Oxymorphone	300 ng/mL	300 ng/mL
Phencyclidine	25 ng/mL	25 ng/mL
Propoxyphene	300 ng/mL	300 ng/mL

## **Impact of Substance Abuse in the Workplace**

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**Employee Health** – People who abuse alcohol or other drugs tend to neglect nutrition, sleep and other basic health needs. Substance abuse depresses the immune system.

Impact on the workplace:

- Higher use of health benefits
- Increased use of sick time
- Higher absenteeism and tardiness

**Productivity** – Employees who are substance abusers can be physically and mentally impaired while on the job. Substance abuse interferes with job satisfaction and the motivation to do a good job.

Impact on the workplace:

- Reduced output
- Increased errors
- Lower quality of work
- Reduced customer satisfaction

**Decision Making** – Individuals who abuse alcohol and/or other drugs often make poor decisions and have a distorted perception of their ability.

Impact on the workplace:

- Reduced innovation
- Reduced creativity
- Less competitiveness
- Poor decisions, both daily and strategic

**Safety** – Common effects of substance abuse include impaired vision, hearing and muscle coordination and low levels of attention, alertness and mental acuity.

Impact on the workplace:

- Increased accidents
- More workers' compensation claims

**Employee Morale** – The presence of an employee with drug and/or alcohol problems creates a strain on relationships between coworkers. Organizations that appear to condone substance abuse create the impression that they don't care.

Impact on the workplace:

- Higher turnover
- Lower quality
- Reduced team effort

**Security** – Employees with drug and/or alcohol problems often have financial difficulties, and employees who use illegal drugs may be engaging in illegal activities in the workplace.

Impact on the workplace:

- Theft
- Law enforcement involvement

**Organizational Image and Community Relations** – Accidents, lawsuits and other incidents stemming from employee substance abuse problems may receive media attention and hurt an organization's reputation in the community.

Impact on the workplace:

- Reduced trust and confidence
- Reduced ability to attract high-quality employees

## **Ways that People Use Alcohol and Other Drugs**

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**Use:** Alcohol and other drugs may be used in a socially accepted or medically authorized manner to modify or control mood or state of mind. Examples include having a drink with friends or taking an anti-anxiety agency as prescribed by a physician. Described below are different ways that people use alcohol and other drugs without necessarily becoming addicted.

**Experimentation** – Out of curiosity and/or at the urging of peers, individuals may try drinking or using drugs illegally. If the illegal drug use is not repeated, or discontinued after a short time, such experimentation may not be problematic. Likewise, deciding to drink alcoholic beverages after early experimentation is not problematic for most adults.

**Social/Recreational** – Drinking alcoholic beverages is permitted in American society, and some excessive use may even be condoned. If use doesn't cause problems for the user, or those around him/her, most people would consider such use to be social or recreational. Some use marijuana in a similar manner – only in certain social or recreational situations and without immediate adverse consequences. However, marijuana use is illegal, except in a few states.

**As a Stress Reliever** – Many people use alcohol or other drugs to help them cope with pressure or stress. If this type of use is infrequent and doesn't create more stress or

difficulties for the user, or those around him/her, it may not lead to addiction, but alcoholism and drug addiction often begin with relief drinking.

**Abuse:** The use of a substance to modify or control mood or state of mind in a manner that is illegal or harmful to oneself or others is considered problematic use, or abuse. Examples of potential consequences of harmful use are:

- Accidents or injuries
- Blackouts
- Legal problems
- Poor job performance
- Family problems
- Sexual behavior that increases the risk of HIV infection

**Addiction:** A number of individuals occasionally use or abuse alcohol or drugs without becoming addicted, but for many abuse continues despite repeated attempts to return to more social or controlled use and leads to addiction. Addiction is the irresistible compulsion to use alcohol and drugs despite adverse consequences. It is characterized by repeated failures to control use, increased tolerance and increased disruption in the family.

## **Understanding Addiction**

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Unfortunately, it is not possible to tell early on whose use may lead to abuse and/or addiction. For one in ten people, abuse leads to addiction.

**Addiction to alcohol and other drugs is:**

**Chronic** – Once you have developed an addiction, you will always have to deal with it. You may manage to stop using alcohol or other drugs for significant periods of time, but for most the disease doesn't disappear but rather goes into remission. Should you attempt to resume 'normal' use, you will rapidly return to addictive, out of control use and abuse.

**Progressive** – Addiction gets worse over time. With some drugs, the decline is rapid; with others, like alcohol, it can be more gradual, but it does get worse. Alcohol and other drugs cause a biochemical change in the nervous system that can persist even after the substance leaves the blood. Repeated use causes progressive damage.

**Primary** – Addiction is not just a symptom of some underlying psychological problem, a developmental stage or a reaction to stress. Once your use of alcohol or drugs has become an addiction, the addiction itself needs to be medically treated as a primary illness.

**Terminal** – Addiction to alcohol and/or other drugs often leads to disease and possibly death.

**Characterized by Denial** – One of the most disturbing and confusing aspects of addiction is that it is characterized by denial. The user denies that his/her use is out of control or that it is causing any problems at home or work. The user often seems to be the last to know that his/her life is

out of control. There are effective strategies employed by professionals for helping to break through this denial, which must be overcome before treatment can take place.

### **Risk of Addiction:**

*Addiction is a family disease:*

Some people with a history of substance abuse in their family are more susceptible to developing problems with addiction. Children of alcoholics or addicts are three times as likely to develop problems. If both parents are addicts or alcoholics, the risk increases to five times as great. This is due to heredity as well as learned behavior. It is important for parents to realize that children learn much more from watching their behavior than listening to their advice.

*Prior abuse of alcohol and other drugs has a great impact on developing future problems:*

A pattern of abuse develops and can lead to addiction and psychological reliance on drugs and/or alcohol. This can be a slow progression for some and a rapid decline for others. Research demonstrates that the later in life an individual first drinks alcohol or uses other drugs, the less likely he or she will be to progress to problem use.

*Other contributing factors:*

Some people abuse alcohol and drugs as part of a self-destructive lifestyle. Other people start to use substances to seek relief from depression or crisis in their lives. Although some fortunate individuals never develop serious problems and use diminishes or ceases once the precipitating events change, others develop a serious problem before they even realize it.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Substance Abuse**

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Abuse of alcohol and other drugs affects people emotionally, behaviorally and physically.

### **Emotional Effects:**

- Aggression
- Burnout
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Paranoia
- Denial

**Behavioral Effects:**

- Slow reaction time
- Impaired coordination
- Slowed or slurred speech
- Irritability
- Excessive talking
- Inability to sit still
- Limited attention span
- Poor motivation and lack of energy

**Physical Effects:**

- Weight loss
- Sweating
- Chills
- Smell of alcohol

**Family and Coworker Impact**

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**Enabling:** Action that someone takes to protect the person with the problem from the consequences of his or her actions. Unfortunately, enabling actually helps the person to NOT deal with his or her problem.

**Examples of enabling include:**

**Covering Up** – Providing alibis, making excuses or even doing an impaired worker's work rather than confronting the issue that he/she is not meeting his/her expectations.

**Rationalizing** – Developing reasons why the person's continued substance abuse or behavior is understandable or acceptable.

**Withdrawing/Avoiding** – Avoiding contact with the person with the problem.

**Blaming** – Blaming yourself for the person's continued substance abuse or getting angry at the individual for not trying hard enough to control his/her use or to get help.

**Controlling** – Trying to take responsibility for the person by throwing out his/her drugs, cutting off the supply or trying to minimize the impact by moving him/her to a less important job.

**Threatening** – Saying that you will take action (ceasing to cover up, taking formal disciplinary action) if the employee doesn't control his/her use, but not following through.

**Examples of traps that family members and coworkers may fall into:**

**Sympathy** – Trying to get you involved in his/her personal problems.

**Excuses** – Having increasingly improbable explanations for everything that happens.

**Apology** – Being very sorry and promising to change. (“It won’t happen again.”)

**Diversions** – Trying to get you to talk about other issues in life or in the workplace.

**Innocence** – Claiming he/she is not the cause of the problems you observe, but rather the victim. (“It isn’t true.” “I didn’t know.” “Everyone is against me.”)

**Anger** – Showing physically intimidating behavior, blaming others. (“It’s your fault.”)

**Pity** – Using emotional blackmail to elicit your sympathy and guilt. (“You know what I’m going through. How can you do this to me now?”)

**Tears** – Falling apart and expressing remorse upon confrontation.

**Assistance**

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**Things to remember:**

- Difficulty performing on the job can sometimes be caused by unrecognized personal problems – including addiction to alcohol and other drugs
- Help is available
- Although a supervisor may suspect that an employee’s performance is poor because of underlying personal problems, it is up to employee to decide whether or not that is the case
- It is an employee’s responsibility to decide whether or not to seek help
- Addiction is treatable and reversible
- An employee’s decision to seek help is a private one and will not be made public

***EAP services are available:***

- An EAP can help employees decide what to do if they have a problem with alcohol or other drugs
- An EAP also can help an employee decide what to do if someone in his/her family or workgroup has a problem
- Conversations with an EAP are confidential

***If EAP services are not available, help may be available from:***

- Community hotlines
- Self-help groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Al-Anon, etc.

- Community mental health centers
- Private therapists or counselors
- Addiction treatment centers

## **Confidentiality**

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### **Employees need to know that:**

- Problems will not be made public
- Conversations with an EAP professional – or other referral agent – are private and will be protected
- All information related to performance issues will be maintained in his/her personnel file
- Information about any referral to treatment, however, will be kept separately
- Information about treatment for addiction or mental illness is not a matter of public record and cannot be shared without a release signed by the employee
- If an employee chooses to tell coworkers about his/her private concerns, that is his/her decision
- When an employee tells his/her supervisor something in confidence, supervisors are obligated to protect that disclosure

### ***EAP services are available, employees are also assured that:***

- EAP records are separate from personnel records and can be accessed only with a signed release from the employee
  - EAP professionals are bound by a code of ethics to protect the confidentiality of the employees and family members that they serve
- There are clear limits on when and what information an EAP professional can share and with whom

### **However, there are some limits on confidentiality that may require:**

- Disclosure of child abuse, elder abuse and serious threats of homicide or suicide as dictated by state law
- Reporting participation in an EAP to the referring supervisor
- Reporting the results of assessment and evaluation following a positive drug test
- Verifying medical information to authorize release time or satisfy fitness-for-duty concerns as specified in company policy
- Revealing medical information to the insurance company in order to qualify for coverage under a benefits plan

## **Specific Drugs of Abuse**

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### **Alcohol**

In American society alcohol is a legal drug. Nonetheless, it is a depressant and is the leading drug of abuse. Use of alcohol affects judgment and decision-making abilities, slows down the central nervous system and brain function, and reduces coordination and reflex actions.

#### Signs and symptoms of abuse:

- Dulled mental processes
- Lack of coordination
- Slowed reaction time
- Poor judgement
- Reduced inhibitions

#### Health effects:

- Decreased sexual functioning
- Liver disease
- Increased cancers of the mouth, tongue, pharynx, esophagus, rectum, breast and skin
- Kidney disease
- Ulcers
- Spontaneous abortion
- Birth defects – leading cause of preventable retardation

#### Workplace issues:

- Many employers now test for the presence of alcohol along with other drug testing.
- Consuming alcohol increases the likelihood that a driver or equipment operator will be involved in an accident.
- Low doses of alcohol reduce inhibitions and affect decision making.
- People who would not ordinarily behave in inappropriate ways can be persuaded to change their behavior when they are drinking.
- Often employees are under the influence of alcohol when they make the decision to use drugs.

## **Marijuana**

Marijuana is a derivative of the hemp plant and is illegally used for its intoxicating effects and dreamy state of relaxation and euphoria. All forms of marijuana have negative physical and mental effects. The active ingredient in marijuana is Delta-9-Tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, and is present in all forms of the drug.

### Signs and symptoms of use:

#### Physical

- Substantial increase in heart rate
- Bloodshot eyes
- Dry mouth and throat
- Increased appetite
- Chronic sore throat

#### Mental

- Impaired or reduced short-term memory and comprehension
- Altered sense of time
- Changed sensory perception--sight, smell, hearing, touch
- Reduced ability to perform tasks requiring concentration and coordination, such as driving a car

### Health effects:

- Emphysema-like symptoms
- Respiratory track and sinus infections
- Lowered immune system response

### Workplace issues:

- Employees who fall under Federal guidelines such as the Department of Transportation's testing regulations are prohibited from using marijuana in any form.
- THC is stored in the body fat and is slowly released over time. Since it is retained in the fat, an employee can test positive many days after use.
- Many employers also have work rules requiring the employee to disclose if he or she is taking any sedating medications that could impact his or her ability to work safely. This rule would apply even in states that have approved the medicinal use of marijuana.
- The use of marijuana definitely would cause fitness-for-duty concerns.

## **Inhalants**

Inhalants are mood-altering substances that are voluntarily inhaled. Most substances used are commercial and household products, such as solvents and aerosols, which are easily obtained and not harmful, if used for the purpose intended and as directed. Because they are common products, inhalants often are a young person's first attempt at "getting high."

### Signs and symptoms of abuse:

Inhaling solvents allows the substance to reach the bloodstream very quickly. Immediate negative effects of include:

- Nausea
- Sneezing
- Coughing
- Nosebleeds
- Fatigue
- Poor coordination
- Loss of appetite

### Health effects:

- Hepatitis
- Brain damage
- Debilitating effects on the central nervous system
- Weight loss
- Fatigue
- Electrolyte imbalance
- Muscle fatigue
- Permanent damage to the nervous system

### Workplace issues:

- Inhalants can severely impair judgment and driving ability.
- They also cause severe disorientation, visual distortion and confusion.
- Some such products may be available in the workplace.

## **Cocaine**

Cocaine is the most potent stimulant of organic origin and the most widely used of the stimulants. Although cocaine has been used in the past as a topical anesthetic, its therapeutic uses have almost been eliminated due to the development of safer anesthetics. Cocaine is a powerfully addictive drug leading to physical and psychological dependence.

### Signs and symptoms of abuse:

- Dilated pupils
- Increased pulse rate
- Elevated blood pressure
- Insomnia
- Loss of appetite
- Tactile hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Seizures
- Anxiety, agitation
- Periods of increased activity followed by fatigue and depression
- Wide mood swings
- Difficulty in concentration

### Health effects:

- Cocaine stimulates the central nervous system. Its immediate effects include dilated pupils and elevated blood pressure, heart rate, respiratory rate and body temperature. Cocaine use can lead to death by cardiac arrest or respiratory failure.
- Cocaine powder is sniffed or snorted. The euphoric high lasts for approximately 30 minutes. Occasional use can cause a stuffy or runny nose, while chronic use can ulcerate the mucous membrane of the nose. Cocaine powder can also be injected into the bloodstream when it is mixed with water. Using contaminated equipment to inject cocaine, or any other substance, can transmit HIV and cause HIV/AIDS, hepatitis and other infection diseases.
- Preparation of freebase, which involves the use of volatile solvents, can result in death or injury from fire or explosion. Inhalation of cocaine fumes from freebasing produces effects that are very fast in onset, very intense and momentary in duration.
- Crack is cocaine that is processed into tiny chips having the appearance of slivers of soap. Crack has become a very popular form of cocaine, since it is inexpensive and relatively easy to use. It is smoked in a pipe or rolled with tobacco in a cigarette. Cocaine can produce psychological and physical dependency, a feeling that the user cannot function without the drug. Many users become extremely depressed when not using the drug, and the craving for the drug is intense. In addition, tolerance develops rapidly.

### Workplace issues:

- Employees who fall under Federal guidelines such as the Department of Transportation's testing regulations are prohibited from using cocaine in any form.
- The addictive nature and cost can lead to workplace theft and/or dealing.
- Work performance is erratic with periods of high performance and periods characterized by forgetfulness, absenteeism and missed assignments.

### **Stimulants**

Stimulants are drugs that stimulate the central nervous system and excite bodily activity. Methamphetamine or crank is one of the fastest growing drugs of abuse. These drugs create less intense and less expensive cocaine-like effects in the body.

### Signs and symptoms of abuse:

- Mood changes
- Impaired concentration
- Impaired mental functioning
- Swings between apathy and alertness

### Health effects:

- Increased heart and respiratory rates
- Elevated blood pressure
- Sweating
- Headaches
- Blurred vision
- Dizziness
- Sleeplessness and anxiety
- Rapid or irregular heartbeat
- Tremors
- Poor coordination
- Physical collapse

### Workplace issues:

- Employees who fall under Federal guidelines such as the Department of Transportation's testing regulations are prohibited from using amphetamines without a current prescription.
- The addictive nature and cost can lead to workplace theft and/or dealing.

- Work performance is erratic with periods of high performance and periods characterized by forgetfulness, absenteeism and missed assignments.

## **Depressants**

A depressant is a drug that depresses the central nervous system, resulting in sedation and a decrease in bodily activity. Depressants, taken as prescribed by physicians, can be beneficial for the relief of anxiety, irritability, stress and tension.

### Signs and symptoms of use:

- Slurred speech
- Staggered walk
- Altered perception
- Respiratory depression
- Coma and death

### Health effects:

- The use of depressants can cause both physical and psychological dependence. Regular use over time may result in a tolerance to the drug, leading the user to increase the quantity consumed.
- The main classes of medical depressants are barbiturates and benzodiazepines. When regular users suddenly stop taking large doses, they can develop withdrawal symptoms ranging from restlessness, insomnia and anxiety to convulsions and death.
- Babies born to mothers who abuse depressants during pregnancy may be physically dependent on the drugs and show withdrawal symptoms shortly after they are born. Birth defects and behavioral problems also may result.

### Workplace issues:

- Mental clouding and drowsiness pose a fitness-for-duty concern.
- Many employers also have work rules requiring the employee to disclose if they are taking any sedating medications that could impact their ability to work safely.

## **Hallucinogens**

Hallucinogenic drugs distort the senses and often produce hallucinations--experiences that depart from reality. Phencyclidine (PCP) interrupts the function of the neurocortex, the section of the brain that controls the intellect and keeps instincts in check, because the drug blocks pain receptors. Violent PCP episodes may result in self-inflicted injuries.

### Signs and symptoms of use:

- Impaired concentration
- Confusion and agitation
- Muscle rigidity
- Profuse sweating

### Health effects:

- Chronic users of PCP report persistent memory problems and speech difficulties.
- Some of these effects may last six months to a year following prolonged daily use.
- Mood disorders, such as depression, anxiety and violent behavior, also occur.
- In later stages of chronic use, users often exhibit paranoid and violent behavior and experience hallucinations.
- Large doses may produce convulsions and coma, as well as heart and lung failure.

### Workplace issues:

- Employees who fall under Federal guidelines such as the Department of Transportation's testing regulations are prohibited from using PCP.
- Use causes severe disorientation.

## **Narcotics**

Narcotic analgesics are the most effective compounds used for pain relief. Narcotic analgesics include Opium, Opiates (morphine, codeine, percodan, heroin and dilaudid) and Opioids (synthetic substitutes such as vicodin, darvon, demerol and methadone).

### Signs and symptoms of use:

Narcotics initially produce a feeling of euphoria that is often followed by:

- Drowsiness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Constricted pupils
- Watery eyes and itching
- Low and shallow breathing

- Clammy skin
- Impaired respiration
- Convulsions
- Coma
- Possible death

#### Health effects:

- Tolerance to narcotics develops rapidly and addiction is likely.
- The use of contaminated syringes may result in diseases such as HIV/AIDS, endocarditis and hepatitis.
- Addiction in pregnant women can lead to premature, stillborn or addicted infants who experience severe withdrawal symptoms.

#### Workplace issues:

- Employees who fall under Federal guidelines such as the Department of Transportation's testing regulations are prohibited from using opiates without a current medical prescription.
- Many employers also have work rules requiring the employee to disclose if they are taking any sedating medications that could impact their ability to work safely.
- The addictive nature and cost can lead to workplace theft and/or dealing.
- Mental clouding and drowsiness pose a fitness-for-duty concern.

#### **Designer Drugs**

Illegal drugs are defined in terms of their chemical formulas, but underground chemists can modify the molecular structure of certain illegal drugs to produce analogs known as designer drugs, which do not meet these definitions. These drugs can be several hundred times stronger than the drugs they are designed to imitate.

Many of the so-called designer drugs are related to amphetamines and have mild stimulant properties but are mostly euphorants. They can produce severe neurochemical damage to the brain. The narcotic analogs can cause symptoms such as those seen in Parkinson's disease, including uncontrollable tremors, drooling, impaired speech, paralysis and irreversible brain damage. Analogs of amphetamines and methamphetamines cause nausea, blurred vision, chills or sweating and faintness.

Psychological effects include anxiety, depression and paranoia. As little as one dose can cause brain damage, and the designer drugs still cause illusions, hallucinations and impaired perception.

Some designer drugs are: Synthetic Heroin White, MPTP (New Heroin), analogs of MDMA (Ecstasy, XTC, Essence), hallucinogens (STP, PMA, EVE) and analogs of PCP.