



Employers are concerned about alcohol and drug abuse and its effect in the workplace. Alcohol and drugs can invade all facets of the workplace without regard to occupation or demographic group. Many supervisors do not understand their role in identifying the signs and symptoms that may indicate an employee has a problem with alcohol or drug use.

This guide will assist supervisors to reasonably identify the signs and symptoms of abuse/addiction, and the effects on an employee's behavior, health and performance.

Some Workplace Statistics:

- 77% of illicit drug users are over 18 and gainfully employed.
- More than 60% of adults know someone who has reported to work under the influences of alcohol or drugs.
- Statistics show that substance abusers produce only 67 cents on the payroll dollar and produce only 2/3 as much work.
- Substance abusers are 5 times more likely to have an accident at work, and 5 times more likely to seek a worker's compensation claim.
- Employees with substance abuse issues are likely to be absent 16 times more often; and alcoholism is estimated to cause 500 million lost workdays annually.
- Alcohol and drug abuse has been estimated to cost American businesses 81 billion dollars in lost productivity each year.

A Supervisor's Responsibilities Within a Substance Abuse Free Workplace

- **Become familiar:** Read CCS Administrative Procedure 2.30. 03-A, A Drug Free Workplace and on-line training module "Identifying Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the Workplace."
- **Be prepared:** Understand and be prepared to explain the policy to employees and to enforce its provisions when needed.
- **Know your role:** As a supervisor you must be able to identify and address job performance issues. You are not expected to diagnose alcohol or drug abuse or to provide treatment or counseling. Your role is to observe and where necessary, to document work problems and successes and to apply the policies and procedures as needed.
- **Be attentive and observe:** The most critical component in identification of alcohol or drug abuse is to identify the personal and professional baseline from which an employee has normally functioned. Negative behaviors and actions that clearly move away from the individual's baselines are common indicators of alcohol or drug abuse.
- **Be consistent:** Follow the same procedures for all employees.
- **Maintain confidentiality:** All job performance issues should be discussed privately and only with those "who have a need to know."
- **Refer for Assistance:** Offer resources for personal or work-related problems that may be affecting the employee's performance. Ultimately, how job performance is improved is the employee's responsibility. Referral to an EAP program may be part of how you address a performance issue.
- **Follow Up:** Continue to assess and address performance issues more formally if needed.

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) helps WA State Government employees and their family members resolve personal or work-related problems.

For addition information, please follow this link: <http://www.hr.wa.gov/EAP/Pages/default.aspx> or call (877) 313-4455

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Common Barriers to Identifying Employee Substance Abuse

- Many supervisors do not understand their role in identifying the signs and symptoms indicating an employee may have an alcohol or drug use problem.
- Fear is the number one barrier for a supervisor. Thoughts of "What if?", "What if I'm wrong?", "What if he/she denies it?", and "What will happen to them, or to me?" are common concerns when deciding whether or not to intervene.
- Supervisors often disregard the signs and symptoms due to a misconception that they must be able to prove alcohol or drug abuse or addiction prior to an intervention. Other reasons include:
 - Uncertainty or disbelief about signs and symptoms
 - Reluctance or refusal to identify signs and symptoms
 - Hoping that "things will get better"
 - The risks of involvement with an addicted employee's case
 - Enabling the addicted employee's behavior
 - Ignoring it
 - Covering up for it; trying to protect him or her
 - Making excuses for him or her
 - Supporting the employee by doing their work for them
- The goal is not to diagnose an alcohol or drug problem, but to make sure a problem is recognized and dealt with for the well-being of the employee.

Abuse and Addiction

- People have used drugs for millennia for the same reason...to change the way they feel. For some people, it is experimenting to feel more accepted, for others, it is to feel less pain. Regardless of the circumstances for first using, drugs all have one thing in common...they change the way you feel. Some people call it "getting high."
- **When does using drugs or alcohol become a problem?** In the beginning, all drugs work. They effectively change the way you feel. Over time, however, you become more immune to the effects and it takes more of the drug(s) to get the same effect. This is called tolerance. After a while, you don't feel normal without the drug(s). This is called dependence. If you stop the drug(s), you will experience unpleasant symptoms. This is called withdrawal. Since it is so uncomfortable to be without the drug(s), people will do anything to supply the habit. People will lie, cheat, steal. This state of being is called addiction.
- There is no reliable way to predict who will develop an alcohol or drug addiction. There is not typical a personality or set of physical attributes. Individuals do not necessarily become addicted to a certain substance, however, they become addicted to the feeling it produces and will seek out the same or similar substance to get the same feeling.
- A person may use alcohol or drugs to self-medicate emotional voids, such as sadness, loneliness and depression.
- Addiction is a primary disease, it has specific symptoms and is not to be confused with stress, poor relationships or unmanageable work demands. Addiction is progressive, if left untreated, the disorder will worsen. Addiction can be fatal. Many alcohol and drug overdoses, deaths or suicides involve an individual who has an addiction.

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Signs and Symptoms of Employee Substance Abuse

- Most substance abusers tend to display classic problems and symptoms over time in the workplace. Although the signs listed below may not necessarily mean that an employee has a substance abuse problem, they could indicate other personal problems that are affecting performance.
- When evaluating a situation, you must review the total picture.
 - Do you see more than one of these signs?
 - Have several instances occurred over a period of time?
 - Is there a progression to the signs or symptoms displayed?

Stage 1 Casual or “experimental” use	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Arrives late in morning or after lunch• Leaves job early• Takes unexplained absences from the workplace during the day
	General behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fellow workers complain about behavior or performance• Overreacts to real or imagined criticism• Complains of not feeling well
	Job performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Misses deadlines• Makes mistakes through inattention or poor judgment• Displays decreased efficiency
Stage 2 More frequent alcohol / drug use	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takes frequent days off for vague ailments or improbable reasons
	General behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statements become unclear or undependable• Avoids colleagues or co-workers• Borrows money from colleagues or co-workers• Exaggerates work accomplishments• Is hospitalized more than average• Displays unreasonable resentment
	Job performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exhibits general deterioration in work performance• Works at spasmodic pace• Shows lack of concentration
Stage 3 Preoccupied with “getting high”	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Takes frequent time off, sometimes for days• Fails to return from lunch
	General behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exhibits grandiose, aggressive, or belligerent behavior• Domestic problems interfere with work• Displays an apparent loss of ethical values• Encounters financial problems or garnishment of salary• Hospitalization increases• Refuses to discuss problems
Stage 4 Compulsive use	Attendance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has prolonged, unpredictable absences
	General behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drinks on the job• Becomes totally undependable• Experience repeated hospitalizations• Physical deterioration is visible• Financial problems worsen• Develops serious family problems and/or divorce
	Job performance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Inconsistent and generally incompetent

Drugs and Effects

Narcotics

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Codeine	<p>Signs / Symptoms of use</p> <p>Opiates also called narcotics, are drugs that alleviate pain, depress body functions and reactions, and when taken in large doses, cause a strong euphoric feeling.</p> <p>The natural opiates include opium, morphine, and codeine. Other substances, called opioids, are man-made. These substances are like opiates in that they are most often used to treat chronic or severe pain and are also highly addictive. These substances include Demerol, Oxycodone, Vicodin, Fentanyl, Methadone, and Darvon. Heroin is an opioid manufactured from morphine. Heroin has no medicinal uses; it is used for its ability to give the user a feeling of euphoria.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mood changes • Constricted pupils • Depression and apathy • Impaired mental functioning • Impaired respiration • Impaired alertness • Impaired coordination • Nausea, vomiting and constipation • Physical fatigue and drowsiness
Demerol	
Darvon	
Fentanyl	
Heroin	
Hydrocodone (Vicodin)	
Methadone	
Morphine	
Opium	<p>Street Name</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smack • Horse • Emma • Big D • Juice • Syrup • China White • Dollies
Oxycodone (OxyContin)	<p>How Taken</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tablet • Smoked • Injected, depending on type of narcotic
	<p>Issues and Effects</p> <p>Health Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highly addictive, intense withdrawal symptoms • IV needle users have a high risk of contracting hepatitis and AIDS • Narcotics increase pain tolerance. Increased injury rate or failure to seek medical attention due to lack of pain sensitivity. • Narcotic effects are multiplied when used in combination with other depressant drugs and alcohol; increasing risk of overdose or death. <p>Social Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A majority of medicinal narcotic-dependent persons obtain their narcotics through medical provider prescriptions or prescription fraud. • Because of tolerance, there is an ever-increasing need for more narcotic to produce the same effect. • Strong mental and physical dependency occurs • Increasing financial burden and/or criminal activity to procure drugs <p>Workplace Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unwanted side effect such as nausea, vomiting, dizziness, mental clouding, and drowsiness place the legitimate user and abuser at higher risk for an accident. • Narcotics have a legitimate medical use in alleviating pain. Workplace use may cause impairment of physical and mental functions.

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Drugs and Effects		
Stimulants - Amphetamines		
Amphetamines	Signs / Symptoms of use	Amphetamines are central nervous system stimulants that speed up the mind and body. The physical sense of energy at lower dose and the mental exhilaration at higher dose are the reasons for their abuse.
Cocaine		The legal use of amphetamines is limited to a very narrow range of medical conditions. Most amphetamines that are abused are illegally manufactured.
Khat		
Methamphetamine		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyper excitability, restlessness • Dilated pupils • Profuse sweating • Rapid respiration • Panic and confusion • Increased heart rate, blood pressure • Heart palpitations, irregular beats • Heightened aggressive behavior • Talkativeness • Inability to concentrate
	Street Name	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biphetamine • Delcobese • Desoxyn • Dexedrine • Monster, Black Beauties • Chetrol • Ritalin, Rits • Speed, Crank • Meth, Crystal
	How Taken	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tablet • Injected or smoked • Snorted
	Issues and Effects	<p>Health Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular use produces strong psychological dependence and increasing tolerance to the drug • High dose may cause toxic psychosis resembling schizophrenia • Intoxication may induce a heart attack or stroke due to spiking of blood pressure • Chronic use may cause heart and brain damage due to severe constriction of capillary blood vessels • Withdrawal from the drug may result in severe physical and mental depression <p>Social Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The euphoric stimulation increases impulsive and risk-taking behaviors, including bizarre and violent acts • Increased criminal behavior and risk taking to procure drugs <p>Workplace Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amphetamines alleviate sensation of fatigue, they may be abused to increase alertness because of unusual overtime demands or failure to get proper rest. • Low-dose use will cause a short-term improvement in mental and physical functioning, however with greater use, the effect reverses and the physical fatigue and depression has an impairing effect, making operation of equipment or vehicles dangerous. • Cocaine causes extreme mood and energy swings that create instability. Sudden noises can cause a violent reaction. • Lapses in attention and ignoring warning signals greatly increase the potential for accidents. • A developing paranoia and withdrawal create unpredictable and sometimes violent behavior. Low workplace performance is frequently observed.

Drugs and Effects

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Depressants			
	Signs / Symptoms of use	Street Name	How Taken
	Issues and Effects		
Barbiturates	Barbiturates and other depressant drugs are typically sedative hypnotic drugs used to treat anxiety, stomach (gastrointestinal) discomfort, pain, sleep disorders and are commonly used to treat epilepsy.		
Benzodiazepines	Benzodiazepines are some of the most commonly prescribed drugs in the United States. They are sedative hypnotic drugs, which relieve anxiety with less harmful side effects than the barbiturates.		
GHB (date rape drug)			
Rohypnol	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nervous system depressant • Mild intoxication • Slurred speech • Lack of coordination • Lethargy • Visual disturbances <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headaches • Sensation of numbness or tingling • Dizziness • Confusion • Drowsiness • Difficulty or inability to urinate 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue dolls • Green dragons • Reds <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Downie • Barbies • Goofers 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tablet • Capsule • Liquid • Injection 		
	<p>Health Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sedative hypnotics can produce physical dependence and withdrawal. Due to the abuse and overdose potential, depressants can be very dangerous if taken in greater than prescribed dosages. These drugs are very dangerous when used in combination with other central nervous system depressant drugs such as alcohol. • Long-term use of depressants can produce depression, chronic fatigue, breathing difficulties, sexual problems and sleep problems. As a dependency on the drug increases, cravings, anxiety or panic are common if the user is unable to get more. <p>Social Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While not as common today, barbiturate abuse is still a problem for many. Approximately 9% of Americans will abuse barbiturates at some point during their lives. It's estimated that one in every five children will grow up in a home in which barbiturates or another substance is abused. • Misuse of depressant drugs increase the risk of suicide and are also the leading cause of accidental drug overdose, most often leading to irreversible coma or death. <p>Workplace Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The user's preoccupation with the substance, plus its effects on mood and performance, can lead to poor work performance. • Occupational injury and accidents are highly probable due to the user's impairment in coordination, increased dizziness, and visual acuity. 		

Drugs and Effects

Hallucinogens - Cannabinoids

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Marijuana	Signs / Symptoms of use <p>Marijuana is one of the most misunderstood and underestimated drugs of abuse. People use marijuana for the mildly tranquilizing and mood/perception-altering effects it produces. The effects of marijuana on each person depend on the type of cannabis and how much THC it contains, the way the drug is taken.</p> <p>Some people feel nothing at all when they first try marijuana, others may feel high (intoxicated and/or euphoric.) It is common for marijuana users to become engrossed with ordinary sights, sounds or tastes and trivial events may seem extremely interesting or funny. Time seems to pass very slowly, so minutes feel like hours. Sometimes the drug causes users to feel thirsty and very hungry – an effect called “the munchies.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reddened eyes • Distinctive odor on clothing • Chronic fatigue • Slowed speech • Lackadaisical “I don’t care” attitude • Irritating cough, chronic sore throat • Lack of motivation
K2/Spice (synthetic cannabis)	
Hashish, Hash Oil	
	Street Name <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pot, Grass • Maryjane, MJ • THC • Joints, Reefer • Acapulco Gold • Panamanian Red • Thai Sticks • Hash, Hash Oil
	How Take <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoked – rolled cigarette joints or use of bong pipe • Ingested in baked goods
	Issues and Effects <p>Health Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mind-altering chemical in marijuana is tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). Smoking marijuana seems to affect the structure of the brain associated with emotions, motivation, and the regulation of hormones. • Smokers often have memory problems caused when THC prevents the brain from transferring information from short-term to long-term memory storage. • Health risks include lowered immune system response, increased heart rate, sore throats and upper respiratory problems such as bronchitis, shortness of breath, birth defects, and higher rates of infant mortality. <p>Social Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forgetfulness, reduced concentration, rapid loud talking and bursts of laughter in early intoxication, sleepiness in later stages. <p>Workplace Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The active chemical, THC, stores in body fat and slowly releases over time. • Marijuana smoking has a long-term effect on performance. • People who smoke marijuana are never free of its effects and are often never aware of how their actions affect the safety of others around them. Distorted space and time translates into unsafe work habits.

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Drugs and Effects					
Hallucinogens – Non Cannabis					
Ecstasy/MDMA	<p>The effects of hallucinogens are highly variable and unreliable, producing different effects in different people at different times. This is mainly due to the significant variations in amount and composition of active compounds, particularly in the hallucinogens derived from plants and mushrooms. Because of their unpredictable nature, the use of hallucinogens can be particularly dangerous.</p>				
LSD	<p>Peyote, psilocybin, and PCP are drugs that cause hallucinations, which are profound distortions in a person's perception of reality. Under the influence of hallucinogens, people see images, hear sounds, and feel sensations that seem real but are not. Drug effects impeded the control of behavioral, perceptual, and regulatory systems, including mood, hunger, body temperature, sexual behavior, muscle control, and sensory perception.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased blood pressure • Slow respiratory rate • Cognitive changes, inability to think logically • Needle track marks • Decreased pupil size • Pre-occupation with obtaining drugs • Depression, irritability • Hyper-vigilance, psychosis • Euphoria 				
PCP	<table border="0"> <tr> <td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecstasy - Scooby doos, disco biscuits, XTC, doves • LSD – acid, micro dots, tabs • PCP – Angel dust, dust </td><td style="vertical-align: top;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mushrooms – shrooms, mushies • Inhalants – bulbs, glue, gas, sniff, huff • Ketamine – baby food, K-hole, K • Steroids – pumpers, Arnolds, stackers </td></tr> </table>			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ecstasy - Scooby doos, disco biscuits, XTC, doves • LSD – acid, micro dots, tabs • PCP – Angel dust, dust 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mushrooms – shrooms, mushies • Inhalants – bulbs, glue, gas, sniff, huff • Ketamine – baby food, K-hole, K • Steroids – pumpers, Arnolds, stackers
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Peyote & Mescaline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Injected • Tablet • Inhaled • Tea 				
Steroids					
Inhalants					
Psilocybin (mushrooms)					
Ketamine (animal anesthetic)					
	<p>Health Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mind-altering chemicals found in hallucinogenic cause both a physical and psychological dependence on these drugs. Physical symptoms include fatigue, constipation, breathlessness, bronchospasm, nausea, confusion and chest pain. • Effects include a depressed respiratory rate and difficulty breathing and when combined with alcohol or other drugs, results in coma or death. <p>Social Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes a person may experience the negative effects of hallucinogens and have what is called a bad trip. They may experience unpleasant and/or intense hallucinations, anxiety, panic or fear. • Some people may experience a drug induced psychosis after using hallucinogens. The psychosis is usually characterized by hallucinations, delusions and bizarre behavior and can last for several hours or longer. • Long term effects can cause a 'flashback.' Flashbacks are a re-experience of the drug and can occur days, weeks, months and even years later. <p>Workplace Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feelings of panic, paranoia and fear or flashbacks can lead to risky behavior that can cause injury. 				

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Drugs and Effects		
Alcohol		
Beer	<p>Alcohol is a socially acceptable drug that has been consumed throughout the world for centuries. It is considered a recreational beverage when consumed in moderation for enjoyment and relaxation during social gatherings. When consumed primarily for its physical and mood-altering effects, it is a substance of abuse. Alcohol is a depressant, it slows down physical responses and progressively impairs mental functions.</p> <p>Out of millions who hold full time employment in the United States, close to fifteen million are heavy drinkers of alcohol, exacting a high cost on work organizations. Employees who drink a lot are often absent from work, suffer from a lot of health problems, and are at a greater risk of harming themselves and others.</p> <p>Signs and Symptoms of Alcohol Abuse: Experts make a distinction between alcohol abuse and alcoholism; also called alcohol dependence. Unlike alcoholism, alcohol abusers have some ability to set limits on their drinking. However, their alcohol use is still self-destructive and dangerous to themselves, can progress into alcoholism and they need help. Alcohol abuse is a pattern of drinking that results in harm to one's health, interpersonal relationships, or ability to work. Except for the odor, the following signs are also general signs and symptoms of any depressant substance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeatedly neglecting responsibilities • Alcohol use in dangerous situations • Legal problems due to drinking • Continued drinking despite relationship problems • Drinking to de-stress • Dulled mental processes • Odor of alcohol on breath • Sleepy or stuporous condition • Slurred speech • Lack of coordination • Possible constricted pupils • Slowed reaction rate 	
Wine		
Ethyl Alcohol		
	Signs /Symptoms of use	
	Street Name	
	How Taken	

Recognizing Drug and Alcohol Abuse in the Workplace

Drugs and Effects	
Alcohol (cont.)	
	<p>Health Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Medical research also supports that chronic substance abuse has an adverse impact on the general health of the user. Some examples of the effects of substance abuse on health include but are not limited to:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Increased heart rate, blood pressure, breathing rate, heart attack,◦ Fatal liver and kidney disease, ulcers, cancer, and pancreatitis◦ Convulsions, seizures, tremors, strokes◦ Anxiety, paranoia, depression, confusion, blackouts, violent behavior, hallucinations◦ Problems with perception, motor skills◦ Difficulty with concentrating and information processing, lapses in judgment◦ Coma, Death◦ Birth defects, spontaneous fetal abortion and neonatal mortality <p>Physical Effects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• It takes one hour for the average person (150 pounds) to process one serving of an alcoholic beverage from the body.• Impairment in coordination and judgment can be objectively measured with as little as two drinks in the body.• A person who is legally intoxicated is 6 times more likely to have an accident than a sober person. <p>Social Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Two-thirds of all homicides are committed by people who drink prior to the crime.• Two to three percent of the driving population is legally drunk at any one time. This rate is doubled at night and on weekends.• Two-thirds of all Americans will be involved in an alcohol-related vehicle accident during their lifetimes.• The rate of separation and divorce in families with alcohol dependency problems is 7 times the average.• Forty percent of family court cases are alcohol-related problems.• Alcoholics are 15 times more likely to commit suicide than other segments of the population. <p>Workplace Issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• In the workplace, the impact of alcohol abuse focuses on four major issues:<ul style="list-style-type: none">◦ Premature death/fatal accidents◦ Injuries/accident rates◦ Increased Absenteeism◦ Loss of productivity• More than 60 percent of burns, 40 percent of falls, 69 percent of boating accidents and 76 percent of private aircraft accidents are alcohol-related.