



Drugs at Work Toolbox Talk

Drugs at work is not only a hazard risk to yourself but also your work colleagues. Drug abuse results in higher rates of workplace injuries, fatalities, and absenteeism. In this toolbox we will look at the duties required by employers (PCBUs) and employees, and drug testing in the workplace.

Why run a Drugs at Work Toolbox Talk?

- Prevent unnecessary injury from working whilst impaired from drugs, by improving awareness and training
- Company policy for drugs
- Assist with understanding of legislative aspects
- Fewer injuries and not being impaired by drugs means higher productivity

Why are drugs a significant risk in the workplace?

Problem drug taking will cause impairment, which can lead to poor decision making and concentration, negative health impacts to the worker, slower reaction times, and increased error rates.

Health and Safety Duties

Relevant country legislation (in New Zealand, the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015) employers and employees both have a duty to ensure that the workplace is safe.

- Employers should provide employees with the highest level of protection from risks, as reasonably practicable.

Employees have a duty to take reasonable care for their own and others' safety by doing the 3 following things:

- Turn up fit for work and consider their safety
- Ensure their actions do not harm the health and safety of others
- Comply with any reasonable policy, procedure or instruction given by the PCBU about how to work in a safe and reasonable way

Things to consider for your drug policy

- Minimizing harm associated with drug use
- Helping workers who may have problems with drugs use



- Promoting a sensible and responsible attitude
- Giving workers the information they need to take the right actions with anyone affected by drug use
- Who is responsible for what – workers roles, supervisors' roles, and managers roles
- Consequences of violating the drug policy
- The availability of help for people with drug abuse issues, such as rehabilitation, Alcohol and Drug Helpline or other providers
- Any testing the employer carries out i.e. pre-employment and random drug testing
- What's acceptable on site

Key takeaways:

1. **No drugs at work** - *do not aggravate health and safety risks by taking drugs*
2. **Be fit and ready** – *Don't be on a drug downer or stoned whilst at work*
3. **Look out for your work mates** – *Don't harm yourself and your work mates, also help others who may have a drug use problem.*