

Course Corrections, LLC Jeremy Nikel, MSW, LCSW, SAP Substance Abuse Professional Services (918) 417-1006

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Explanation of SAP Services and the Return-To-Duty Process

Return-To-Duty Process Overview

Federal Department of Transportation (DOT) regulations require that a Substance Abuse Professional (SAP) conduct a clinical assessment and evaluation, referral to education/treatment, and follow-up evaluation as part of the return-to-duty (RTD) Process. This must be completed before an employee can return to safety-sensitive duty following a violation of DOT drug and alcohol regulations. These guidelines are also generally followed by non-DOT employers and consortiums, such as DISA, and typically require the same RTD process.

As per DOT regulations, the role of the SAP is to protect the public interest in safety and not to act as an advocate for the employer, employee, or any other party. I am a fully-qualified SAP and have met the requirements of 49 CFR Part 40 Section 40.281. My services comply fully with 49 CFR Part 40 Subpart O of the Department of Transportation regulations.

How Does an Employee Start the Process?

The employer's Designated Employer Representative (DER) or the employee can contact me during normal hours (9AM-5PM, M-F) by emailing jeremy@saptulsa.com or by calling (918) 417-1006. I can typically schedule the initial appointment within 2-3 working days from the time you contact me. While either the DER or employee can contact me, the employee must schedule appointments directly. Contact attempts outside of normal hours may or may not be returned. When contacting me, please have available the following:

- 1. Name and contact information for the employee
- 2. Name and address of the employer where the violation occurred
- 3. Name and contact information for the DER where the violation occurred
- 4. DOT Administration (FAA, FMCSA, FRA, PHMSA, USCG, FTA)
- 5. Date of violation
- 6. Type of violation (positive or refusal)
- 7. Reason for test (Pre-employ, Random, Post-accident, Follow-up, RTD, Suspicion)
- 8. Type of test (Urine Drug or Breath Alcohol) and substance detected
- 9. Previous Violations

How Much Does the Process Cost?

The SAP fee is \$450 if paid in cash, \$475 if other acceptable payment method is used. I do not accept personal checks. The fee covers comprehensive SAP services as defined in 49 CFR Part 40 Subpart O. The SAP fee is due in full at the time of the initial appointment and can be paid by either the employee or employer.

Additional required costs of the RTD process include the education/treatment program (see below) and urine drug tests (if required). Additional fees will also be charged for missed



normally required.

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appointments, non-compliance letters, repeat evaluations, and any services outside of those

What Education or Treatment is Required and How Long Does It Take?

The length of the RTD process is dependent on several factors, including level of care determined at the initial evaluation and participation by the employee. DOT regulations require that the employee complete an education/treatment program. The length of this program is determined at the clinical assessment and evaluation. It can range from a relatively short education class to a lengthier inpatient or outpatient treatment program.

Education/treatment must be delivered by an independent third-party provider and the employee or employer must pay for the services. Whenever possible, referrals will be made to providers who are covered by the employee's health insurance.

When Can the Employee Return to Duty?

After completing education/treatment, the employee must attend a follow-up evaluation. At this appointment, it is determined whether the employee is compliant or non-compliant with SAP recommendations.

If compliant, the employer will receive a report and can send the employee for an RTD test. The employer must ensure that the employee has a negative RTD test before returning the employee to safety-sensitive duty. Only the employer can order the RTD test and return the employee to duty.

If non-compliant or the employee does not complete the RTD process, the employee and employer will be notified in writing of what must be done to achieve compliance. This could include additional cost to the employee or employer.

If no longer employed, the employee must first find a prospective employer. The new employer must ensure that the employee has a negative RTD test before returning the employee to safety-sensitive duty.

What Happens After the Employee Returns to Safety-Sensitive Duty?

After returning to safety-sensitive duty, the employee must participate in a follow-up testing plan that lasts between one and five years. DOT regulations require that this plan be communicated in writing directly to the employer's DER. DOT regulations prohibit sharing the follow-up testing plan with the employee.

Aftercare treatment may also be recommended. The employee or employer is responsible for any costs associated with aftercare treatment.