

SUPERVISOR GUIDELINES ~ Managing Impaired Employees

The following procedures are suggested in situations where an employee appears to be impaired for unknown reasons and potentially unsafe to perform job duties. The employer recognizes that situations may be factually different, but that taking steps to prevent harm to self or others is necessary in maintaining a safe workplace.

1. Determine, in person, if an employee appears impaired by observation of physical appearance or behavior (*i.e. glassy eyes, smell like alcohol, slurred speech; unsteady on feet, disheveled; sobbing/distraught, agitation, etc.*). Look for specific behaviors. Ask if they are feeling okay.
2. Where possible, have another management representative personally observe the appearance and behavior of the employee.
3. Document your observations and, later, sign the form along with the other management representative, adding any other pertinent information to your documentation.
4. If you conclude that the employee does not appear to be adversely affected by physical and/or emotional conditions, and seems able to safely perform their job duties, then, have the employee return to work.
5. If you have documented signs that the employee may be under the influence of alcohol and/or other substances, seems otherwise medically compromised or is too distraught to maintain acceptable workplace behavior, then advise the employee that he/she will not be permitted to work. Emphasize that you are concerned for their health and safety as well as the health and safety of others in the workplace.
6. If the employee seems medically unstable, makes statements about harming self or others, they need to be transported by a rescue service and/or police to the nearest emergency room for evaluation. **Call 911 and report your concerns and observations.**
7. If the employee seems less urgently compromised, for example, smell of alcohol, but remains steady on their feet and coherent; or they are crying and upset, but are able to give explanations and are not making threats to self or others; ask the employee if they drove a vehicle to work. Ask if you can hold their keys and offer alternative means of transportation to the home. This includes calling relatives, friends or a taxi. **It is strongly recommended that coworkers and supervisors not be allowed to drive a seemingly impaired employee home or to another location.**
8. Offer coffee/ water while you make calls to arrange transportation home for them.
9. It is employer's decision whether to tell employee if they are being placed on a sick day or suspension day at this point or to defer the decision. Employees usually are preoccupied with their job status at this point or the next day, so it is helpful to inform them what their status is or that you'll decide at a later point.
10. When you observe behaviors indicating probable impairment (for example: *a strong odor like alcohol, coordination or speech problems, threats of harm to self or others* **and if the employee insists on leaving the premises, and you believe he/she intends to drive while in an unsafe condition**) let the employee know you have no choice but to notify the police. Attempt to observe the license plate, make, model, and color of the vehicle.
11. If an impaired person insists on driving themselves home, it is best not to try to physically remove their keys. Instead, notify the police immediately, giving as much factual information as you have. Advise them that you believe the employee may be impaired and are concerned for their ability to drive safely. You of course want to do everything possible to prevent a tragedy.
12. Document the facts of what occurred. Notify your Human Resources Representative and your Manager at the earliest possible time by direct call or voice mail.
13. After reviewing prior disciplinary status and/or agreements and a determination is made about what consequences will now follow, including a requirement for EAP clearance prior to return to work and/or disciplinary action up to or including termination, please let your employee know their status, and inform EAP as well. We can assist you with a Last Chance Agreement plan.

Note: this information is made available to our client organizations for use in developing their own internal guidelines. Please review with your organization's Human Resources and Legal Consultant for use in your particular work environment.

VISUAL OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

for Fitness for Duty Interventions

Walking/ Standing	Speech	Demeanor	Actions	Eyes	Face	Appearance	Breath	Movements	Eating/ Chewing
Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Normal	Gum
Stumbling	Shouting	Sleepy	Resistant	Bloodshot	Flushed	Unruly	Faint odor like alcohol	Fumbling	Candy
Staggering	Whispering	Talkative	Threatening	Glassy	Pale	Messy	Strong odor like alcohol	Nervous	Mints
Falling	Silent	Crying	Profanity	Watery	Sweaty	Dirty	Faint odor like pot	Jerky	Other:
Swaying	Slow	Excited	Drowsy	Droopy	Expression:	Condition of clothing:	Strong odor like pot	Hyperactive	
Unsteady	Rambling	Silent	Hyperactive	Closed				Slow	
Holding on	Slurred	Gesturing	Overly affectionate	Pupils pinpoint or dilated				Shaky	
Unable to stand	Profanity	Fighting	Variable						

Other Observations:

