

Substance Abuse

While many of us may enjoy the occasional drink or two, alcohol (or illicit drugs) at the workplace is a very serious matter. Drug and alcohol abuse can devastatingly affect every aspect of your life, and can result in injuries to yourself and others. Although the use of alcohol and drugs is largely a personal matter, when it affects your performance on the job or the safety of yourself and others then it immediately becomes an issue that your employer must address. Not only are you putting yourself and others at risk, but you may be terminated as a result of your actions and/or behavior.

You don't have to be a full-blown alcoholic to have interference with your workday. During the holiday season, there are more celebrations and social gatherings that lead many to drink more than they are accustomed to. If you over-consume alcohol the evening before, your performance at work will likely be affected due to the extremely unpleasant symptoms of a hangover—headache, nausea, erratic motor function and lack of depth perception, just to name a few. If you feel that you are unable to function properly in your workplace, immediately notify your supervisor. Continuing to work with compromised judgment can lead to unnecessary accidents and lower morale among fellow coworkers.

If you suspect you or someone you know may have a substance abuse problem, it is imperative that you address the issue immediately. Only you can determine whether or not you have a problem, however if you feel your personal and professional lives are being affected by your consumption of alcohol and/or drugs, it will be in your best interest – as well as the best interest of your family members and coworkers—to get help from a professional. If you are unsure if your drinking or drug use constitutes a problem, a possible first step is to contact Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous. As their name implies, they will provide you with anonymous support and advice to work through whatever particular problem you may be going through. It is important to consider the possible underlying causes of your substance abuse. Unfortunately, as everyone must figure out eventually, substance abuse never solves problems, it only causes more.

The above information is not a substitute for professional medical advice and is for general informational purposes only. Consult a physician in all matters relating to your health, particularly in matters that may require diagnosis or medical attention. Any action taken as a result of the information provided above is taken at your own discretion.