



10 Reasons to Implement a Drug-Free Workplace Policy

To protect your business and employees, consider the following 10 reasons to establish a drug-free workplace policy.

1 CREATING A POLICY IS EASY

To create a drug-free policy at work, a business has many options. All policies should be in writing and effectively communicated to all employees. It can be as simple as adding a drug-free provision to an employee handbook stating:

“Employees are prohibited from unlawfully consuming, distributing, possessing, selling, or using controlled substances while on duty. In addition, employees may not be under the influence of any controlled substance, such as drugs or alcohol, while at work, on company premises or engaged in company business. Prescription or over-the-counter medications, taken as prescribed, are an exception to this policy. Anyone violating this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.”

2 REDUCE WORKPLACE INJURIES

One in six workplace deaths, and one in four workplace injuries, involve drugs or alcohol use. By implementing and communicating clear rules consequences of using drugs or alcohol during work, drug use as well as the number of work-related accidents and injuries should significantly decrease.

3 IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY

Employees who frequently use drugs or alcohol tend to miss work or run late more often than non-users. Additionally, those who use drugs are twice as likely to change employers three or more times in a year than non-users. Help curb these behaviors by instituting a drug-free work place policy and holding workers accountable.

4 ESTABLISH SAFE, HEALTHY WORK ENVIRONMENTS

By implementing a drug-free workplace program, you show a commitment to having a safe, healthy work environment.

5 DECREASE WORKERS' COMPENSATION CLAIMS

The National Institute of Drug Abuse found that substance users cost employers twice as much in workers' compensation and medical expenses as non-users. Additionally, substance abusers are five times more likely to file workers' compensation claims. By reducing drug use among employees, you can reap safety benefits and workplace savings.

6 DECREASE WORKERS' COMPENSATION PREMIUMS

To encourage businesses to implement drug-free workplace programs, some states, such as Florida, Georgia, Texas, Virginia and Washington, have passed laws that enable businesses to receive workers' compensation insurance premium credits of as much as 10 percent, if they employ a drug-free workplace program.

7 EDUCATES EMPLOYEES

A drug-free workplace program should contain an educational component that informs employees on the health and safety risks drug use imposes on all employees. You should also point out to employees the costs drug use has on your company's bottom line, productivity and increased health-care costs.

8 SHOWS EMPLOYEES YOU HAVE A VESTED INTEREST

A drug-free workplace program shows employees that you care about their health and safety. By providing helpful resources, such as confidential hotline numbers or names of treatment centers, to assist employees who have substance abuse problems, you illustrate your commitment to seeing your employees get help and improve their quality of life.

9 OVERALL COST SAVINGS IMPROVE THE BOTTOM LINE

Benefits from implementing a drug-free workplace program include lower absenteeism, increased productivity, reduced workers' compensation filings and fewer accidents. More discrete savings include improved employee morale, creativity and emotional stability. As a result of these savings and cost reductions, the net profit of your business improves.

10 POSSIBLE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT CONTRACTS

If your business wants to contract with the government, you must have a drug-free policy in place. Under the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1998, most companies seeking contracts with the government must maintain a drug-free workplace. Additionally, the Department of Transportation requires companies operating any commercial vehicle in interstate commerce to have a drug-free workplace policy.

For more information about drug-free workplace programs, please visit: www.dol.gov/elaws/drugfree.htm.