

Steps to Talking to Employees Who Test Positive: An Educational Guide

When an employee tests positive for substance use, it's important to handle the situation with care and professionalism. Instead of focusing on punishment, employers can guide employees toward accessing help and addressing the issue effectively. Here's a step-by-step approach:

Step 1: Stay Calm and Maintain Confidentiality

Before you engage in the conversation, take a moment to ensure you are calm and composed. Privacy is key—ensure that the meeting is confidential and that you are addressing the issue privately, without judgment. Make it clear to the employee that their situation will remain confidential.

Step 2: Present the Facts Clearly and Professionally

When discussing the drug test results, stick to the facts. Avoid using accusatory language and focus on the objective outcomes. Let the employee know that workplace testing is part of the company's commitment to safety, which benefits everyone. Frame the conversation around their well-being and the safety of the workplace.

Step 3: Offer Support and Resources

Rather than focusing on the negative aspect of testing positive, offer the employee access to resources for recovery. Let them know that the company is here to help and is offering them support for treatment. Highlight the available programs, such as Blink's addiction support services, which provide personalized care and guidance.

Step 4: Engage in a Non-Judgmental Conversation About Next Steps

Ask open-ended questions to understand the employee's situation. Make sure the employee feels comfortable sharing their experiences. Use this time to discuss options for treatment, recovery programs, or counselling. Emphasize that asking for help is a courageous and necessary step for their health and well-being.

Step 5: Create a Clear Plan for Support

Work with the employee to create a clear, actionable plan to address the issue. This might include temporary time off for treatment, flexible work hours, or counseling sessions. Having a clear plan shows the employee that the company is committed to their recovery and provides a roadmap for success.

Step 6: Follow Through and Offer Continuous Support

Recovery is a long-term process, so it's essential to stay supportive throughout the journey. Make sure to check in regularly, provide resources, and maintain an open line of communication. Reinforce the company's commitment to helping the employee succeed and ensure they have access to the ongoing support they need.