

## Reasonable Suspicion Drug Testing

You may be wondering if you can require an employee to take a drug test if said employee starts showing erratic behavior or signs of diminished capacity. The answer is yes, and you should have a standard for such a process in place and apply it to all situations. The standard is "reasonable suspicion". When the employee is obviously impaired, testing can be performed, especially when they are dealing with patients or putting themselves or others in harm's way.

Some examples of the signs an employer may observe are described below.

### Physical signs

- Bloodshot eyes and, or dilated pupils
- Slurred speech
- Unsteady walk and, or uncoordinated movements
- Shakes or tremors
- Unexplained sweating or shivering
- Fidgeting and the inability to sit still
- Sleeping at work or difficulty staying awake
- Unusual body or breath odor
- Deterioration in appearance and grooming

### Behavioral signs

- Attendance problems — tardiness, pattern of absences or excessive absenteeism
- Decline in performance and productivity
- Acting withdrawn from others, secretive
- Money problems or borrowing or stealing money

### Psychological signs

- Unexplained changes in personality or attitude
- Sudden mood changes, irritability, angry outbursts or inappropriate laughing
- Unexplained fear or paranoia
- Inability to focus or concentrate

When two or more members of management make observations significant enough to warrant reasonable suspicion drug testing, this should be documented and explained to the employee being sent for testing.