

Workplace Substance Abuse Drug Testing For Efficiency & Safety



Every year in Australia, workplace substance abuse accounts for over \$5 billion in lost productivity as a result of reduced output and absenteeism. Furthermore up to 25% of workplace accidents are drug or alcohol related.

It is no surprise then that many workplaces are adopting zero-tolerance and harm-minimisation policies to deter employees from working under the influence of drugs.

Drug Testing As Part Of Harm-Minimisation and Zero-Tolerance Policies



Random drug testing and at-cause testing may be carried out as part of both policies. Under a harm-minimisation policy, the results will typically be used to identify employees who may require drug counselling or further assistance, whereas a zero-tolerance workplace will use the test results as a disciplinary tool, potentially terminating an employee who fails.

But what happens when the results are wrong?

Like all products, preliminary drug testing kits can vary in accuracy.

A poor quality testing kit could wrongly indicate that someone has taken drugs. Even though a blood test may clear an innocent worker, the lengthy wait for results can place an incredible amount of stress on the accused employee and their reputation and career may be affected permanently.

Conversely, a poor quality test may not even identify that someone has been taking drugs. This can have significant implications for workplace safety.

Follow these four steps for effective drug testing programs to make sure you are getting the results you need.

Choosing A Drug Testing Kit For Workplace Safety

Step One: Which drugs are a concern for your company?

All drugs can impact on the safety of both the user and those around them in the workplace.

However certain drugs, such as barbiturates, are not widely available within Australia and you may decide not to test for this in order to reduce the cost per test. The six most commonly tested for drugs of abuse are

- Amphetamines
- Benzodiazepines
- Cocaine
- Opiates
- Cannabis
- Methamphetamines





Step Two: Do you want to test for drug use that may have occurred days earlier?

Many employers are only concerned about drug abuse that impacts on an employee's ability to carry out their job effectively and safely. They do not want to test for drug use that occurs outside of work.

The detection time will be affected by

- Whether the test kit samples urine or saliva
- Body mass, age and metabolism of the user
- The type of drug that is taken
- How often and how much of the drug is taken

Refer to the chart below as a general guide for drug test detection times based on urine and saliva testing methods.

Drug Test Detection Times

	Detection Period For Saliva Testing	Detection Period For Urine Testing
Amphetamines	3 days	1 - 4 days
Barbiturates	-	1 - 21 days
Benzodiazepenes	-	1 - 42 days
Cannabis (single / casual use)	12 - 24 hours	2 - 3 days
Cannabis (habitual use)	12 - 24 hours	15 - 30 days
Cocaine	24 hours	4 - 5 days
Methadone	-	3 - 5 days
Methamphetamines	3 days	3 - 5 days
Opiates	7 - 21 hours	2 - 4 days

Step Three: How much manual handling of the sample are you willing to carry out?

There's no delicate way to phrase this. Are you OK with handling a urine specimen?

In broad terms, preliminary tests are designed to test either urine or saliva. It is highly recommended that you wear protective clothing when handling both types, however some people may be uncomfortable with using a small pipette to transfer a urine sample from a cup to a drug testing panel.

Thankfully there are urine drug test kits available which limit the amount of manual handling needed. The *Secure4* urine drug test cup is an all in one device which means that all you need to do is screw on the lid and place the cup on its side to begin the testing process.



Step Four: How to spot an accurate drug test kit

There are various levels of quality in drug test kits and cheap often means inaccurate. To avoid false accusations of drug abuse or to ensure drug abuse is actually being identified, workplaces need to use reliable drug testing kits.

There are three primary indicators of quality for drug test kits

1) Australian Certification

Check whether the drug test kit carries Australian Certification. BUT be cautious as using this as the only indicator of quality. Some manufacturers have been known to switch to lower quality components after their drug test kit has passed certification. These changes may mean that the kit is less effective than the version that was actually certified.

2) US FDA Approved

US manufactured kits, such as the drug kits sold by Drug Detection Solutions, must use the same materials from batch to batch. This creates consistency and the version that passed the Certification is likely to be the same that is for sale even years after.

3) The colour of the indication line

Regardless of whether a negative or positive sample is recorded, a quality drug test kit should produce a cherry red coloured indicator line. If not, the manufacturer has probably used lower quality components and your results may not be accurate.



Drug Detection Solutions supply a range of high quality urine and saliva drug testing kits for private and workplace testing. Our kits use only quality components to greatly reduce the incidence of inaccurate results.

All our kits are manufactured in either Germany or the USA and comply with Australian Standards.



Secure4

AS/NZS 4308:2008 Certified



Oratec III

AS/NZ4760:2006 Certified



Oratec XP/5

Contact Drug Detection Solutions today to find out more about their range of drug-of-abuse screening devices and accessories.

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