

Observation of Persons being tested for Alcohol and/or Other Drugs

RECOGNISING FITNESS FOR WORK PROBLEMS:

This section will assist you to recognise these situations. Some or all of the following behaviours are often observed in individuals with fitness for work problems:

ATTENDANCE PROBLEMS These typically begin on an infrequent basis and get worse. They include missed days, especially if a pattern develops (e.g. first day back), being late for the start of work and unexplained absences during the day.

VARIATION IN PERFORMANCE These include changes in the pace of work, efficiency, productivity and reliability. They often are small and infrequent to start with but become larger and more frequent over time.

A DECLINE IN WORK QUALITY AND QUANTITY This includes missed deadlines, work poorly done, an increased number and seriousness of mistakes, a lack of attention to detail and so on.

IMPROBABLE EXPLANATIONS AND EXCUSES Employees with fitness for work problems often have (or report) unusual reasons to account for their poor attendance, behaviour or performance.

INCREASE IN SAFETY INCIDENTS / ACCIDENTS There is often an increase in minor incidents or “near misses” which may or may not result in injuries or damage to property and equipment.

HEALTH ISSUES This may show up as increased time off work or frequent, minor health issues. Alternatively the person may often complain of pressure and stress, either at home or work.

COMPLAINTS FROM OTHERS These may be from co-workers, customers or the public. This may involve work output and quality, or inappropriate behaviours or attitudes.

EMOTIONAL / BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES These include irritability, anger, suspiciousness and over-reaction to real or imagined criticism or conflict. However they can also include other things such as fluctuations in confidence and/or morale, or withdrawal and avoidance of contact with others at work.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CHANGES These include an inability to concentrate, excessive fatigue or sleepiness and obvious impairment such as slurred speech or hand tremor. Other signs include difficulty in recalling instructions, frequent requests to repeat instructions, decreased ability to handle complex tasks or difficulty in recognising mistakes.

ABNORMAL BEHAVIOUR This includes coming to work in an abnormal state (agitated, distressed, incoherent, etc.) or a deterioration in appearance or personal hygiene. A very serious sign is repeated risk-taking or self-harming behaviour.

OTHER POSSIBLE INDICATORS This can include frequent complaints about money, low pay, high living costs and unexpected expenses. This can result in frequent borrowing or attempted borrowing from others. Other signs include evasiveness on the subject of personal affairs.

Immediate Observation /assessment form

General appearance:	Tick where observed	Comments
Untidy		
Disheveled		
Under the weather		
Profuse sweating		
Hygiene Impression		
Poor Hygiene		
Breath smells of alcohol		
Blood shot eyes		
Pupils dilated		
Abnormalities with the eyes		
Attitude		
Aggressive/ Confrontational		
Emotional		
Irrational		
Erratic		
Paranoid		
Other		
Body Language		
Fidgety and nervous		
Lazy and listless		
Other		
Cognitive ability		
Slurred speech		
Impaired reaction time		
Impaired awareness		
Staggering/ unable to stand straight		
Disorientated/ appearing "out of it"		
Memory impaired		

Provide general comments on the above observations: What leads you to suspect the person is under the influence of drugs

Anything else concerning not raised on tick sheet:

Discussion with the Employee notes:

Was the employee asked to take a drug test? _____

Result of test: _____

Where employee refused to take a test please provide his or her reasons and have a witness sign in acknowledgment of the refusal

Signed:

_____ (Full name and signature)

Person conducting the observation

_____ (Full name and signature)

Witness

CHECKLIST – FITNESS FOR WORK (Long term report)

Using the following information, tick the signs that you believe indicate a person may have a fitness for work problem. Use the space underneath each to describe the behaviour of concern. Attendance problems. This is useful when a long term problem is suspected.

☐ Attendance problems

☐ Variation in performance

☐ A decline in work quality and quantity

☐ Improbable explanations and excuses

☐ An increase in safety incidents and accidents

☐ Health issues

☐ Complaints from others

☐ Emotional / behavioural changes

☐ Psychological changes

☐ Abnormal behaviour

IN ADDITION TO THE ABOVE, you can ask the employee to cooperate with you and conduct this test for suspicion of being drunk (it should be performed when a breathalyzer is refused), if you do this be sure to use it **in addition** to the observation tick sheet and to record all of the findings in writing.

The field sobriety test:

- Horizontal gaze test, which involves following an object with the eyes (such as a pen) to determine characteristic eye movement reaction.

Findings: _____

- Walk-and-turn (heel-to-toe in a straight line). (This test is designed to measure a person's ability to follow directions and remember a series of steps while dividing attention between physical and mental tasks.)

Findings: _____

- One-leg-stand.

Findings: _____

- Modified-position-of-attention (feet together, head back, eyes closed for thirty seconds; also known as the Romberg test).

Findings: _____

- Finger-to-nose (tip head back, eyes closed, touch the tip of nose with tip of index finger).

Findings: _____

- Touch each finger of hand to thumb counting with each touch (1, 2, 3, 4, 4, 3, 2, 1).

Findings: _____

- Count backwards from a number such as 30 or 100.

Findings: _____

