

Supervisor Communication

Workplace Guidelines to Prevent Opioid & Substance Abuse

At a glance...

It is important for supervisors to know how to recognize impairment in the workplace and how to have conversations with workers that they believe are struggling and getting them to the help they need. Supervisors are the link between workers and management making them a vital part of addressing opioids in the workplace

DO'S



Prepare - It saves time and energy

- Recognize the importance of using people's first language when intervening.
- Remember, your goal is to offer support and solve problems, not discipline or terminate.

Remain self-aware

- Reluctance to do what is necessary is often due to your own feelings and the emotional involvement with the employee.
- Feeling helpless, sad, hurt, fearful, guilty, angry, or superior is not uncommon or inappropriate. Such feelings block effective communication and need to be dealt with before meeting with the employee.
- You also need to be ready to cope with the employee's resistance, defensiveness, and even hostility.

Deliver the message directly and respectfully

- The keys to a successful approach of the troubled employee are clarity, brevity, and your resolve to do the right thing.
- Stick to the facts—a balanced, firm and factual presentation.
- Be specific and direct, using examples of the incidents you've observed. But do so without blaming or speculating about cause. Explain why the behavior is alarming or the level of performance is unsatisfactory.

DON'TS



- Delay or avoid the meeting.
- Give advance notice of the meeting.
- Minimize the problem.
- Lose your cool
- Moralize, judge, or criticize.
- Let friendship interfere with performance and safety.
- Talk about what are otherwise protected, confidential matters with others in the company.
- Cover for one person's poor performance and threats to safety by assigning their work to others.
- Diagnose or counsel people.
- "Jump the gun" by breaking with your own policies or the law and violating people's rights.