



## REASONABLE SUSPICION CONSIDERATIONS

### 10,000 foot view

- Document all received complaints
- Document all observed behaviors that are concerning
- Be cognizant of patterns of behaviors
- Focus on performance & use the appropriate improvement/discipline process
- Seek support — and don't delay

### Who can document observed behavior

- Anyone & everyone

### What does "document" mean

- Observers should clearly document their observations, including any concerning behaviors. The documented observations should be as specific as possible in their descriptions but not attempt to diagnose the situation.
- Supervisors should clearly document how observed behaviors impact performance and safety
- Supervisors should clearly document related concerns regarding safety and liability.
- Supervisors should clearly document and communicate clear expectations for approved performance, timelines, and consequences of non-compliance.

### Serious issue (SAMSA)

- Substance abusers file 3–5 times as many Workers Comp claims.
- 38%–50% of all Workers Comp claims are related to substance abuse in the workplace.
- Substance abusers incur 300% higher medical costs than non-abusers.
- Workers with alcohol problems were 2.7 times more likely to have injury-related absences.
- Substance abusers are 1/3 less productive.
- Increased liability risks, such as lost productivity, absenteeism, injuries, fatalities, theft, low employee morale, increase in health care costs, legal liabilities, increased workers' compensation costs, etc.

### Considerations

- There are illnesses, medications, disabilities, and physiological conditions that can resemble stereotypical characteristics of being under the influence.
- Under some circumstances, substance abuse may be considered a serious health condition.
- An employee who needs help may be just that — a person who needs help.

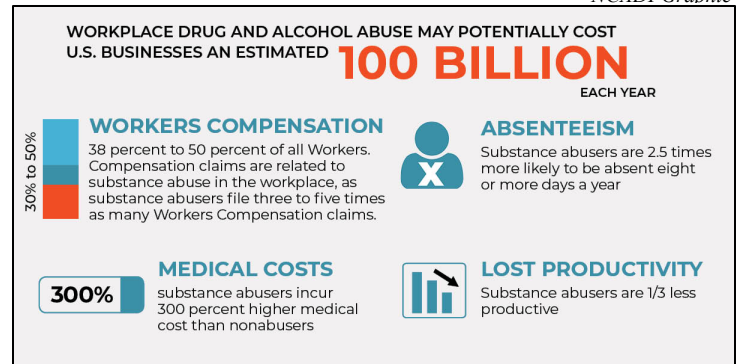
### Example support for employees

- Clearly defined expectations
- Accountability
- Improvement/discipline process
- Paid and unpaid time off
- FMLA
- In/out-patient treatment
- LifeWorks EAP
- And more

### Example support for supervisors

- Industry-specific regulations and guidelines
- Improvement/discipline process
- Managers, Department Heads, and Elected Officials
- Administrative Services
- State's Attorney's office
- LifeWorks EAP
- And more

NCADI Graphic



**Resources to learn more / Resources used to compile this overview**

- Comprehensive reasonable suspicion training  
[https://www.wasbo.com/images/WASBO/Documents/6/Handouts/SC2017\\_ReasonableSuspicionTraining.pdf](https://www.wasbo.com/images/WASBO/Documents/6/Handouts/SC2017_ReasonableSuspicionTraining.pdf)
- Books  
*Effectively Managing Troublesome Employees*, McAfee & Champagne
- SHRM resource  
<https://www.shrm.org/resourcesandtools/tools-and-samples/how-to-guides/pages/documentingreasonable suspicion.aspx>
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018/NSDUHNationalFindingsReport2018.pdf>  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/data/report/2017-2018-nsduh-state-prevalence-estimates>