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Substance abuse in the workplace: Legalization of marijuana requires employers update policies and procedures

By Dave Robinson on July 27, 2016



Substance abuse negatively affects employers through lost productivity, absenteeism, low morale, higher turnover, increased accidents and increased health costs. The Working Partners Report, a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, and the SBA, and Office of National Drug Policy Control, estimates that 38 percent to 50 percent of all workers compensation claims are related to substance abuse, and substance abusers file three to five times more workers compensation claims than the average employee. The White House's Office of National Drug Control Policy estimates that U.S. companies lose billions of dollars each year due to substance abuse issues.

Despite these statistics, over the last few years, 23 states, including Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine and Vermont, have authorized or decriminalized medicinal use of marijuana, and four states have legalized its recreational use. With the changing landscape of the law, now is the time for employers to update and implement a comprehensive workplace substance abuse policy.

Read the full article by Dave Robinson, Esq. and Michael Robinson [here](#).

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