

FENTANYL USE IN THE WORKPLACE: A GROWING CHALLENGE FOR EMPLOYERS: NAVIGATING THE NEW RISKS WITH ADVANCED TRAINING PRODUCTS (ATP)

Recent data show a sharp rise in workplace fentanyl detection, with random drug test positivity rates for fentanyl more than doubling since 2020 and now over seven times higher in random tests than in pre-employment screenings. This troubling trend reveals that employees may increasingly turn to fentanyl during active employment, eluding traditional pre-hire testing and presenting new dangers to workplace safety and productivity.

The Scope of the Problem

- Fentanyl positivity rates in random workplace testing reached 1.13% in 2024, twice the 2020 rate and 707% higher than pre-employment test rates.
- The data show elevated poly-drug use: 60% of fentanyl-positive samples also contained other substances, with marijuana and amphetamines rising sharply as co-detected drugs.
- This pattern suggests shifting substance use dynamics: Employees, once hired, are turning to highly potent and dangerous opioids while on the job, greatly increasing the risk of accidental impairment, injury, overdose, and liability.

The Regulatory Landscape

In response to this trend, federal testing protocols are evolving. As of July 2025, the Department of Health and Human Services' Drug-Free Workplace Program has authorized fentanyl screening for federal workplaces, highlighting the urgency for all employers to adapt their own policies and practices.

ATP's Proactive Approach

ATP stands at the forefront of workplace impairment risk management, providing comprehensive solutions that address the multidimensional risk fentanyl poses:

- **WIRE™ Supervisor Training:** Ensures managers are equipped to spot real-time impairment—whether opioid, cannabis, or other substance—and make informed, defensible decisions that transcend the limitations of drug test results.
- **WAIT™ Employee Awareness Training:** Delivers up-to-date education on the dangers of fentanyl and other impairing drugs, emphasizing reporting, peer support, and a culture of accountability.
- **Anonymous Hotlines and Digital Documentation:** ATP's technology streamlines incident reporting and enables intervention before the worst outcomes occur.
- **Policy Consulting:** Through ATP's legal partners, we help organizations create robust, adaptive substance policies that incorporate evolving legal, scientific, and safety standards—critical as fentanyl screening becomes a workplace norm.

Best Practices Moving Forward

- Expand impairment training for all safety-critical personnel.
- Regularly update drug policies and ensure rapid adaptation to new testing standards and legal mandates.
- Foster a culture where concerns about substance impairment can be voiced and addressed confidentially and without stigma.
- Integrate poly-drug and opioid-specific education and response into all future safety initiatives.

Conclusion

The fentanyl crisis is a workplace crisis. As synthetic opioid risks rise and workplace use patterns shift, employers must move beyond traditional approaches. ATP partners with organizations to proactively address these risks, safeguard employees, and ensure regulatory readiness in a rapidly changing environment.

Contact us today at Solutions@AdvancedTrainingProducts.com with any questions about WIRE Certified Training™ or visit our website: <http://www.AdvancedTrainingProducts.com/> to get started!

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