



JOB AID HAZARD AWARENESS INFO

CANNABIS AND IMPAIRMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Many workplaces are still struggling to navigate the balance between managing the effect of the new cannabis legislation in the workplace while also protecting employer rights. Safety should always come first, therefore all employees must show up to work, fit for work and remain so throughout their shift. This requirement applies to those who use recreational drugs, prescription drugs, or alcohol.

Hazards Involved/Arise

- Cannabis contains hundreds of chemical substances including Delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) and Cannabidiol (CBD)
- Although medical cannabis may have lower amounts of THC (responsible for the psychoactive response), it may have an impact on how the brain and body functions
- The effects of cannabis impairment are usually more subtle and longer lasting than alcohol impairment and may be harder to recognize
- Acute effects of impairment include diminished: mental alertness, physical coordination, reaction time, sustained vigilance, manual dexterity and judgment
- Complex human/machine performance such as driving vehicles or operating machinery will be impacted by drug or alcohol impairment
- Impairment from THC may last as long as 24 hours after taking a moderate dose of cannabis products, and effects can linger for frequent users
- Cannabis that is available as edibles (e.g. candy, baked goods) increase the risk of accidental consumption, impairment, and over-dose
- Studies have linked the consumption of products high in THC to an increased risk of mental illness



People Affected

- Employees
- Recreational and medicinal cannabis users
- People exposed to cannabis second-hand smoke or vapour

Existing Controls

- Conduct risk assessments to identify safety sensitive positions
- Develop a workplace drug and alcohol policy that:
 - Clearly defines impairment
 - Requires employees to be fit for work
 - Outlines discipline, up to and including termination, for anyone not fit for work
 - Includes supports for an employee struggling with addiction
 - Addresses the use of cannabis in and around your workplace and in company vehicles
 - Addresses the use of medical cannabis on an individual basis
- Develop procedures for identifying, reporting and removing impaired employees from the workplace
- Identify resources and supports that are available for employees (community agencies, health unit)
- Identify accommodation measures for employees who disclose a substance abuse problem, in accordance with obligations under applicable human rights legislation
- Provide training for all employees on the risks of workplace impairment and the workplace policy
- Provide training for supervisors to identify, respond to and record evidence of work-related impairment
- Reinforce workplace harassment policy
- Implement workplace wellness programs to support physical and mental well-being

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