Substance Abuse Awareness:
Recognizing the signs of impairment in the workplace

Substance abuse in the workplace is the use of any substance, while at work, that can impair a person’s judgement, clarity or functioning.

Substances can include but are not limited to:
* Alcohol
* Illegally obtained substances
* Legally obtained medication
* Over the counter medications

Examples of workplace substance abuse:
* Coming to work drunk or high
* Drinking or using on the job

Most commonly used substances at work:
These are most often used because they are easily stored.

* Opiates
* Benzos
* Cocaine
* Marijuana
* Amphetamines
The sad reality of Substance Abuse:

- 70% of substance users are employed.
- 24% of workers admit to using during the workday at least once in the past year.
- 15% of US workers report using or being impaired on the job in the last year.

The implications of employee substance use for companies are absenteeism, cost, job turnover, and healthcare cost increase.

**Signs of Impairment**

- Slurred Speech
- Unsteady Gait (Walk)
- Poor Coordination
- Glassy/Red Eyes
- Sleeping at Work
- Looking Space Out
- Dilated/Pinpoint pupils
- Odor of alcohol/drugs
- Acting inappropriate, loud, excessive laughing

**What to do if you suspect an employee has a substance use disorder?**

- The short answer is...nothing.
- Discuss your concerns with a supervisor and focus on work-related performance and behavior issues.
- An employee with a substance use disorder can be disciplined the same as an employee without one.

**Remember if you suspect an employee has a substance disorder or if you do, you can always talk to your supervisor.**