



#119

NATIONAL SAFETY COUNCIL

Position/Policy Statement

Opioids in the Workplace

The National Safety Council has an increasing body of evidence supporting that workplace safety, risk management and worker's compensation programs have an increasing focus on use of opioids for workplace injuries and their impact on recovery and work time loss. While the number of these prescriptions and dosing has begun to be addressed in these settings, accelerated focus is warranted as data suggests that the use of opioids may contribute to increased safety risks, disability and prolonged duration of time off.

The National Safety Council recommends employers utilize a comprehensive approach to address opioid use and abuse in the workplace. Essential elements include:

- 1) Supervisor education focused on identification of impaired employees
- 2) Expanded drug testing programs that include testing for all common opioids
- 3) Assure that their insurance carriers and PBMs have mechanisms for identifying inappropriate opioid use and patterns of prescribing and a mechanism of response to assist patients and report prescribers to regulatory boards when appropriate.
- 4) Evaluation of employee assistance programs (EAP) that include accessible means for treatment
- 5) Clear definition of which drugs may not be used in safety-sensitive positions

This position statement reflects the opinions of the National Safety Council but not necessarily those of each member organization.

Adopted by the Council, November, 2014