

OPIOIDS AT WORK

EMPLOYER TOOLKIT



Asking For Help at Work

If opioid use or misuse is affecting your life or work, or you think you may have a problem with opioids, the time to seek help is now. Opioid use disorder (the medical name for opioid addiction) is a long-term, relapsing brain disease – asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

WHO CAN YOU TALK TO?

An Employee Assistance Program representative. EAP services are free and confidential, and nothing discussed will be shared with your employer. When you talk to the representative, you can get advice on what to do next and get referrals if you need them.

Your doctor. Be honest about your opioid misuse and ask for a plan to discontinue the medication. This may include a plan to taper off opioids, use of a medication assisted treatment in the doctor's office or a clinic, or a referral to a treatment program.

If you or a loved one has a problem with opioids, seek help now.

A company supervisor and/or human resources professional. Your supervisor might already be aware that you have performance or personal issues, so talking frankly about your opioid use disorder may clear the air and help get you back on track. They will work within the company's drug-free workplace policy to help you get treatment and preserve your job status.

If none of these resources are available to you or you don't feel comfortable exploring them, consider using resources such as a [Treatment Services Locator](#) or calling SAMHSA's 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information hotline at 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

SIGNS OF OPIOID MISUSE

It can be hard to tell if you or someone you know is misusing opioids. Watch for the following signs of misuse:

- Taking prescribed opioids more frequently than the doctor directed
- Inability to stop taking opioids even when they are no longer needed for pain
- Continuing opioid use despite negative consequences to personal life or job
- Obtaining opioids from more than one source –going to multiple doctors or taking a friend's prescription
- Opioids are crushed, chewed, snorted, or injected to increase their effect
- Transition to seeking out and using illicit opioids, such as pills bought on the street or heroin
- Failure to fulfill major life responsibilities, such as work, school or financial obligations
- Withdrawal from important relationships or activities
- Legal consequences such as drug possession arrest, DUI, etc.

Medical advice and information in this document were approved by NSC physicians who advise the Council on our substance use harm initiatives. These doctors also are members of the [NSC Physician Speakers Bureau](#).