



National Safety Council
Employer Recommendations:
Cannabis

NSC Employer Recommendations: Cannabis

The Impact of Cannabis in the Workplace

As more states legalize cannabis for recreational and medicinal use, employers must take clear, strong stances to ensure worker safety. A recent NSC survey of employers and employees found that:

- Cannabis is a workplace safety risk
 - One third of employees say they've observed usage during work hours
 - Those in safety-sensitive positions report observing cannabis usage more than those in non-safety-sensitive positions
 - More than half of employers that eliminated THC testing reported seeing an increase in incidents or other workplace performance concerns
- Employees don't feel comfortable self-identifying when they may be too impaired to work, despite what employers think
 - A total of 71% of employers believe employees would feel comfortable telling their supervisor if they were too impaired to work, while only 42% of employees reported they would feel comfortable telling supervisors they were impaired
- Less than half of organizations have a written policy addressing cannabis
 - Written policies are significantly higher among organizations in states where cannabis is illegal

NSC Recommended Employer Actions to Keep Workers Safe

To help employers address the risks of cannabis in the workplace, NSC encourages business leaders to address cannabis safety concerns through these key actions:

1. Establish a Cannabis Policy

- Create clear, fair policies about cannabis in the workplace that prevent impairment and provide employee support
- Consider language on use during and outside of work hours
- Consider a zero-tolerance policy for employees in safety-sensitive positions

2. Build a Safety-Focused Culture



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- Create a safe and trusted culture for employees to report cannabis use in the workplace
- Include cannabis in drug testing panels for safety-sensitive positions
- Advocate for increased access to employee assistance programs (EAPs) and health care benefits for those with substance use disorders

3. Educate and Train About Cannabis

- Train supervisors to recognize and respond to potential cannabis impairment; learn more about NSC training at nsc.org/ImpairmentTraining
- Create clear messages and educate employees about the safety risks of using recreational and medicinal cannabis, both on and off the job
- Stay up to date on cannabis regulations in states of operation
- Provide regular communication to employees about internal policies – especially when making changes to them – and government regulations regarding cannabis

Visit nsc.org/Cannabis to learn more.