

For Managers: Responding to a Workplace Crisis Involving Alcohol or Substance Use

Alcohol and substance use can lead an employee to behave irrationally. When that happens at work, you may be called on to respond to the situation:

- Do a quick assessment to figure out if there is any physical danger in either taking action or not taking action, and decide whether you need to call security, law enforcement, or 911.
- Contact your human resources (HR) department for guidance. If appropriate, ask an HR representative to help you deal with the situation.
- Ask the employee to come with you and another supervisor, an HR representative, or security to a private area.
- Express your concern, and ask about the behavior in a nonjudgmental tone. Listen to what the employee tells you, repeating back what you hear to make sure you have understood.
- If there is reason to believe that a violation of workplace policy has occurred, document your observations and notify HR or a labor-relations representative. Follow the guidelines of your organization's workplace drug or alcohol policy.

This is excerpted from "Recognizing and Dealing with a Substance Use Problem," in A Manager's Guide to the Employee Support Program.

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Disclaimer: This document is intended for general information only. It does not provide the reader with specific direction, advice, or recommendations. You may wish to contact an appropriate professional for questions concerning your particular situation.

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