

# BUSINESS CONCERNS: Marijuana

## Prevention Action Alliance

### Workplace Safety

- According to a study reported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse, employees who tested positive for marijuana had 55% more industrial accidents, 85% more injuries, and 75% greater absenteeism compared to those who tested negative.<sup>1</sup>
- OSHA law requires an employer to provide “employment and a place of employment which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or are likely to cause death or serious physical harm to employees.”<sup>2</sup>
- An increase in the number of marijuana users can translate to greater safety risks for coworkers and decreased productivity, absenteeism, safety and liability risk for employers.

### Employment Ramifications

- It is now difficult for employers to find job applicants who can pass a drug test. Colorado construction company GE Johnson was forced to hire out-of-state construction workers because too many Coloradans were failing pre-employment drug tests.<sup>3</sup>
- 71% of employers believe employees would feel comfortable telling their supervisor if they were too impaired to work; yet only 42% of employees reported that they would feel comfortable telling supervisors they were impaired.<sup>4</sup>

### Sources

1 Zwerling C, Ryan J, Orav EJ. The efficacy of pre-employment drug screening for marijuana and cocaine in predicting employment outcome. JAMA. 1990;264(20):2639-2643.

2 Occupational Safety and Health Administration: Workers' Rights

3 [https://gazette.com/news/drug-use-a-problem-for-employers/article\\_ab53e66f-4923-55a5-a48c-00b05cf262f9.html](https://gazette.com/news/drug-use-a-problem-for-employers/article_ab53e66f-4923-55a5-a48c-00b05cf262f9.html)

4 Understanding Cannabis in the Workplace; National Safety Council; July 2021.

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## Business Liabilities

- Higher-potency marijuana has been demonstrated to consistently impair executive function and motor control for periods in excess of 6 hours after cessation of smoking. It is reasonable to presume that emerging high-potency THC strains will have proportionally greater and more prolonged psychomotor effects.<sup>5</sup>
- Unlike with alcohol, we do not yet have a reliable testing method to detect if someone is impaired by marijuana in the workplace. Insurance claims have become a growing concern among companies in legalized states because if marijuana use is allowed or drug testing ignored, employers are at risk of liability claims when a marijuana-related injury or illness occurs onsite.

## Sources

5 MEDICAL MARIJUANA IN THE WORKPLACE; GOLDSMITH, ET. AL.; MAY 2015.

This fact sheet was created by the Marijuana Task Force, a collaboration of the Ohio Prevention Professionals Association and Prevention Action Alliance. Members of the Marijuana Task Force include:

- PreventionFirst!
- Jennifer's Messengers
- Empower Tusc
- Mental Health and Recovery Board of Union County
- Alliance for Substance Abuse Prevention
- Westshore Enforcement Bureau
- Westshore Young Leaders Network
- Summit County Community Partnership

Prevention Action Alliance is a 501(c)3 nonprofit located in Columbus, Ohio. We're dedicated to leading healthy communities in the prevention of substance misuse and the promotion of mental health wellness. Learn more at [preventionactionalliance.org](http://preventionactionalliance.org).

If you have concerns about your own use of marijuana or of a loved one and wish to seek help, please visit: [findtreatment.samhsa.gov/](http://findtreatment.samhsa.gov/)

For more information about marijuana and health, contact Prevention Action Alliance at: (614) 540-9985  
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