

Quick Policy Repair: Removing Perceived Gray Areas

Do your policies and practices have gray areas that prevent employees from taking action to address substance use in the workplace? It may not be practical to redraft your policy, but it is possible to offer clarifications through company-wide memos or postings. Use the tips below to start filling in the gray areas. If you find that your policy needs a total overhaul, contact us at www.substancefreeworkplace.com so we can help you create functional and effective workplace policies.

Problem	Solution
Consequences in policy are listed as “up to and including termination.”	Provide examples of possible consequences or interventions other than termination. Include a sample return to work agreement if you have one.
Violations of a policy will be evaluated on a “case by case” basis.	Discuss what criteria will be used to evaluate each case. Just as important, include which criteria WILL NOT be used to evaluate each case. Doing so will help remove the suspicion of bias and/or favoritism.
Lack of commitment to policy	Demonstrate your commitment to a policy by following through with it in its entirety, reviewing it on an annual basis, providing trainings to supervisors and employees, and aligning the policy with the practices and culture of the workplace.
Policy is unclear or misunderstood	Issue a list of Frequently Asked Questions and answers. Ensure that all supervisors understand the policy and don’t have to answer policy related questions with “you’ll have to ask HR.”
Policy encourages “self-referral” but doesn’t include resources	Provide education on access to treatment either through your EAP, health insurance provider, or community resources. Post a resource list where everyone will see it.



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