

Alternative Sentencing Courts

Alcohol and Drug

Testing Primer

Drug Testing 101

- Reasons for Drug Testing:
 - Key Component #5 – Abstinence is monitored by frequent alcohol and drug testing.
 - Acts as a deterrent to future drug use
 - Identifies the individuals who are maintaining abstinence
 - Identifies the individuals who are relapsing
 - Rapid interventions and effective use of limited resources
 - Provides incentive, support, and accountability

- Effective Ways to Drug Test:
 - Drug testing must be random – unexpected, unannounced, unanticipated
 - Limited time between notification and testing
 - Test as frequent as possible
 - Use a progressive / proactive testing strategy
 - Always assume that the participant knows more than we do

Drug Testing 101

- Drug That are Tested for:
 - Laboratory Tests:
 - Alcohol
 - Creatinine
 - Opiates
 - Benzodiazepines
 - Phencyclidine (PCP)
 - Cocaine (Benzoylecgonine)
 - THC (Marijuana)
 - Amphetamines (includes Methamphetamines)
 - On-Site Tests:
 - All the above
 - Methadone
 - Ecstasy
 - Breathalyzer:
 - Alcohol

Drug Testing 101

- Drugs That are not Tested for:
 - Inhalants
 - LSD and other Hallucinogens
 - Over-the-counter cold medications
 - Other things the kids are using to get high that we have no idea about

- Special Testing Opportunities:
 - ETG/ETS
 - Steroids
 - Ambien
 - LSD
 - GHB

Sample Collection

- EVERY TEST MUST BE OBSERVED:
 - This is the single most important aspect of effective drug testing program
 - Urine collection not witnessed are of little to no assessment value
 - Denial component of substance abuse requires “direct observation” collection of participants

- Pre-collection Preparation:
 - Minimize access to water supply
 - Gather all materials beforehand
 - Removal of outer clothing
 - Basic principle is to have participant remove any item of clothing that obstruct the ability to have direct observation while the sample is being collected
 - Complete custody and security labels
 - Have participant wash hands before collection begins

Sample Collection

- Collection of Sample:
 - Provide collection bottle to participant
 - Direct observation of urine leaving the body
 - Maintain visual line-of-sight
 - Collector places lid on the bottle once collection has been completed
 - Place correct and legible labels onto bottle
 - Mark label according to test desired
 - Store sample appropriately

- This to Remember:
 - Assume the participant knows more than we do
 - Assume the participant will try and do the test procedure their way
 - Understand that the collection process is your first “line of defense” for a valid sample
 - If odd behavior occurs, contact others and get a sample
 - When in doubt – test, test, test

Reporting and Results

- Timeline:
 - Drug tests are shipped out to the Lab two to three times a week
 - Results are known within 48 – 72 hours after being shipped
 - Results are processed and notification of positive results are sent out within 30 minutes

- Interpretation of Results:
 - A positive tests mean a positive test
 - No medication will test positive for cocaine
 - No positive test from passive marijuana or crack use
 - A negative test does not necessarily mean no drugs are present
 - We don't do levels

Reporting and Results

- Retention Timelines:
 - Alcohol – metabolizes .015-.018 gm/dl per hour (very short window)
 - ETG/ETS: 1-4 days of detection time
 - Amphetamines – 3-4 days
 - Barbiturates – 1-3 days (Phenobarbital can be up to 2 weeks)
 - Benzodiazepines – 1-3 days
 - Cocaine – 2-4 days
 - Opiates – 2-4 days
 - Marijuana:
 - Chronic use (daily) – 2-3 weeks max
 - Regular use (several times a week) – 7-10 days
 - Infrequent use (less than twice a week) – 1-3 days
 - Diluted sample:
 - <20 mg/dl = short-term loading of liquids to dilute any drug below the cut-off level
 - <10 mg/dl is considered abnormally dilute

Reporting and Results

- Responses to Positive Results:
 - First off immediate response is needed
 - Court sanction
 - Increased treatment
 - Residential
 - Increased testing (both urine or breathalyzer)
 - Termination

- Things to Consider:
 - Should a dilute test be considered a positive test?
 - Should a late test be treated the same as a missed test?
 - Would a participant be happy to miss a test and get community service than to give a test and it come up positive?
 - Does the punishment fit the crime?
 - We don't do levels
 - Direct observation is the only way