

BACK TO BASICS

5 Things to Know About Your Substance Abuse Professional



A compliant drug testing program pairs Substance Abuse Professionals (SAP) with employees after they have tested positive for drugs and/or alcohol following the return-to-duty (RTD) process. SAPs work with employees to move them from a **prohibited status** to a **non-prohibited status** allowing them to get back to work.

35%

Outpatient Treatment

Nationally, only 35-37% of people seeking outpatient substance use treatment independently will successfully complete a program.

49%

Employer Sponsored Program

People with an employer sponsored program had higher rates of completion (49%)*

85%

American Substance Abuse Professionals (ASAP) Programs

ASAP programs protect public and workplace safety while promoting treatment and recovery. Our success rate returning employees back to work safely is 85%.



1. Role and Function

SAPs are licensed or certified credentialed clinicians who evaluate employees in safety-sensitive positions (e.g., commercial drivers, pilots) to assess whether they have substance use issues. They determine whether an **employee** is fit to return to duty after a positive drug and/or alcohol test or a substance use-related violation (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2023).

2. Qualified Evaluators

SAPs must meet all the qualifications under **U.S. Department of Transportation** (DOT) 49 CFR Part 40 §40.281. They must be knowledgeable about the specific regulations and standards for different industries, especially those involving safety-sensitive positions (FMCSA, 2023) in addition to having clinical experience in diagnosing and treating substance use disorders (SUD).



3. Evaluation Process

The SAP's primary responsibility is to be the 'Gatekeeper' of safety. The SAP will conduct a comprehensive evaluation and psychosocial assessment of an **employee's** substance use history, behavior, and determine what course of recommendations (e.g., treatment/education) are needed. The goal is to determine the proper level of care in order to return the employee to work safely.



4. Referral and Treatment Recommendations

After conducting an evaluation, **SAPs** make recommendations for treatment, which may include education, counseling, and/or outpatient services. They will then conduct a follow-up evaluation ensuring that the employee adhered to the mandated recommendations and see if anything further is needed before clearing the employee to return to safety-sensitive duties.

5. Return-to-Duty Process

SAPs play a crucial role in the **return-to-duty (RTD)** process. After an employee successfully completes the required treatment and/or education programs, the SAP then determines the employee's eligibility for an RTD test. The employer conducts the test(s) and a negative test places the employee in a **non-prohibited status**. The employer then follows the mandated testing schedule and aftercare monitoring plan provided by the SAP (U.S. Department of Transportation, 2023).



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