

# Creating a Recovery-Supportive Workplace

## Seven ways to support employees in recovery

Recovery from substance use disorder, similar to other chronic diseases, is a life-long process. And there are **compelling reasons** for employers **to support employees** managing this diagnosis. For example, employees in recovery have **lower turnover, absenteeism and health care costs** than the general workforce.

Use these tips, in combination with a best-practice drug-responsible/drug-free workplace program, to create a recovery-supportive workplace that will **help maximize the productivity and safety** of your workplace and workforce.

### 1 Culture

Treat addiction as the preventable and treatable disease it is. Train supervisors on this disease and signs of a possible setback. Set low or no-use alcohol consumption guidelines at social gatherings and discourage alcohol and other drug-related jokes and put-downs.



### 2 Encouragement

Encourage employees in recovery to be upfront and honest if they feel their recovery is in danger - just as you would encourage an employee recovering from a heart attack to speak up if their symptoms returned.



### 3 Flexibility

Employees may need time off for ongoing support or treatment. Evaluate your time off and flextime policies through the lens of an employee managing a disease over a lifetime.



### 4 Communication

Be sure all appropriate release forms are signed to enable you to communicate with your employee's counselor.



### 5 Accountability

Hold employees accountable to your usual work standards and refer for assistance or take appropriate corrective action if their work performance is not up to par.



### 6 Follow-up

Do follow-up testing as recommended by a counselor or directed by your drug-free workplace policy.



### 7 Balance

Encourage work/life balance and overall wellness to minimize stress, which can trigger a setback.

