



For Immediate Release.
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Southwest Iowa ECI: "Iowa Drug & Alcohol Testing Law: Updates, Policies & Procedures"

COUNCIL BLUFFS, IOWA – No business, regardless of size or location, is immune to the countless problems that alcohol and drug abuse can cause. Most individuals who abuse alcohol and other drugs are employed, and when they arrive for work, they don't leave their problems outside the door. Everyone involved in running a business—both employers and employees—suffer when there is workplace alcohol and drug abuse. Some costs are obvious, such as increased absences, accidents and errors. It also impacts absenteeism, tardiness and productivity rates, workers' compensation claims and the overall climate and morale of the workplace.

The Southwest Iowa Employers' Council (ECI) and Iowa Workforce Development will be hosting a training session on "Iowa's Drug & Alcohol Testing Law: Updates, Policies & Procedures" on Wednesday November 12, 2008 from 10 am to 2:30 pm at Ameristar, 2202 River Rd, Council Bluffs.

Featured speaker will be Helen C. Adams, Attorney with Dickinson, Mackaman, Tyler & Hagen PC Law Firm, Des Moines. All business owners, human resource personnel, managers, line supervisors and staff are invited to attend.

Pre-registration is requested by Friday, November 7th to Carol Morgan at (712) 242-2131 or carol.morgan@iwd.iowa.gov. There is a minimal registration fee of \$50 to attend which covers meeting expenses and lunch. This program has been approved for 4.0 (General) recertification credit hours towards PHR, SPHR and GPHR recertification through the Human Resource Certification Institute (HRCI); this session also meets the one (1) hour continuing education requirement for supervisors under Iowa Code Section 730.5 9(h). A certificate of attendance will be provided at the training session.

Consider these facts from the Governor's Office of Drug Control Policy:

- 77% of drug abusers are employed (Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Substance Abusers are 33-50% less productive (National Institute of Drug Abuse)
- Abusers are absent 30-35 days per year and three times more likely than non-users to be late for work (US Chamber of Commerce)
- Abusers are three to four times more likely to have an accident on the job and five times more likely to file a worker's compensation claim (Employee Assistance Society of North America)
- 21% of workers report being injured or put in danger, having to re-do work or cover for another employee, or need to work harder due to others' drinking (JSI Research and Training Institute)

When it comes to workplace substance abuse, small businesses have big disadvantages. They are less likely to have programs in place to combat the problem, yet they are more likely to be the "employer-of-choice" for illicit drug users. Individuals who can't adhere to a drug-free workplace policy seek employment at firms that don't have one, and the cost of just one error caused by an impaired employee can devastate a small company.

Program topics include:

- Statutory definitions: drugs and alcohol
- Steps an employer must take before commencing any testing
- Employee resources
- Supervisor training
- Who can be tested and circumstances
- Test scheduling, costs, and procedures
- Handling positive test results
- Employer responses to positive tests
- Employer liability issues

- Enforcement
- Other legal considerations
- Iowa Code Section 730.5

Helen Adams is a shareholder in the Iowa firm of Dickinson, Mackaman, Tyler & Hagen, PC. Ms. Adams practices primarily in the areas of employment and trial law. She represents employers in a variety of employment matters that arise during the application process all the way through employment termination. Ms. Adams is listed in the employment law category of Chambers USA America's Leading Lawyers for Business. She is a frequent author and speaker on employment related topics and provides employment law-related training to employers in a variety of industries.

The Southwest IA Employers' Council is a local employer group supported by Iowa Workforce Development Region 13 including Harrison, Shelby, Pottawattamie, Mills, Cass, Fremont and Page counties, and is part of the statewide Employers' Council of Iowa system. All businesses, including Iowa, Nebraska and Missouri employers are welcome to attend ECI events. This employer's group addresses workforce issues, and provides both educational and networking opportunities for employers and human resource professionals. Contact Carol Morgan for more information about the Southwest Iowa ECI group.

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