

## Am I Impaired?

Impairment begins when your ability to cope with everyday problems starts to have a negative impact on your life.

Drinking or drug use becomes a problem when these activities begin to impact negatively on your life; at work, in your family or social relationships, in your personal finances, or in your physical and emotional health. In the workplace, signs of impairment may include time and attendance issues, decreased performance, or your inability to get to your worksite as a result of a Driving Under the Influence (DUI) conviction and loss of your driving privileges.

It is important to understand that you may not always be aware that you are impaired; although you may feel that your alcohol or drug use is not affecting your work performance or behavior, others may perceive it differently. Feedback from family members, friends, co-workers, or supervisors may be your first source of insight that impairment exists.

If you are wondering if your use of alcohol or drugs is causing impairment, help is only a phone call away. Call SEAP at 800.692.7459 for a free assessment and referral to treatment.

## Where to Turn 800.692.7459

The State Employee Assistance Program (SEAP) and the commonwealth are committed to early intervention and treatment, and employees are encouraged to seek assistance before a problem occurs in the workplace.

SEAP provides free and confidential assistance for a wide array of personal problems. You or your family member can access services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The SEAP professionals will work with you to find the most appropriate service to meet your personal needs. SEAP not only can help you with substance abuse and mental health problems, but also can assist with financial, legal, and other personal problems as well. SEAP is confidential and no one in the workplace will be informed without your expressed written consent.

SEAP may also be considered an option when an employee has violated the commonwealth's Substance Abuse Policy or has reached the point of termination. Depending upon the circumstances, the employee may be offered a Condition of Continued Employment in lieu of termination.

**Remember: In most cases, without intervention problems get worse, not better.**

## Do You Need to Talk?

- stress
- grief/ loss
- family
- parenting
- job pressure
- anger
- depression
- alcohol/ drugs
- marital

The trained SEAP professionals can talk with you 24/7 to explore the best available options that may help you.

For a FREE consultation session and referral, call 800.692.7459 anytime.

All services are confidential.

Working Substance Free  
**WORKS!**



The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
is committed to maintaining a  
**Substance Free Workplace**



## Commonwealth Substance Abuse Policy Management Directive 505.25

### Prohibited Behavior

- Reporting to work or remaining at work in an unfit condition.
- Possession or use of alcohol and/or controlled substances (except prescription medications) while on duty or in any commonwealth workplace.
- Unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensing, possession, or use of alcohol and/or controlled substances while on duty or in any commonwealth workplace.

### Other Policy Requirements

- Employees must receive information on the dangers associated with alcohol and drug use in the workplace.
- Federally-funded agencies must annually certify that they are drug-free worksites.
- Agencies must take appropriate action, including discipline up to and including termination, when a policy violation occurs.

## What Happens If...

### I self-disclose a substance abuse problem to my manager or supervisor?

Your supervisor will refer you to SEAP. If your job requires you to carry weapons, or hold a CDL, or you are a licensed professional, or have care/custody/control of inmates, patients, students or residents, you will be required to participate in SEAP before you can return to work.

### I have violated the Substance Abuse Policy but I have not been arrested or convicted?

You may be subject to discipline up to and including termination. Given the circumstances of the violation, you may be required to participate in SEAP as a Condition of Continued Employment.

### I have been arrested and convicted of a crime as defined in the Substance Abuse Policy?

You must report the conviction within 5 days to your supervisor. If you are not terminated, you may be disciplined and will be required to participate in SEAP as a Condition of Continued Employment.

### Do you know...

Conviction means a finding of guilty, including a plea of nolo contendere, disposition in lieu of trial, probation without trial, and Accelerated Rehabilitative Disposition (ARD)?

Although some of the substances described in this brochure are legal and may have a medical benefit, others do not. However, all of these substances can impair judgment, mental functioning, and coordination, which can be dangerous to everyone in the workplace, regardless of the type of work being performed.

## Educate Yourself on These Common Substances

### Depressants

Alcohol is a depressant, and is the most commonly abused substance. As little as one or two beers or drinks can impair the user.

Depressants also include barbiturates (such as Nembutal), benzodiazepines (such as Valium and Xanax), methaqualone (Quaaludes), as well as other prescription medications.

Depressants decrease the response of the central nervous system. The use of depressants results in lack of coordination, falling asleep, and impaired judgment and thinking. Although alcohol and other depressants may be used legally, they represent a significant risk if used in the workplace or while operating equipment.

Depressants can create both physical and psychological dependence, and many depressants are highly addictive. The use of depressants can cause serious medical problems, which if untreated, can cause death.

### Cannabis

The most common form of this drug is marijuana; other forms include hashish and hashish oils. The active ingredient (THC) may also be produced in pill form. While cannabis is not physically addictive, it is considered moderately addictive psychologically.

The use of cannabis results in feelings of euphoria; impaired memory, concentration, and knowledge retention; loss of coordination and motivation; and other similar conditions that can impair work performance and your personal life.

### Narcotics

Narcotics include opium, morphine, codeine, heroin, and other opiates. Although some narcotics can be obtained legally, heroin and opium are illegal.

Narcotics are highly addictive, both physically and psychologically. The use of narcotics results in feelings of euphoria, drowsiness, and respiratory depression. The use of narcotics will significantly impair the user's ability to operate equipment and to mentally function.

### Stimulants

Amphetamines, methamphetamine and cocaine are all examples of stimulants. Stimulants have a high potential for psychological addiction; particularly cocaine, especially in its crack and freebase forms. This can lead to a physical addiction.

Stimulants increase heart rate, respiratory functioning, and alertness. The use of stimulants results in feelings of restlessness, agitation, and decreased appetite. The risk of accidents and errors increases with the use of stimulants.

### Hallucinogens

LSD, PCP, psilocybin mushrooms, and peyote are all examples of hallucinogens.

Hallucinogen use results in increased heart rate, tremors, blurred vision and memory loss, as well as extreme changes in behavior and mood, a disoriented perception of time, hallucinations, and heightened suspicion.

Long term effects include flashbacks, mood swings, impaired thinking, bursts of violence, and depression.

### Inhalants

Inhalants are commonly-found substances that produce certain effects similar to drugs, but unlike the drugs mentioned in this pamphlet, inhalants are not regulated in the same manner.

Examples of inhalants include glue, marking pens, gasoline, butane, amyl nitrite, and aerosol sprays.

The effects of inhalants include loss of muscle control, slurred speech, respiratory failure, cardiac arrest, and a number of other physical symptoms. Inhalants can cause brain and lung damage and can be fatal, even when used in small amounts.

### Designer Drugs

Ecstasy, Spice, K2 and Bath Salts are examples of designer drugs. Designer drugs are modified or synthetic versions of existing drugs.

These drugs are made illegally, and can be toxic. Because their chemical make-ups are unknown, the effects of designer drugs are unpredictable, and can be fatal even after one use.

A master's level SEAP counselor is *always* standing by at 800.692.7459 for a free assessment and referral to treatment. Your call is completely confidential.