



# American Drug Testing

*Drug-Free Workplace Programs*

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## DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE ADVISOR

AN ONGOING SERIES TO PROTECT YOUR COMPANY BY HELPING TO KEEP DRUGS OUT OF YOUR WORKPLACE.

### 12.3 Million Workers Current Illicit Drug Users

Eight percent of all full-time employees and 10.3 percent of all part-time employees are current illicit drug users in the American workforce - a total of 12.3 million employees - according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS").

SAMHSA defines "current

*"75.2 % were employed either full or part time"*

illicit drug use" as at least once in the past 30 days.

Of the 16.4 million current illicit drug users aged 18 or older in the United States in 2004, 12.3 million (75.2 percent) were employed either full- or part-time.

**Employment status** as it relates to current illicit drug use by adults (18 and older) in 2004 was:

- Unemployed - 19.2 percent
- Employed Part-Time - 10.3 percent
- Employed Full-Time - 8.0 percent

Current illegal drug use was higher in *urban* areas than *rural* areas - e.g., 8.1 percent in large metropolitan counties vis-à-vis 6.3 percent in non-metropolitan counties. Interestingly, current illicit drug use is slightly higher in small cities than in large cities - 8.5 percent to 8.1 percent.

**Educational level** as it relates to current illicit drug use among adults (18 and older) also was a factor, with the highest at-risk group being those with some college, but no college degree:

- Some college, no degree - 8.7 percent
- No high school diploma - 8.6 percent
- High school graduates - 7.8 percent
- College graduates - 5.6 percent

**Gender** also was considered by SAMHSA, with males - as always in its survey results - being *more* likely to be current illicit drug users:

- Males - 9.9 percent
- Females - 6.1 percent

Among current marijuana users, the gender gap is essentially just as wide:

8.0 percent for males; 4.3 percent for females.

However, current illicit use of prescription drugs (non-medicinal use of any prescription-type psychotherapeutic) is statistically



equivalent as to gender: 2.6 percent for males; 2.4 percent for females.

Interestingly, the most significant declines in current illicit drug use were in youths (12-to-17) - which is encouraging, while adult (18 and older) current illicit drug use essentially maintained the same levels as in the previous years 2003 and 2002 (or varied very slightly - and statistically insignificantly - up or down). Our society's success in substance-abuse prevention appears to be greater in recent years with the younger generation.

SAMHSA also had significant findings regarding **alcohol abuse**: 121 million Americans aged 12 and older were identified as "current" (in

the last 30 days) drinkers of alcohol in 2005 - 50.3 percent of the 12 and older population; 55 million Americans aged 12 and older - 22.8 percent - participated in "*binge drinking*" (five or more drinks on at least one occasion in the last 30 days); 16.7 million Americans - 6.9 percent - were "*heavy drinkers*," defined as binge drinking five or more times in the last 30 days; *Most* alcohol drinkers were full-time employed adults. 61.3 percent of full-time employed adults (18 and older) were current alcohol users in 2004, compared with "only" 56.6 percent of unemployed adults. However, full-time employed adults had lower rates in the "binge drink-



ing" and "heavy drinking" categories, as defined above, of 29.2 percent and 8.9 percent, respectively (34 percent and 13.6 percent for unemployed adults).

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ("HHS")

#### The Drug-Free Workplace Advisor

is a resource of



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