

Impairment Testing Content for Employee Manuals

Template for Employers

1. Impairment Screening

1.1 What is Impairment Testing?

Impairment testing detects a worker's ability to work safely and efficiently – to protect both himself and his co-workers. Worker impairment can have a variety of causes and is not limited to alcohol or drugs - legal or illegal. Fatigue is a leading cause of impairment. Others causes include illness, injury (such as concussion), medical treatments, chronic medical conditions, physical limitations, and emotional issues.

Impairment is simply an individual's mental and physical state, affected in a way that lessens their capabilities and includes anything that might seriously distract the individual from the job.

For the employee, impairment testing, compared to drug testing, has the advantage of being less intrusive, less time-consuming, and non-stigmatizing. It's non-stigmatizing because, unlike drug testing, impairment testing detects for impairment only; *it cannot detect the specific cause of impairment*. In this way, it's much like a fever thermometer which does nothing more than detect fever and its degree. The thermometer does not and cannot detect the specific illness causing the fever. Impairment testing is the same. Once the fever – or the impairment - is detected, other steps can then be taken to further diagnose the problem and to remedy it.

1.2 Impairment Monitoring

Warning signs of impairment at work can include such symptoms as faulty coordination, slow movements, failure to attend to appearance, inattention, red or glassy eyes, slurred speech, and altered gait. On-site supervisors can institute impairment testing at regular or irregular intervals, or for cause.

When deciding whether an employee should be tested for impairment, the company will consider whether an employee can perform the job safely and whether his condition poses a threat to himself, to co-workers, to the public, or to the job. Such decision requires a quick, reliable, and objective impairment testing method. The company is using the Druid® app from Impairment Science, Inc. as a screening test.

1.3 The Druid app

The Druid app is a 3-minute test that operates on smart phones and tablets. It requires users to perform four tasks.

Tasks 1-3 assess reaction time, hand-eye coordination, decision-making accuracy, and time-estimation accuracy. Each of these three tasks is also a divided-attention task, meaning that the app asks the user to perform two things at once. For instance, one of the tasks requires the user to count the number of circles that appear on the screen while at the same time to estimate the passage of 30 seconds. Task 4 assesses a user's ability to maintain balance by standing on one leg.

Once all four tasks are completed, the app integrates the hundreds of data points it has recorded in order to calculate a performance score. High scores indicate impairment; low scores indicate the absence of impairment.

1.4 Testing Procedure

1.4.1 Site supervision - A company supervisor will monitor all testing with the Druid impairment app. Supervisors are qualified to do so after undergoing training to administer and evaluate the tests. All Druid testing will be performed using a company tablet or smart phone. The testing area requires an internet-connected space where the employee can concentrate without distraction.

1.4.2 Establishing a baseline – When first using Druid, each employee will take a number of practice tests. After the practice tests, all unimpaired, diligently-performed tests will count toward the establishment of each employee's *baseline score*. This is the individual's average unimpaired score. The more the employee takes the tests, the more accurate will be the baseline score. A well-established baseline score varies very little, usually by no more than one or two points. It's difficult to score much lower than your baseline score in the same way that, without extensive training, it's difficult to improve much on repeated 50-yard dashes. Your lowest Druid score, like your fastest 50-yard dash, represents the mind and body's limitation. On the other hand, tests taken when impaired score higher, in some cases much higher, than baseline.

1.4.3 Evaluating the test results – Once a baseline score is established, subsequent tests are assessed in two ways:

- 1) Personal Standard - Comparing it to the user's baseline score.
- 2) Objective Standard - Interpreting it as a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) equivalent.

Each way of evaluating the results has significance, but the Personal Standard frequently best indicates if the worker is fit for duty at that time. High scores above a user's baseline may warrant review by management.

1.4.4 Guidance - Protocol for Druid Scores that Trigger an Alert

In the case of an elevated score, the on-site manager may take the following steps:

- 1) Retake Test - The employee will be asked to retake the test, and do it under more closely monitored circumstances. If the repeat test is at or near baseline, the employee may be allowed to go back to work.
- 2) Interview – If the repeat test is elevated, the employee is likely to be referred to a manager or to HR supervisor, each of whom will have training to figure out why your score is elevated. The manager or supervisor will have access to the following chart to assess the risk associated with the level of impairment indicated by Druid:

Druid score increase over baseline of	Indicates minimum BAC of	Effects
2.2 points	0.02%	At this BAC level, some people will begin to experience reduced coordination and judgment. To prevent alcohol-impaired driving, many countries have made it illegal to drive a vehicle with a BAC of 0.02% or higher (e.g., Brazil, China, Norway, Sweden).
4.5 points	0.04%	Drivers with a BAC of 0.04% or higher who operate a commercial vehicle stand in violation of regulations issued by Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation. The Federal Aviation Administration has the same rule for airline pilot crews, while also prohibiting the ingestion of any alcohol within eight hours of flying.
5.6 points	0.05%	At a BAC of 0.05%, side effects may include impaired balance, speech, and vision, slower reaction times, and impaired judgment and memory. For this reason, most countries have made it illegal to drive a vehicle with a BAC of 0.05% or higher (e.g., Argentina, Canada, Germany, Egypt, South Africa, South Korea).
9.0 points	0.08%	Most U.S. states have made it illegal to drive a vehicle with a BAC of 0.08% or higher. The exception is Utah, which defines alcohol-impaired driving as 0.05% or higher. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, National Institutes of Health defines binge drinking as alcohol consumption that results in a BAC of 0.08% or higher.
12.5 points	0.11%	At a BAC of 0.11% or higher, people are severely impaired and will exhibit confusion, dizziness, slurred speech, along with extremely poor balance and much slower reaction times. Vomiting, sleepiness, and blackouts may occur. Some people who reach this BAC level or higher may require medical attention.

If there are other indications of impairment, there are a number of actions that the supervisor or HR may take, including reassigning the individual to another task temporarily or for a longer period, sending the individual home for the rest of the day or longer, re-training the individual, counseling the individual, or requiring the individual to take additional tests.

- 3) Dialogue – If there are no other indications of impairment, the individual is likely to be questioned about personal circumstances, such as recent illness, new baby, recent injury, marital or family problems, death in the family, or other personal or emotion issues. If the high score is thereby explained, the best action in response will be determined based on all circumstances.
- 4) Decide on Course of Action – If high score remains unexplained, other actions may be taken based on the totality of circumstances, including how deviant the Druid score is from the individual's baseline and whether there is a history or pattern of high Druid scores.