

Fitness for Duty: Guidelines for Supervisors

The University of Texas at Austin
Human Resource Services
Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
(512) 471-3366
www.utexas.edu/hr/eap



Human Resource Services
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN
Committed to Employee and Organization Effectiveness

Fitness for Duty: Maintaining a Safe Workplace

In order to provide a safe workplace, employees must be able to perform the essential duties of their jobs in a safe, secure, productive, and effective manner, without presenting a safety hazard to themselves, to other employees, to the University, or to the public.

Fitness for Duty:

Impaired Behavior & Safety

***Impairment* may be present when the employee is clearly “not acting like herself” or “something seems to be wrong with him.

Specific actions, physical condition, or words must be observed and/or validated.

Examples include:

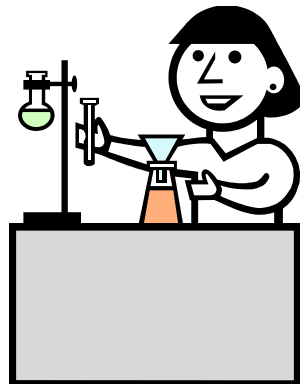
uncontrollable crying, severe trembling, notable problems with coordination, markedly diminished memory or concentration, very inappropriate interactions with coworkers, suicidal or threatening statements

Fitness for Duty: Impaired Behavior & Safety

** Must be actions that can be seen or heard.

** Safety hazard

Impairment is determined **WITHIN THE CONTEXT** of the individual's job duties or in a way that could directly affect the university.



Fitness for Duty: Impaired Behavior & Safety

- In a situation involving impairment and safety, there are two key goals:
 - Remove the threat to safety
 - Follow a procedure to determine when the employee is able to return to the workplace and perform job duties safely

Fitness for Duty

Guidelines for supervisors:

1. In emergencies, call UTPD.



2. Observe or validate employee's appearance of impairment. Inform your manager.

3. Discuss the specific observations with the employee and give employee an opportunity to respond.

You may be able to resolve the situation simply and informally with the employee, without using the formal FFD process.

Fitness for Duty

(Guidelines for supervisors, continued)

4. In non-emergency situations or after UTPD has been notified, contact the EAP (512 471-3366) to consult about next steps.

NOTE: If the situation occurs outside the Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. workday, the supervisor may send the employee home for safety reasons and then consult with EAP during the next business day. Emergency situations should be referred to UTPD.

Fitness for Duty

(Guidelines for supervisors, continued)

5. If the supervisor and EAP agree that a safety hazard is present due to an employee's apparently impaired behavior, EAP will guide the supervisor/manager through the steps toward having the employee evaluated by a medical professional.

Fitness for Duty

Possible results of consult with EAP:

- Same day **meeting with employee** at EAP
- **Formal written request to employee** to be evaluated; **information for health care provider** about the impaired behavior and job duties
 - Certification by health care provider required
 - Return to work plan
- Referral to **Strategic Workforce Solutions** for corrective action, if appropriate
- **No** safety issue is present; **no** impairment indicated

Fitness for Duty

- Other issues that may be addressed by consult with EAP or HRS:
 - Type of **leave** to use
 - Whether a direct **threat** has occurred
 - **Notification of management**
 - How to **discuss the situation with the employee**
 - How to ensure **safe transport**
 - How to handle a **non-compliant employee**

Questions?

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