

FAQs - Marijuana Drug Testing

MultiCare Occupational Medicine

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Legalization of marijuana use in Washington and other states has generated numerous questions from employers. MultiCare Occupational Medicine does not provide employment policies to employers and does not advocate a position about marijuana testing in NonDOT drug tests.

These FAQs are designed to help employers weigh testing options that may be impacted by changes in their policy regarding marijuana testing.

Q: How do I test to check if an employee is “high” on marijuana at work?

A: No universally recognized method exists for this. While several states including Washington established “legal limits” while operating a vehicle, there no standard, widely accepted test for being “under the influence” of marijuana at this time.

Urine drug testing looks for the by-products drugs which have already been metabolized (metabolites). There are no “currently under the influence” standards or rules of thumb to indicate probable impairment from metabolite levels.

Q: Can we get blood drug testing for marijuana?

A: No, MultiCare OccMed does not offer blood drug testing at this time. Some states have arbitrary blood thresholds to define being under the influence. However, these levels are not universally agreed/recognized, and unlike urine drug testing, there is little in the way of industry standardization or employment case law.

Q: Can we modify DOT tests to eliminate marijuana?

A: No: These are regulated by the Federal Government. Only NonDOT testing can be customized

Q: Can we get a Non-DOT express (aka rapid, aka instant) drug test without marijuana? (e.g. MultiCare/eScreen eCup and mCup tests)

A: Yes. Our digitally read X-Cup is available as a 4-panel test. That is, the standard 5-panel minus THC (marijuana).

Q: Can we get a lab-based (always sent to the lab) test without marijuana, or with a different threshold for positives?

A: Yes: Non-DOT lab-based tests can be customized for the drug tested and the cutoff levels for tested drugs. If a custom cut off level is desired, the employer must provide the specifications.

Q: We currently use express tests. If we switch to a lab-based test, how long will results take?

A: Lab negatives take 1 to 3 business days. Positives and MRO negatives take 6-10 business days.