



Random Alcohol & Drug Testing – Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why are Persimmon only undertaking random testing at our manufacturing and construction sites?

A. Our manufacturing and construction sites can be dangerous places, with the operation of plant and machinery and working at height etc. Anyone working at these locations is in a safety critical role and it is even more important that workers are deterred from coming to work impaired by alcohol or drugs and if they do, it is detected. They could not only seriously injure, even kill themselves but also their colleagues around them.

Q. What does impaired by alcohol or drugs mean?

A. In terms of our Alcohol and Drugs Policy, impaired means:

- Alcohol – breath alcohol concentration exceeds 22mcg per 100ml (set at drink drive limit in Scotland).
- Drugs – consumed illegal drugs (covered by the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971) or misused any other drug (using drugs in unsanctioned way).

Q. What alcohol and drug tests are carried out?

- Alcohol – calibrated digital Alcolmeter, similar to those used by the police. Two tests will be undertaken.
- Drugs – urine sample, which will be tested on site. If there is a non-negative reaction (indicating possible drugs) the urine sample will be split into two further sections and both will be delivered to an approved laboratory following strict of chain of custody procedures. One sample will undergo confirmation analysis to ascertain the exact identity of the drug(s) detected.

Q. What happens if someone tests positive for alcohol or has a non- negative test for drugs?

A.

- If an employee and depending upon the circumstances the person may be suspended on full pay and disciplinary action taken. If the person is not suspended then the person must not undertake any work which is safety critical (operating tools/ machinery, working at height etc.) or one that is likely to be affected by the consumption of alcohol or impairment of drugs until the time that they would definitely not exceed breath alcohol concentration of 22mcg per 100ml.
- If the person is a non-direct employee, i.e. a contractor or Agency worker, their employer/ Agency must be notified and if they cannot be re-deployed to a non safety critical task or one that is not likely to be affected by the consumption of alcohol or the impairment of drugs they will be removed from site.

Every situation is different, so please seek the advice of the HR. Dept.

Q. What happens if someone tests positive for drugs after the laboratory test?

A. This will depend upon the type of drugs found, seek the advice of the HR. Dept.

Q. Can a person appeal the result of the Alcohol or Drug test?

A. Yes, the procedure for appealing an alcohol or drug test result is set out in section 9 of the Alcohol & Drug Policy.

Q. How long does alcohol stay in a person's system?

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A. On average, it takes one hour for alcohol to be absorbed into the bloodstream fully, and then one hour per unit consumed for alcohol to leave the body. There is no way to know how much a person can drink and stay under the limit, since it can depend on weight, age, metabolism, the of food they've eaten and other factors.

Q. How long do drugs stay in a person's system?

A. It would depend upon the type or drug but most drugs stay in the system and can be detected in urine tests for 1 – 4 days. Benzodiazepines and Cannabis can stay in the system longer and can be detected in urine for weeks after being consumed.

Q. Will prescription drugs be picked up in urine drugs test?

A. Yes, prescription drugs can show up on a drugs test, if they are of the type that the test screens for. If anyone is taking any prescription drugs they should tell the person testing them so this can be noted at the time of the test. A person may be asked to evidence that they are prescribed the drug by a medical professional and that they are taking the drug as directed and not in an unsanctioned way.

Q. What if someone has an alcohol or drug dependency and they are worried about being tested?

A. If they are a Persimmon employee they must immediately let their Line Manager, other Manager or HR know of the problem. If someone tells us they have a problem as a Company we will make sure that advice and specialist help is made available to them. If they are a Contractor, they are strongly advised to speak to their own Employer and also discuss their concerns with site management, so that help can be provided.

If a person only declares they a problem when a serious misconduct issue has arisen or shortly before a test takes place and they are proven to be in contravention of the Alcohol and Drugs Policy, they will be subject to the same procedures as anyone else.

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