

Health Bulletin



Updated Drugs and Alcohol Standard (Issue 8 - NR/L2/OHS/00120)

Issued to: All Network Rail line managers, health and safety professionals and accredited contractors

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Location: National

Contact: [Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team](#),
[Technical Authority](#)



Overview/Next Steps

The Network Rail Drugs and Alcohol Standard (Issue 8 - NR/L2/OHS/00120) has been updated and re-published on 1 March 2025. The compliance date is set for 7 June 2025.

The changes affect everyone in Network Rail. To access the standard click [here](#) and the briefing information click [here](#).

If you are a **line manager**, you need to be aware of the following changes which apply to you:

- **Clause 5.6:** if an employee records a non-negative point of contact test (POCT) following a random drugs test, you must now implement the '[non-negative risk assessment](#)'
- **Clause 6.1:** prior to determining if a for-cause D&A test is required, you must complete the '[for-cause test form](#)' with an employee;
- **Clause 7.1:** prior to determining if a post-accident/incident test is required, you must complete the '[post-accident/incident test form](#)' with an employee.

The following changes apply to **all employees**:

- **Clause 13.1:** you must only use prescribed or over the counter (OTC) licenced medicine where there is a legitimate medical reason as defined in NR/L2/OHS/00120;

- **Clause 13.4:** you must seek guidance from chemist on call for any medication use with known side effects that have the potential to impact on your ability to work safely;
- **Clause 14.1:** appeals against positive D&A tests may now be submitted without support of a Sponsor, but only where evidence is provided which meets the appeal criteria stated in NR/L2/OHS/00120;
- **Clause 10.7.4:** employees who have a medical condition which prevents you providing a urine sample may request guidance from occupational health for alternative drugs testing methodology.

Other changes to the standard

- **Clause 5.1.3:** the scope of employees eligible for random D&A testing has been updated;
- **Clause 9:** addition of 'active monitoring' as a test type for an employee who is under the Network Rail Drugs and Alcohol Support Programme;
- Removed the requirement for Network Rail employees to attend and pass a D&A test within the 3 months prior to attending Personal Track Safety (PTS) training.

See below for further information and guidance.

Discussion points

Access and share information on this update with your teams:

- Access the updated standard [here](#).
- Access the standard briefing information [here](#).
- Access further guidance and information on the [D&A MyConnect page](#)

For support, contact:

- Your Region or Function Health & Safety Leadership Team
- Technical Authority Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team via healthandwellness@networkrail.co.uk