



Prevention: Occupational Health & Safety Newsletter

Provided by: Orthopedic and Sports Therapy Institute, Inc.



Benefits of Implementing a Fit For Duty Testing Program

WORKSTEPS®

FUNCTIONAL EMPLOYMENT TESTING:

- Pre-employment testing for conditional hires
- Reliable, legal, defensible testing program
- In accordance with the EEOC and ADA
- Includes comprehensive medical tests, dynamic lifting, and essential job functions
- Quantifies all pre-existing conditions
- Determines baseline on all hired employees
- Reduce workers' comp costs, insurance premiums, and lost time
- Affordable for both small and large organizations
- Tests include: Post-Offer Testing, Fit For Duty Testing, Upper Extremity Testing, and Functional Capacity Evaluations

For more information on the WorkSTEPS® Functional Employment Testing Program or our Industrial Rehabilitation Services; contact **Meghan Wilinski, Director of Marketing**: (815) 243-1240 or via email at: mwilinski@ostipt.com.

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With many companies not hiring new employees due to the unstable economy; it is more important than ever for the employer to maintain a healthy and safe workforce, either while working and/or returning back from injury. Accidents happen and injuries occur. However, it is the employers role to insure that employees can perform his or her job safely, to avoid cases of injury or re-injury.

Orthopedic and Sports Therapy Institute, are providers of the WorkSTEPS® Functional Employment Testing Program which includes Fit For Duty Testing. This test is administered to existing employees under several circumstances, specifically allowed under the ADA when the medical examination is "job related and consistent with business necessity."

When an employee is sent for a Fit For Duty Test, the clinician evaluates whether or not the employee can perform the essential job functions and/or examines the previously injured area of an employee to document a new baseline. Fit For Duty Testing is used under various operational scenarios when an employer may require a post-employment functional employment testing:

1. When the employer observes reliable, objective evidence of current performance problems indicating that the employee may not be able to perform essential job functions or may pose a direct threat to the health and safety of the employee or others because of a medical condition.
2. When an employer has a "reasonable belief that an employee's ability to perform essential job functions will be impaired by a medical condition or that he/she will pose a direct threat due to a medical condition" (must be based on objective evidence).
3. When an employee seeks to return to work after being on leave for a medical reason if the employer "has reasonable belief that an employee's present ability to perform essential job functions will be impaired by a medical condition or that he/she will pose a direct threat due to a medical condition" (the employer is covered by the federal FMLA and any state medical leave laws should be aware of possible conflicting obligations).
4. When an employee requests a reasonable accommodation.
5. When the employer requires periodic testing and monitoring of employees in positions affecting public safety.
6. When an employer requests medical examinations required by federal law or regulations.
7. When an employee voluntarily participates in a wellness program.

Fit For Duty Testing is beneficial to employers by making sure employees returning back to work are safe and able to execute the essential job functions as if they were on the job, prior to returning. Also by, testing existing employees that are observed as having performance problems by completing the essential job functions. Each of these testing scenarios are perfect examples on how Fit For Duty testing can help with injury prevention. Both make sure an employee is safe to return to work by avoiding re-injury and/or insuring uninjured employees can safely perform the essential job functions without becoming hurt or injury others.

In addition to reducing new injuries and their related costs, employers are experiencing reduced modifier rates, reduction in lost time, increased worker productivity, decreased turnover, and diminished incidences of fraud and abuse. **For more information about implementing a Fit For Duty Testing Program, please contact Meghan Wilinski, Director of Marketing at (815) 243-1240 or mwilinski@ostipt.com.**