

***THE ALMACA  
CONTINUUM OF SERVICES  
ALCOHOL AND  
DRUG ABUSE  
IN THE WORKPLACE***



# **THE ALMACA CONTINUUM OF SERVICES ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE**

Alcohol and drug use is an increasingly visible and controversial problem. Abuse of alcohol and drugs in the workplace is being discussed in almost every arena. Employee Assistance Professionals have been grappling with the issue in the workplace for over thirty years. EAPs have long recognized the serious health and safety issues posed by alcohol and drug use and have been actively involved in intervening. The current discussions of drug testing focus a great deal of attention on a small piece of the solution.

Employee Assistance Programs, which began as occupational programs to intervene in alcoholism, have experienced a surge of growth and a broadening of focus in the 1970s and 1980s. Today's comprehensive Employee Assistance Programs deal with a wide range of personal problems, identified through employee self-referral or on the basis of job performance criteria. Studies of Employee Assistance Programs show reduced health costs, improved productivity, decreased absenteeism, decreased turnover, increased morale, and greater satisfaction with the job.

A safe workplace and a healthy, productive workforce are the goals of these programs. The focus is on the maintenance or return to high levels of productivity through the rehabilitation of employees experiencing personal problems including alcohol and drug abuse. Employee Assistance Programs are strongly supported by both labor and management. They have a proven track record and are rapidly expanding in the workplace.

The continuum model presented here is a comprehensive approach to the problem. Involvement of both labor and management is essential. Integration of this model into established organizational procedures increases program effectiveness. This model overlaps with employee/labor relations, risk management, medical, security and training departments, and often organizational development sections. It includes policy development, education and prevention activities, rehabilitation efforts, and perhaps testing. This approach does not provide a dramatic quick fix, although the results can be dramatic for employees and the organization.

This is the recommended continuum of services.

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**NOTE:** This continuum of services was developed by Tamara Cagney, chairperson of the ALMACA Program Managers Committee, and was approved on November 4, 1986, by the ALMACA Board of Directors. © Copyright 1987 by The Association of Labor-Management Administrators and Consultants on Alcoholism, Inc.



# PROCEDURE FOR ADDRESSING ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE IN THE WORKPLACE

## PLANNING PHASE

- ▼ Organizational assessment of the problem
- ▼ Review of applicable statutes & regulation
- ▼ Labor/Management committee formed to develop organizational policies in the areas of alcohol & drug use & organizationally sponsored use of alcohol. Clear work rules are developed.
- ▼ L/M Committee instrumental in formulation of employee assistance program
- ▼ EAP Policies & Procedures established to provide assistance to troubled employees thru both self & supervisory referral
- ▼ Gain Top Management support for policies & program
- ▼ Fitness For Duty Policy developed
- ▼ Insurance coverage is reviewed to guarantee access to treatment

## IMPLEMENTATION PHASE

- ▼ Policies and Procedures are actively communicated to all levels of the organization
- ▼ Confidential assessment, referral & treatment services are available through EAP
- ▼ Reintegration plans & expectations are designed for employees receiving treatment
- ▼ EAP Relationship with disciplinary process is clearly delineated
- ▼ Stewards & supervisors are trained in the use of EAP—sharpening skills in managing performance going far beyond mere awareness of behavioral effects of drug use.
- ▼ Comprehensive employee education programs are presented & supported by the organization
- ▼ L/M Committee monitors EAP utilization
- ▼ L/M Committee explores additional methods of intervention—searches, testing are defined
- ▼ Goals & objectives of any testing program are defined
- ▼ Testing Program is constructed to assure competent and fair application\*

## IMPLEMENTATION PHASE (continued)

- ▼ All Testing programs are negotiated
- ▼ Conduct proper investigation of suspected rule violations
- ▼ Testing is initiated on the basis of reasonable suspicion
- ▼ Be sensitive to employees rights
- ▼ Roles in Testing are specified—supervisors, security, medical, EAP, disciplinary
- ▼ Employees who have confirmed positive tests are offered opportunity for appropriate rehabilitation
- ▼ Follow appropriate disciplinary guidelines
- ▼ Reintegration and follow up plans, perhaps including periodic testing, are established for employees receiving treatment
- ▼ L/M Committee continues to monitor all program for fairness & effectiveness

\* Refer to process maps for specific details on drug testing.



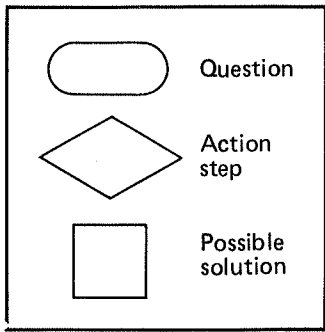


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**PROCESS MAP  
ANALYZING DRUG TESTING ISSUES—  
PRE-EMPLOYMENT**



Continue to offer education, prevention and assistance through Employee Assistance Program

How significant a problem is drug/alcohol abuse in our organization?

not significant or being adequately addressed

- EXAMINE:**
- EAP utilization
  - Confidential employee survey
  - % of arbitrations, disciplinary actions, accidents involving drug/alcohol use
  - Employee complaints about safety hazards posed by workers on drugs
  - Use, sale or distribution of drugs on organization property or time
  - Customer or regulatory demands for testing
  - Possible liability due to failure to detect unfitness for work
  - Health insurance utilization

significant or not adequately addressed

Do we have a well designed program to address alcohol/drug use?

No

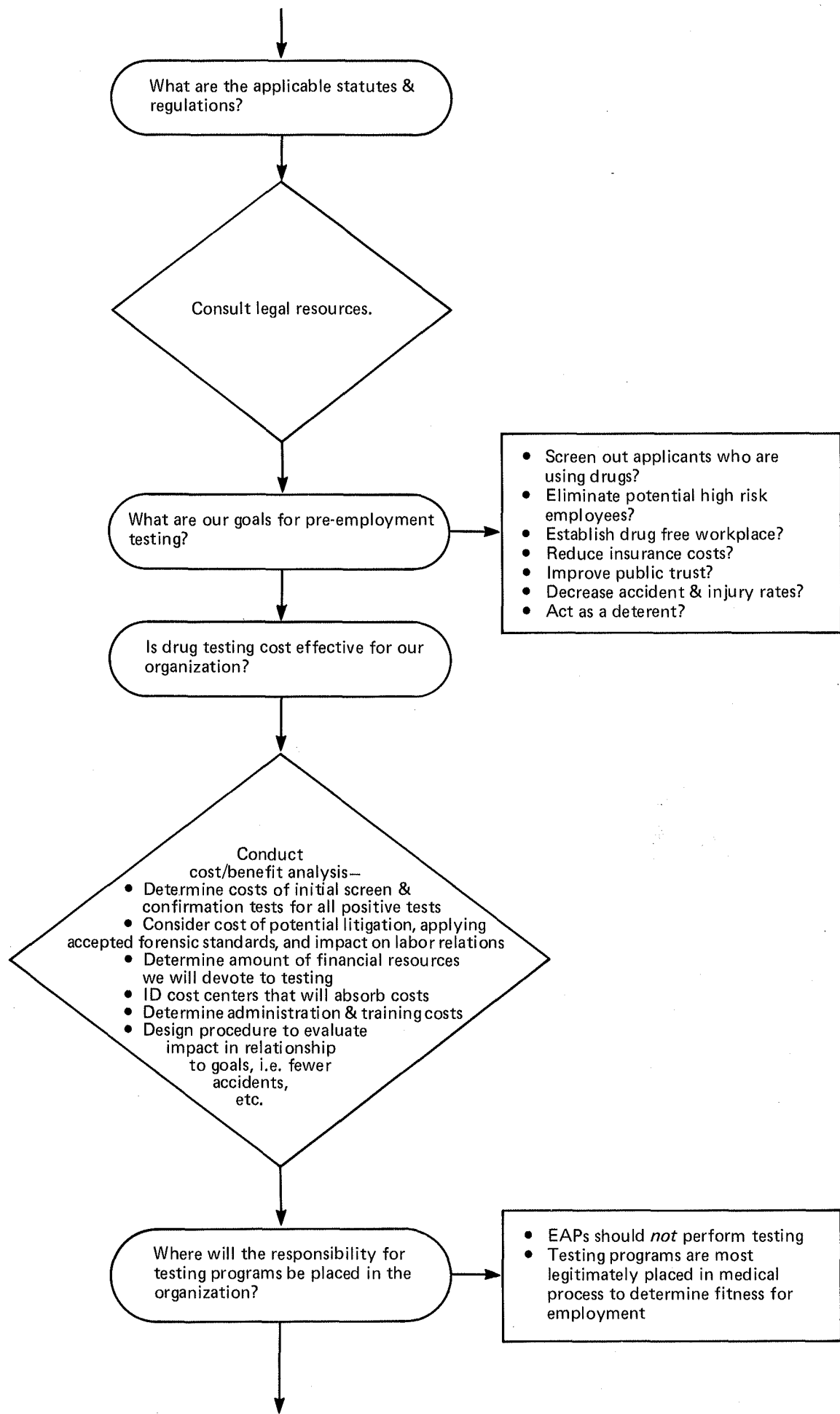
- Establish labor/management EAP
- Formulate & communicate alcohol/drug policy & fitness for duty policy
- Train supervisors and stewards
- Educate employees
- Update existing alcohol policy to include drugs

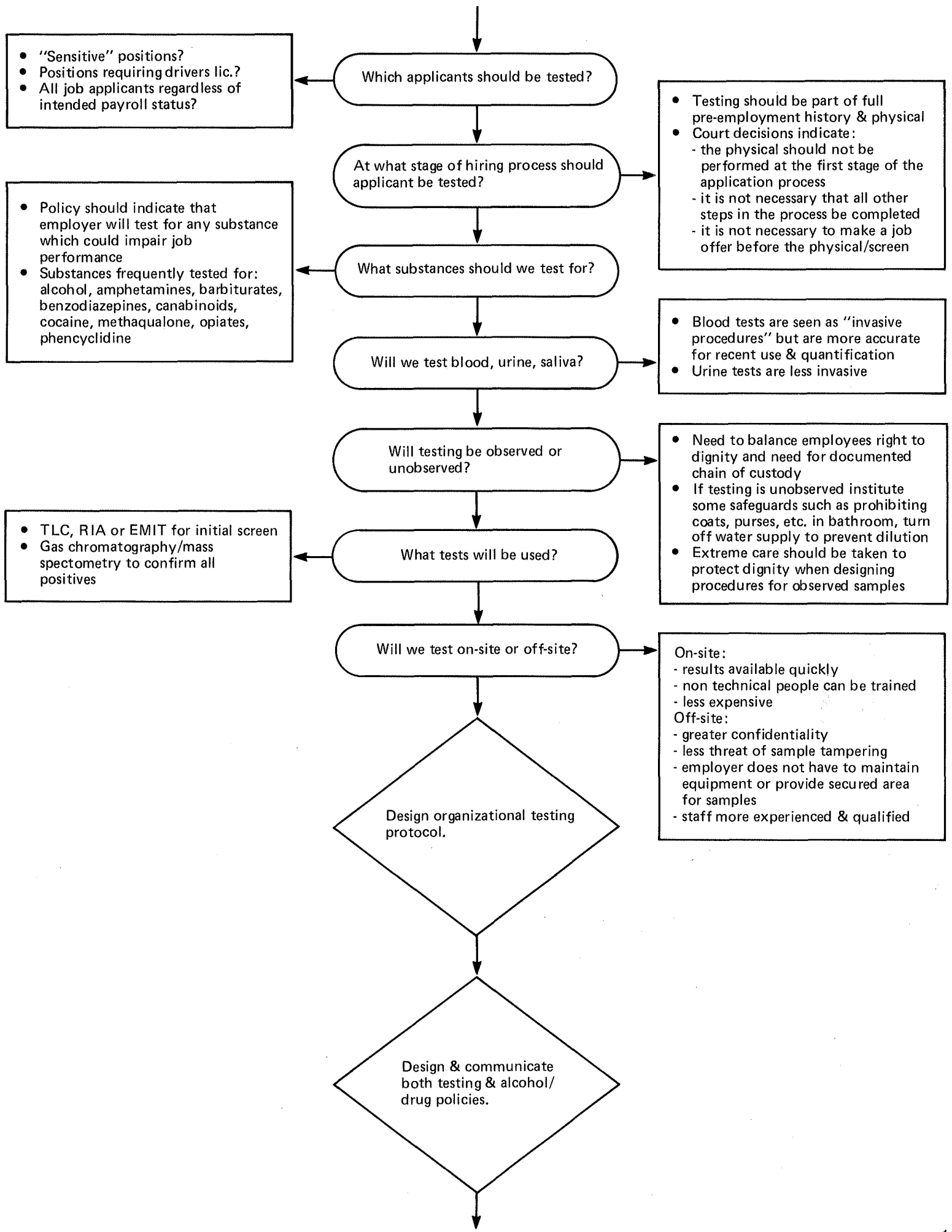
Yes

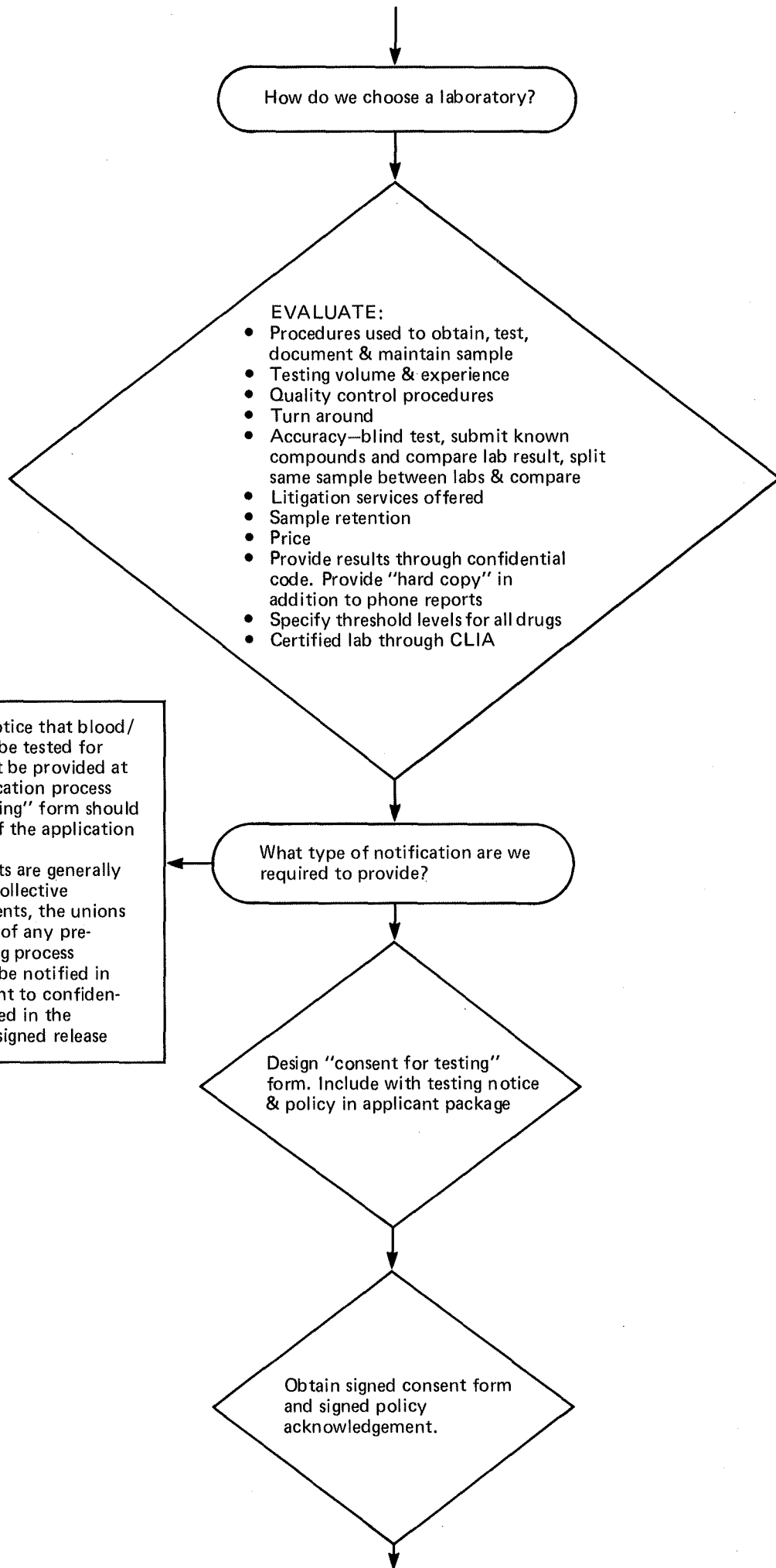
Legal decisions indicate a need to clearly establish the link between job performance and alcohol/drug use for all positions tested.

Can we document a need for testing and demonstrate a relationship between job performance and alcohol/drug use?

Consult with EAP concerning the need, design & implementation of pre-employment testing.







- Specific written notice that blood/urine samples will be tested for alcohol/drugs must be provided at beginning of application process
- A "consent to testing" form should be signed as part of the application process
- Although applicants are generally not protected by collective bargaining agreements, the unions should be notified of any pre-employment testing process
- Applicants should be notified in writing of their right to confidentiality and instructed in the limitations of any signed release

Every use of drug tests should be processed & documented to stand up in court.

How do we confirm and maintain test results?

- Have well documented chain of custody
- Confirm all positives with second test of different methodology
- Retain all samples 6 months

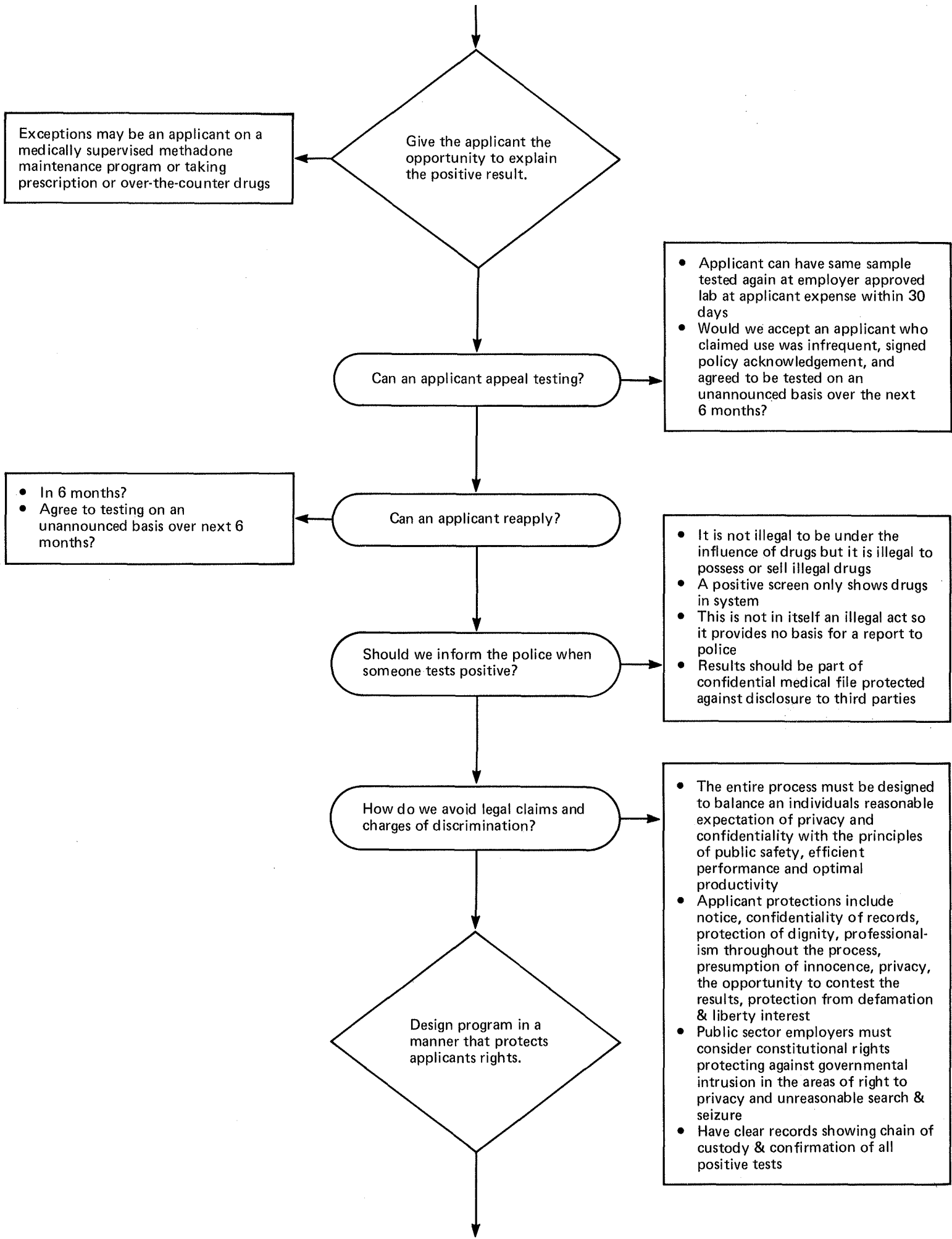
How do we handle prescription & over-the-counter drugs?

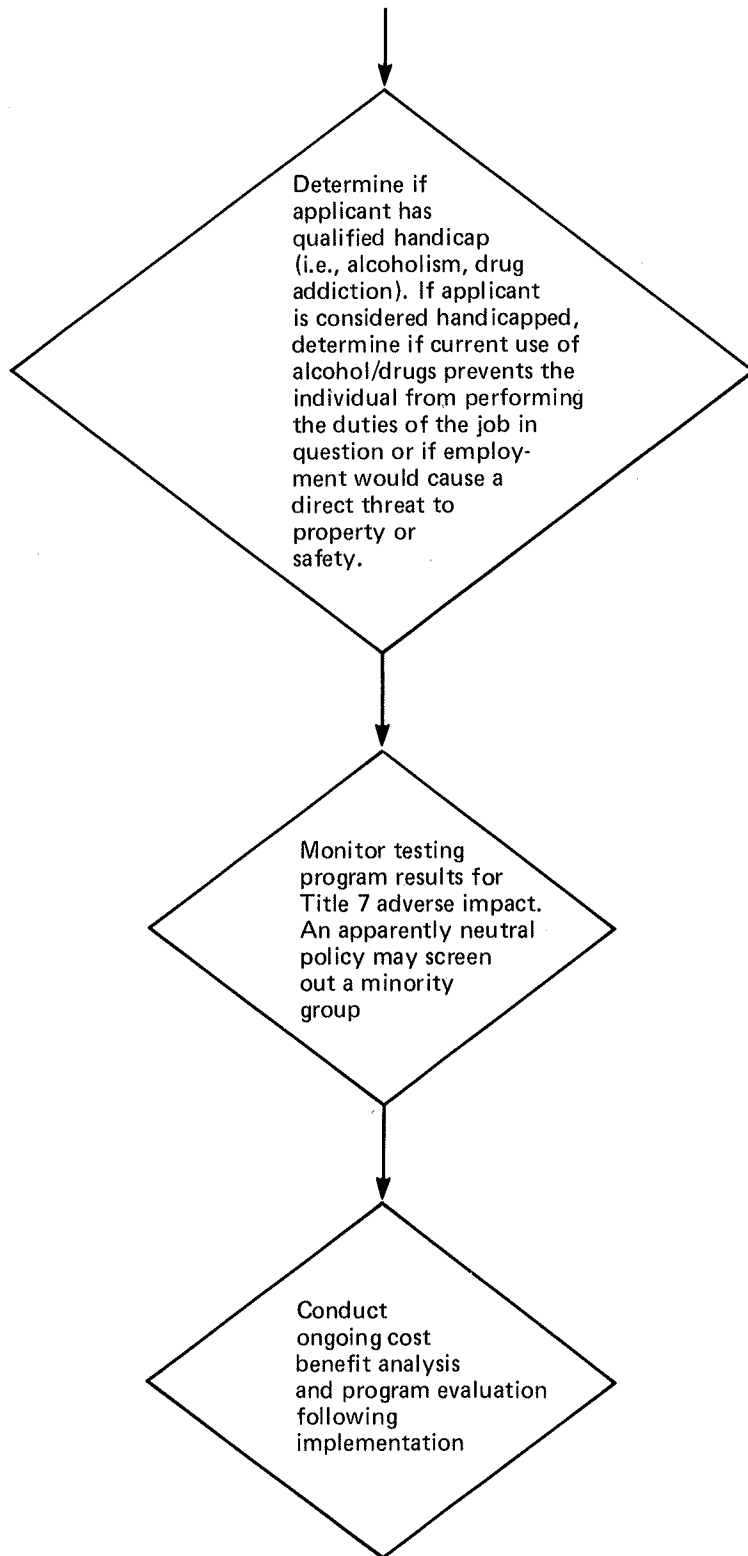
- Obtain a list of all prescription and over-the-counter drugs applicant is taking on consent form
- If test is positive for prescription drug but drug is not listed ask employee if drug had been prescribed & have them bring in prescription bottle

How do we proceed once testing has produced a positive result?

- Results are *confidential* medical information. An employer has an affirmative duty to prevent disclosure of medical information without the applicant's consent & therefore must establish appropriate procedures to ensure confidentiality, and protect from unauthorized disclosure
- A policy automatically excluding an applicant that tests positive is *not* advisable. Employers should review entire application process before an employment decision is made

Results must be kept on forms that are separate from applicants packets.







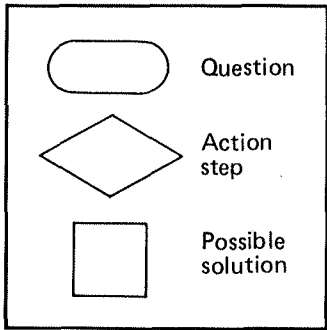




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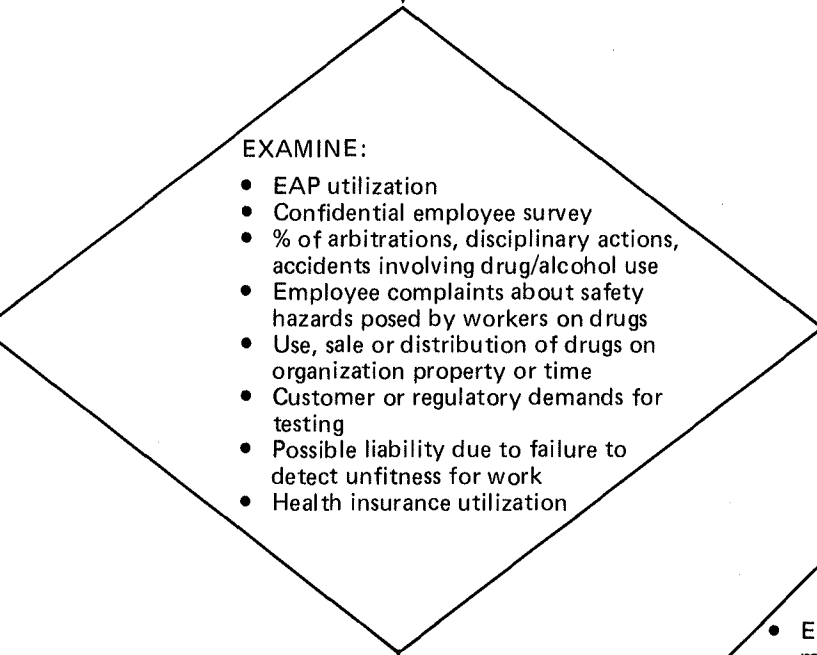
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# PROCESS MAP ANALYZING DRUG TESTING ISSUES— WHILE EMPLOYED



Continue to offer education, prevention and assistance through Employee Assistance Program

How significant a problem is drug/alcohol abuse in our organization?



not significant or being adequately addressed

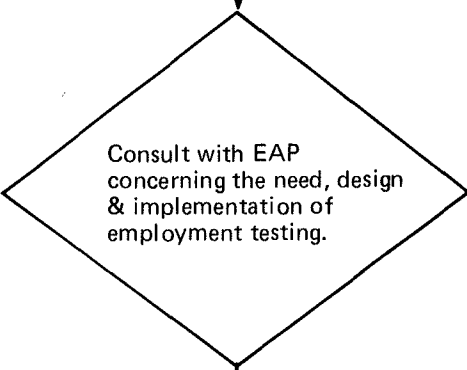
significant or not adequately addressed

Do we have a well designed program to address alcohol/drug use?



Legal decisions indicate a need to clearly establish the link between job performance and alcohol/drug use for all positions tested.

Can we document a need for testing and demonstrate a relationship between job performance and alcohol/drug use?



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What are the applicable statutes & regulations?

Consult legal resources.

What is the union involvement?

- The labor organization should be involved in formulating any testing program. They can help assure a fair, well designed program
- All testing programs must be negotiated

- Form a labor management committee for program formulation
- Negotiate contract language for implementation
- Continue to monitor program for fairness & effectiveness

What are our goals for testing employees for drug use?

- Meet responsibility to provide safe workplace?
- Establish drug free workplace?
- Eliminate potential high risk employees?
- Reduce absenteeism?
- Reduce liability & insurance costs?
- Customer & regulatory demands for testing?
- Decrease accident and injury rates?
- ID users & intervene through rehab.?
- Insure public safety?
- Public trust?
- Improve public relations?
- Deter illegal activity?
- Protect property & employees from theft?
- To confirm employees successful participation in treatment?
- Improve quality control?
- Decrease arbitration cost?
- Decrease employee turnover?
- Act as a deterrent?

Is drug testing cost effective for our organization?