



2022 Drug Testing Index® Spotlight

Professional, Scientific, and Technical



2022

Drug Testing Index® spotlight

A focused analysis of workforce drug use data and trends in your industry

Since 1988, Quest Diagnostics® has leveraged the nationwide data from our forensic toxicology labs to publish the Drug Testing Index® (DTI), an annual report examining drug positivity rates of specimens tested on behalf of employers across the country.

The 2022 DTI compiles data from more than 11 million deidentified urine, hair, and oral fluid drug test results collected between January and December 2021. This year's report reveals relevant insights into patterns of drug use among American workers as companies grapple with an ever-evolving labor market—and an ongoing recruitment and retention crisis—in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We invite you to review both the cross-industry and industry-specific data captured in this DTI spotlight, and to use the information as you continue to reduce risk, plan for the future, and create a safe work environment for your employees.

DTI data reported in:

The Wall Street Journal

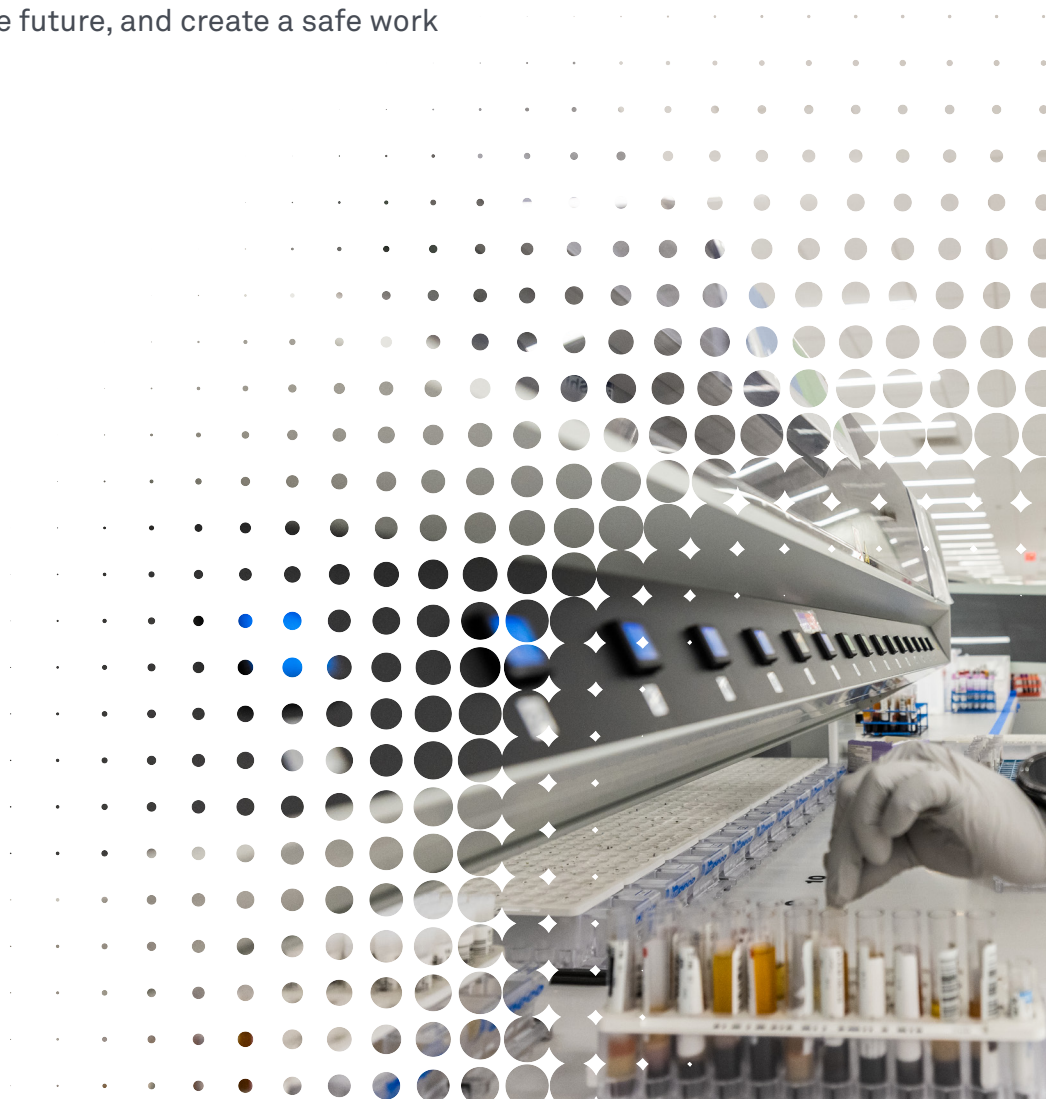
Barron's

Axios

CNBC

Fox Business

NPR Marketplace



The upshot

US workforce drug use rates reach 20-year peak

The past 5 years have seen a sharp rise in America's workforce drug use in 16 of the 17 industries tracked by Quest. 2021 continued that trend, reaching the highest rate of positive drug test results since 2001—up more than 30% in the combined US workforce from an all-time low in 2010-2012.

“Our Drug Testing Index reveals several notable trends, including increased drug positivity rates in the safety-sensitive workforce responsible for keeping society safe, as well as higher rates of positivity in individuals tested after on-the-job accidents.”

Barry Sample, PhD
Senior Science Consultant for
Quest Diagnostics

Adapting drug testing strategies to address shifting trends

As workforce drug use continues to increase, so does your risk as an employer. Consider updating your company's drug-free workplace program to meet the moment and match current drug use patterns. In addition, conducting specific post-accident drug testing can help you learn why workplace accidents happen—so you can maintain a safe environment for employees.



30%

year-over-year increase in positive drug test results

(combined US workforce since 2012)

General workforce positivity

Pre-employment ▲ 17.4%

Post-accident ▲ 26%

(vs 2017)

Safety-sensitive workforce positivity

Pre-employment ▲ 9.5%

Post-accident ▲ 41.9%

(vs 2017)

Not all drugs are used equally

Over the past 5 years, positivity rates are up for some drugs and down for others:

Marijuana ▲ 50%

Amphetamine ▲ 8.3%

Methamphetamine ▼ 11.1%

Cocaine ▼ 30%

Opiates ▼ 56.4%

(national averages across all industries vs 2017)

The aftereffect

Post-accident positivity rates steadily climb

The correlation between drug use and workplace safety is clearer than ever as positivity rates for post-accident urine tests among the general US workforce increased over the past 5 years.

A changing national environment for marijuana

In 2021, marijuana positivity rates in the general US workforce rose to 3.9%, the highest ever reported in the DTI. Considering many states have recently changed laws regarding medical marijuana, recreational marijuana, and Low THC/High CBD, it's no surprise that positivity increased across industries—highlighting the potential need for companies to reexamine how marijuana is handled in the workplace.



Urine test positivity rate after workplace accidents

▲ 26%

for all post-accident testing from 2017 to 2021

▲ 59.5%

for post-accident marijuana testing from 2017 to 2021

General workforce marijuana positivity

▲ 50%

over the past 5 years



2021
3.9%



2017
2.6%

Professional, scientific, and technical

Meeting the high expectations of an expert workforce

The range of industries within professional, scientific, and technical services is broad—from sociologists and software developers to lawyers and landscape architects. Yet these diverse workforces also share a lot in common.

Professional, scientific, and technical workers typically have a high degree of expertise based on years of higher education. They draw on deep training and knowledge to make informed decisions every day. And while the rate of employment growth varies by subcategory,¹ roles within these fields often feature significant professional mobility—and substantial expectations of career advancement.

These key factors contribute to steep challenges in recruitment and retention for companies across industries amid a mixed outlook for job growth through this decade.

Uncertain outlook, important opportunity

While the demand for workers across professional, scientific, and technical industries will vary over the next several years, companies must prepare for anything. After all, predicting the next big shift in an up-and-down labor market is difficult. Hiring employees at a time when drug use is very high—as it is now—presents its own set of challenges. It's critical to maintain safety standards while also delivering a drug testing experience that ensures job candidates feel respected.



Key industry stats

Employees²

10,347,300

(as of April 2022)

Unemployment rate²

1.9% 5.8%

April 2022

April 2020

Workplace growth outlook through 2030^{1,3}

An evolving workforce demands a robust drug testing program

Fields with above average job growth

- ⧗ Financial managers, treasurers, and controllers
- ⧗ Investment fund managers
- ⧗ Software developers and software quality assurance analysts and testers

Fields with average job growth

- ⧗ Civil and transportation engineers
- ⧗ Compliance managers
- ⧗ Information security engineers

Fields with below average job growth

- ✓ Biochemists and biophysicists
- ✓ Environmental engineers
- ✓ Physical, biological, and materials scientists

Fields with job decline

- ✓ Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks
- ✓ Computer programmers
- ✓ Nuclear engineers and technicians

Professional, scientific, and technical

A clear need for comprehensive drug testing

Finding qualified employees has always been an arduous task. Yet today's post-pandemic labor market has made hiring and retaining workers an increasingly complex concern for many businesses. With an increased focus on risk and tens of thousands of new entrants into professional, scientific, and technical fields, workforce drug testing can play a key role in both ensuring workplace safety and enhancing recruitment and retention.

Consider that a potential employee's drug screening may be their first experience with your company. It's essential to make that experience simple, seamless, and superior to what they may find elsewhere. Yet a comprehensive drug testing program is often an investment many companies decide not to make.

Review the industry's drug positivity data to the right and on the following pages to see why that investment—in time, resources, and, yes, budget—is critical.

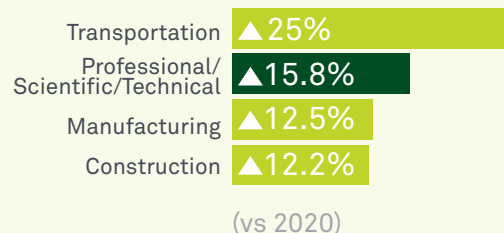
A closer look

While positivity rates for marijuana increased dramatically—most likely due to changing state laws and shifting national perceptions—positivity rates for other drugs either stayed steady or decreased in 2021.



2021 drug use trends for professional, scientific, and technical industries

Workforce positivity



Not all drugs are
used equally

Compared to last year, positivity rates showed mixed results depending on the drug:

Marijuana ▲ 27.3%

Amphetamine (no change)
Methamphetamine (no change)
Opiates (no change)

Cocaine ▼ 8.3%

(professional/scientific/technical
industry averages vs 2020)

A slippery slope

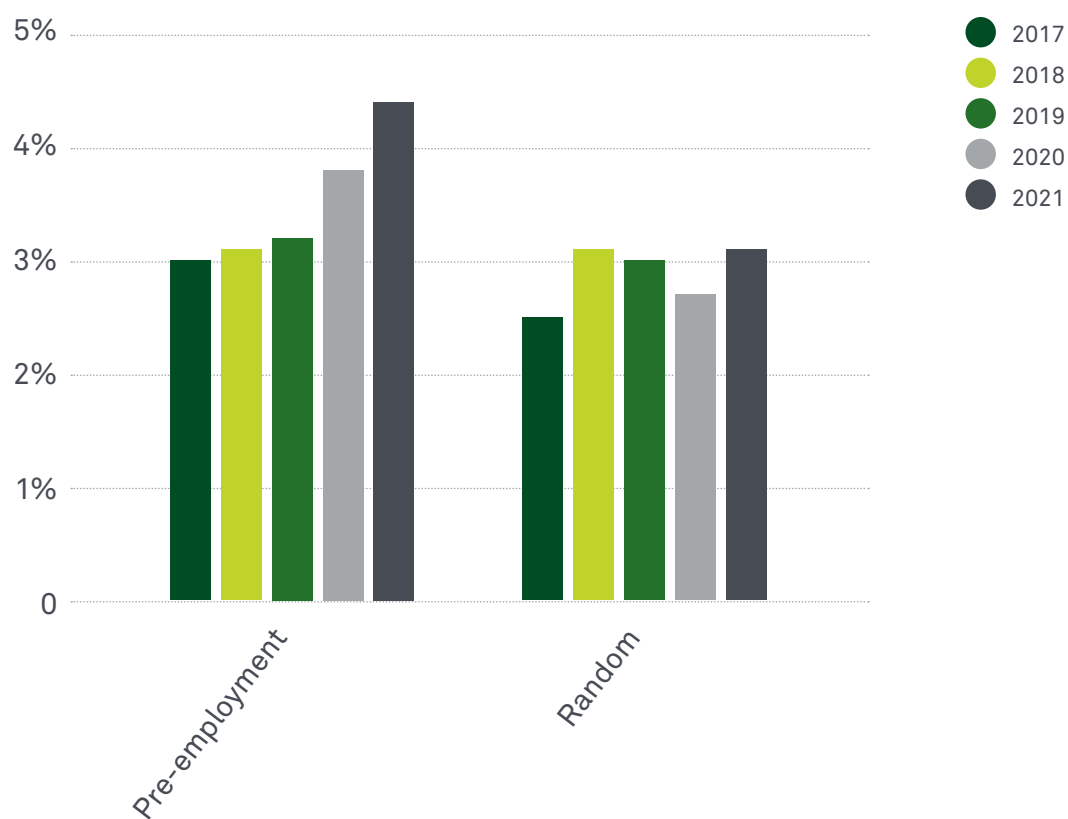
Comparing industry workforce positivity from 2017 to 2021

Positivity by reason

Pre-employment ▲ 46.7%

Random ▲ 24%

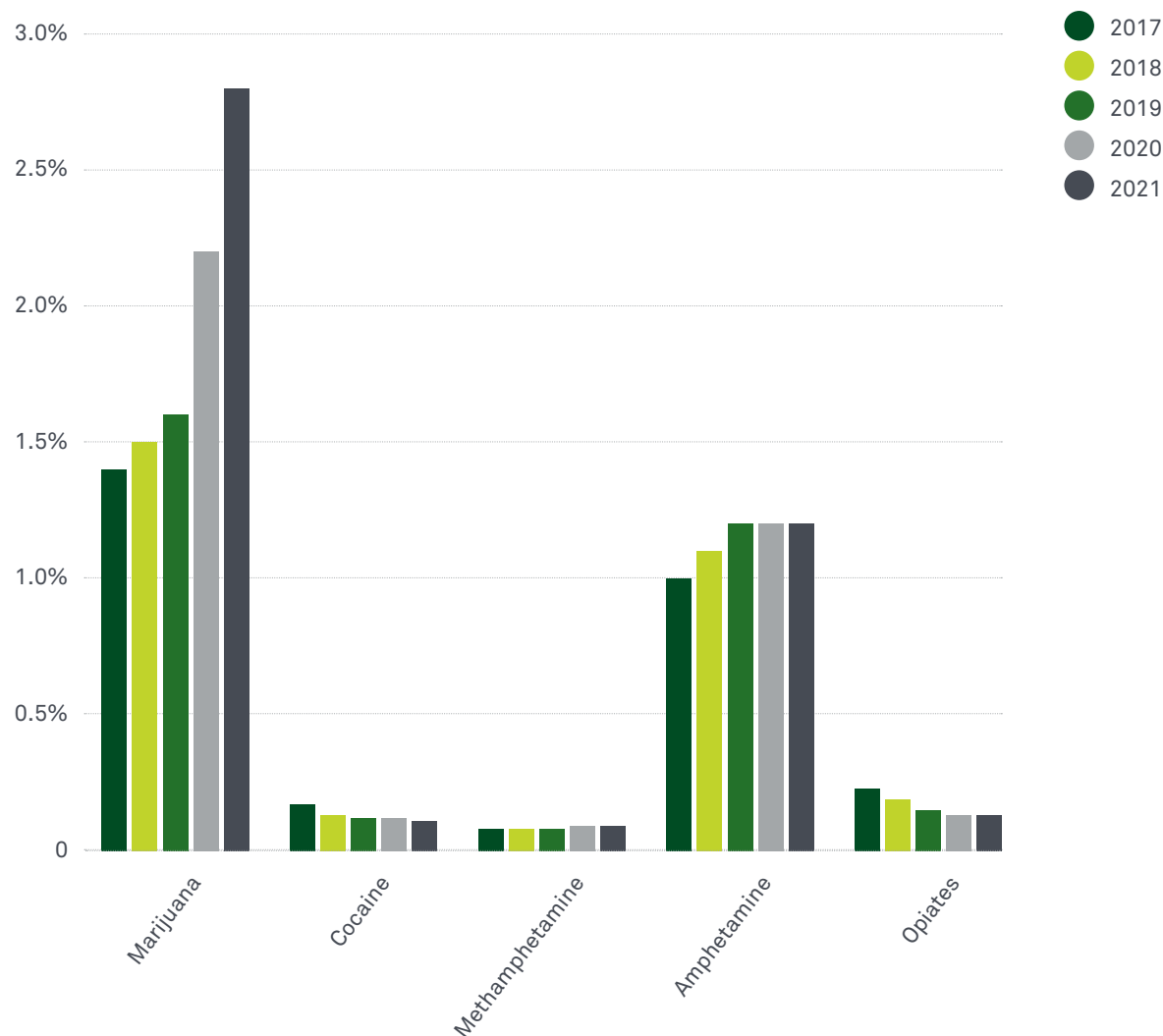
(vs 2017)



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Pre-employment	3.0%	3.1%	3.2%	3.8%	4.4%
Random	2.5%	3.1%	3.0%	2.7%	3.1%

Comparing industry workforce positivity from 2017 to 2021

Positivity by drug



	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Marijuana	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	2.2%	2.8%
Cocaine	0.17%	0.13%	0.12%	0.12%	0.11%
Methamphetamine	0.08%	0.08%	0.08%	0.09%	0.09%
Amphetamine	1.0%	1.1%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%
Opiates	0.23%	0.19%	0.15%	0.13%	0.13%



How comprehensive drug testing can help you keep up

If the 2022 DTI has taught us anything, it's that workplace drug use continues to change with the times, no matter the industry. As companies like yours face rising challenges in recruiting, retaining, and growing staff, you can't afford to compromise on workforce drug testing.

Quest Diagnostics delivers accurate, accessible drug testing solutions you can depend on—including services that meet the demands of professionals with high job mobility and even higher expectations—all while maintaining safety and ensuring confidence in the results.

When you partner with Quest, we'll leverage data-driven insights and cross-industry experience to help you develop a drug testing program that supports your operations, protects your reputation, and empowers you to make the best decisions about building and managing your professional workforce.

Want to learn more?

Visit the Quest Professional Industry Employer Hub at drugtest.questdiagnostics.com/professionalindustry

Ready to meet?

Start the conversation about your drug testing needs at questdiagnostics.com/letstalkdrugtesting



References

Source for all data not cited:

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