

# THE WHY, WHAT AND HOW GUIDE

## to workforce drug testing solutions that work

As workforce drug use trends up, make sure your company's testing strategy is ready.



Transportation Industry



# THE WHY

## A rising need for robust and reliable drug testing

According to the **2022 Drug Testing Index® (DTI)**, an annual report examining positivity rates for drugs tested for employers across the country, America's workforce drug use is rising in 16 of the 17 industries tracked. In fact, 2021 reached the highest drug positivity rate since 2001 after a sharp upswing over the past 5 years.

Meanwhile, the correlation between drug use and workplace safety is clearer than ever as post-accident positivity has also increased over the past 5 years. As changes to state laws across the nation regarding legal uses of marijuana add new wrinkles to the story, employers must make sure their drug testing program is up to the task.

### New realities demand new strategies

Drug use in the workplace isn't going away, as positivity rates continue to climb across industries. The question is: How can you maintain your company's safety, productivity, and reputation while continuing to grow your workforce? A comprehensive drug testing strategy is a strong start.

**In this guide, we'll explore key requirements and recommendations tailored to the transportation industry to ensure your drug testing program:**

- Delivers the highest levels of quality, reliability, and integrity
- Evolves to maximize speed-to-hire and meet your changing needs
- Adapts to current drug use trends and business requirements
- Builds confidence with your corporate leadership team
- Respects employee rights and expectations with clear communications, streamlined experiences, and fair confirmation of results

#### Insights that inform

Our annual **Drug Testing Index®** offers in-depth insights into workforce drug use trends drawn from one of the world's largest pools of drug testing data, including more than 11 million deidentified specimens collected each year from companies across the nation.

We publish our findings as a public service to help government, employers, policymakers, and the general public make informed decisions.

[\*\*Explore DTI insights\*\*](#)



# THE WHAT

## A drug testing program that meets your real-world needs

When it comes to workforce drug testing, you can't afford to compromise. It may be tempting to view one drug test like any other, but it's important to recognize the distinct demands of your industry and address your company's operational requirements.

- Do you have a mix of remote and on-site workers?
- How often do you conduct hiring events?
- Do you ever hire temporary workers to scale up?
- How do federal regulations impact your operations?
- What are your state's laws around marijuana use?

Your drug testing program must meet your needs without forcing tough choices around speed, quality, or coverage. And your testing partner must have the experience to navigate your industry and workforce challenges—at the scale and speed of your business. When evaluating potential partners, do your research.



### REQUIREMENT:

## Trusted partnership

Your drug testing partner should have the proven expertise to design a comprehensive strategy you can rely on—or develop significant enhancements to your current program. All while seamlessly integrating solutions that fit the unique requirements of your business, workforce, corporate footprint, and the transportation industry.



### RECOMMENDATION:

## Protect your reputation

Consider the risks to your business beyond operations. In high-stakes industries like yours, reputation matters—to partners, employment candidates, and current and prospective customers alike. Choose a drug testing partner with a strong reputation of its own, earned for delivering high levels of quality and responsiveness over time.

### The intersection of health and productivity

The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a real toll on the nation's mental health, and the 2022 DTI shows corresponding spikes in workforce drug use.

A well-designed drug testing program can help you combat these concerns, better manage employee wellness, and positively impact critical health and productivity metrics by decreasing absenteeism, accidents, downtime, turnover, and theft. All of which can improve workplace morale, your employees' mental health, and your company's reputation.

# Integrity and experience matter now more than ever



## REQUIREMENT:

### Specimen validity testing

Testing specimen validity is a must to ensure integrity of the results. Consider urine testing, the most common drug testing method yet one where donors can use household chemicals to “cleanse” their specimen. Or where a prescribed medication may interfere with the initial screening. Specimen validity testing measures pH, creatinine, and specific gravity (when required) while checking for adulterants that may be added.



## RECOMMENDATION:

### Validate your partner's know-how

Seek a partner that provides specimen validity testing, automatically runs multiple tests with different parts of the urine specimen, reviews oxidant identification for common adulterants, and uses collection protocols that minimize tampering to begin with. All to ensure accuracy and boost confidence.



## REQUIREMENT:

### Real industry expertise

Your drug testing partner should have experience working with transportation companies, the knowledge to discuss your specific requirements—including how federal regulations impact operations—and the know-how to meet the challenge. Look for:

**Full compliance** with the US Department of Transportation's 49 CFR Part 40 regulations on drug testing

**Nationwide collection network** with labs that collaborate closely to properly collect, package, and ship regulated specimens

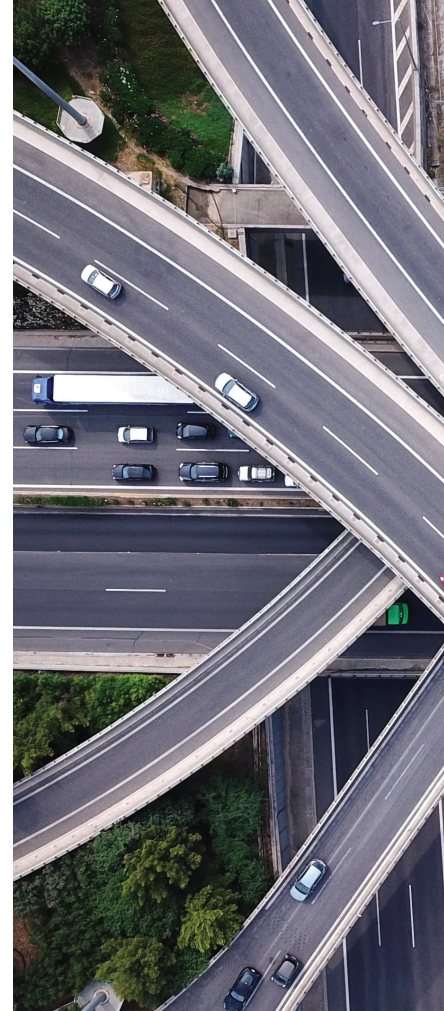
**Robust educational resources** you can provide to drivers and supervisors to help satisfy regulatory requirements



## RECOMMENDATION:

### Get real with your partners

Take the time to understand a potential partner's relevant experience, core capabilities, and how they would tailor their solutions—whether your workforce comprises local delivery drivers or international airline pilots. Ask for concrete learnings from working with companies like yours.







#### REQUIREMENT:

### Credible accreditations

In high-pressure industries like transportation, drug testing must be performed at the highest levels. Your partner's labs should hold and maintain:

- Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA-88)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) training
- College of American Pathologists (CAP) certification
- Applicable state licensure

Also, make sure your partner has a strong track record with safety-sensitive drug testing for US Department of Transportation (DOT), US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and US Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) requirements.



#### RECOMMENDATION:

### Stay flexible

Credibility is key, but so is a flexible strategy to guide decisions around testing methods. For example, urine testing may be the “gold standard” and is currently the only method approved for federally mandated testing, but other testing types will play a key role too—such as when your company needs a longer look-back into drug use.

# THE HOW

## The right tools can bring your testing program to life

To ensure success, your drug testing program needs an integrated mix of tools, solutions, and capabilities. Testing types and panels that fit your business. Respectful testing experiences to help you compete in a demanding labor market. Expert guidance to implement strategies that work for the transportation industry—and are optimized over time. Make sure your testing partner is ready.



### REQUIREMENT:

## Range of testing types

Your drug testing program should cover every potential testing scenario that could arise, including:



### Pre-employment

Protects your business from the impacts of hiring drug users



### Periodic

Conducted on a consistent basis to set employee expectations



### Random or “spot”

Performed on an unannounced basis to deter drug use



### Post-accident

Determines whether drugs played a role in the incident



### Reasonable suspicion

Conducted if reasonable cause or evidence of employee drug use



### Return-to-duty

For employees who previously tested positive or violated workplace policy



### Follow-up

Administered after return-to-duty testing



### RECOMMENDATION:

## Map out your scenarios

Ask potential drug testing partners to provide their point of view on both defining the most relevant set of testing types for your business and establishing the processes and protocols for their use.

### Integrated strategies for safety

Post-accident testing is required for safety-sensitive workforces like interstate truckers, airline pilots, and air traffic controllers. Yet with drug use rising across the industry, even employers not bound by federal regulations should consider integrated testing strategies. By combining random testing to deter drug use with post-accident testing to determine cause, you can gain insights into workplace safety to reduce risk.

# From collections to results, process is paramount



## REQUIREMENT:

### Respectful collections

An effective drug testing program starts with a streamlined specimen collection process that enhances business operations, supports employees, and respects job candidates. In today's labor market, the complete testing experience matters. Your program should provide:

- Nearby access to collection facilities
- Easy online scheduling
- Clean, well-run facilities
- On-site collections as needed
- Timely drug test results
- Training for program managers
- Mobile, 24/7 emergency collections for post-accident or reasonable suspicion testing



## RECOMMENDATION:

### Provide a good experience

Consider how your potential drug testing partner discusses the candidate and employee experience, and ask them to share how they provide convenient, respectful specimen collection. Explore their program capabilities, facility locations, and training materials.



## REQUIREMENT:

### Timely results

In the transportation industry, timing is everything. The same goes for drug test results. Business can't slow down—and managers shouldn't be left in the dark—as you await results. In an integrated program:

- Testing should be performed as soon as the specimen arrives at a provider's laboratory
- Negative results should be released quickly and positive results within a reasonable timeframe thereafter
- Results should integrate seamlessly into your workflow through an available online portal and HR applicant tracking platforms



## RECOMMENDATION:

### Clock the turnaround time

Seek a partner with test result turnaround times (TAT) that meet your expectations. Review their TAT statistics and examine documentation of their approach to testing workflow integration.



# A deep dive into testing types

Requirements and recommendations aside, your drug testing partner should help you make informed, strategic, and confident decisions that match the right testing types to your real-world drug usage scenarios. Your business may require a combination of testing types, so explore the range of commonly available methods below.

## Urine testing

Detects drug use typically in the previous 1 to 3 days



Most common screening method, broadly used for a wide range of testing purposes

Only specimen matrix currently approved for federally mandated testing; serves as the US Department of Labor standard for evidence of “current use”

Highly adaptable with panels available in hundreds of combinations of detectable drugs, test codes, and cutoff levels

### Advantage

Considered to be the least-invasive form of testing

### Disadvantage

Perceived as the easiest test to beat by adding adulterants to a specimen

### Quick tip

Ask your testing partner how their labs detect the evolving variety of adulterants

## Hair testing

Provides a 90-day lookback window



Trained collector takes a small hair sample from employee

Not useful for determining current drug use for reasonable suspicion or post-accident testing

Tests for amphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, phencyclidine, and a range of opiates

### Advantage

Extremely difficult for donors to adulterate hair samples

### Disadvantage

Not approved for DOT testing; challenging method for employees without head or body hair

### Quick tip

Ask your testing partner how they manage employees unable or unwilling to provide a hair sample

## Oral fluid testing

Detects recent drug use better than urine and hair testing



Observed collection reduces the likelihood of tampering or a donor challenge

2-tiered process ensures positive test results are confirmed

Tests for amphetamine, methamphetamine, cocaine, marijuana, PCP, oxycodones, and a range of opiates

### Advantage

Minimizes perception of loss of privacy during specimen collection

### Disadvantage

Long-term, habitual drug use is not detected as accurately as with hair testing

### Quick tip

Ask your testing partner to demonstrate the ease and efficiency of their oral fluid collection device

## Instant/point-of-care testing

Detects recent drug use with oral fluid specimens



Rapid, minimally invasive method allows for on-site testing to maximize worker productivity

Observed collection reduces the likelihood of tampering or a donor challenge

FDA-compliant with accuracy greater than 98%

### Advantage

Extremely difficult for donors to adulterate oral fluid samples

### Disadvantage

Not currently DOT-approved; requires on-site collector to read and document results

### Quick tip

Ask your testing partner to explain how their instant testing protocols increase speed-to-results



# THE WHO

## A drug testing partner who preserves workplace safety and protects your business

Many companies view drug testing as a commodity. Yet to achieve your goals, it's critical to take a strategic approach to testing. So you can grow your workforce to meet demand. So you can maintain a safe workplace. So you can protect your company's valuable reputation.

Consider developing or updating your drug testing program to align with the requirements and recommendations in this guide—and finding a reliable partner who truly understands your needs.

### Get ready to conduct business more confidently

When evaluating potential drug testing partners, dig deeper than core capabilities. Explore how their solutions address your specific business requirements. Make sure they're equipped to build and manage a productive, long-term relationship while treating employees with respect. Ask how they'll help you ramp up with confidence with protocols that include:

- A well-structured onboarding plan
- Dedicated project management for transition activities
- Assignment of an ongoing account management team

Most importantly, look for proven expertise, quality, and integrity—and a clear process to deliver the outcomes your business and reputation depend on.

### Quest works at the speed of your business

#### Want to learn how?

Explore how Quest can support your comprehensive drug testing strategy at [employersolutions.com](https://employersolutions.com)

#### Ready to meet?

Start the conversation about your drug testing needs at [questdiagnostics.com/letstalkdrugtesting](https://questdiagnostics.com/letstalkdrugtesting)

### Resources

#### [SAMHSA Drug-Free Workplace Toolkit](#)

Provides useful information to help employers develop and manage drug-free workplace programs

#### [DOT FMCA Guidelines for Employers](#)

Answers common questions for employers around test procedures, training responsibilities, and more

#### [Quest Drug Testing Index®](#)

Details the latest trends in drug use for your industry—and in the regions where you do business

#### [Quest Transportation Employer Resource Center](#)

Offers relevant drug testing information and insights for your industry