

Workplaces and Substance Use

Safety-Sensitive Positions*



USE & PERCEPTIONS



Employees have more work than before. ... and this is sure to cause burnout And that could certainly lead to drinking. — Study participant



Substance use among some safety-sensitive workers and managers may pose health, safety and productivity risks.

2 in 10

(20%) workers



and

4 in 10

(35%) managers



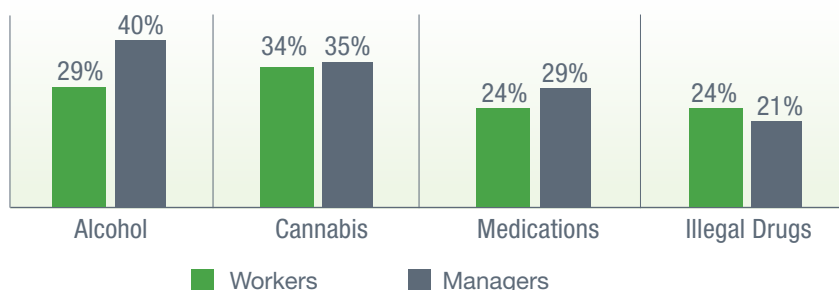
reported consuming **alcohol or other drugs 2 hours before or during work**, or were hungover or felt high at work.

I feel that stress, burnout, tough work situations, tough inter-work relationships. I think those can contribute to [turning to alcohol or substances to cope] in my company.

— Study participant



About **3 in 10 workers** and managers reported thinking that substance use is an issue at their workplaces.



Some businesses have improved approaches to managing substance use risks, such as developing comprehensive policies, training staff, offering accommodations, fostering peer support programs, and setting up mental and substance use health supports.

Contact us at workplace@ccsa.ca for training or for more information and resources such as our [trades toolkit](#).

Background: The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction conducted a national study about workplace policies and practices related to substance use and working in various industries. The information presented here is from workers and managers in safety-sensitive positions who participated in a survey and focus groups, and individuals affected by substance use.

Suggested citation: Meister, S., Barker, B., Dassieu, L., Wood, S., Beirness, D., & Cragg, S. (2025). *Substance use and the workplace — use and perceptions: Safety-sensitive positions* [Infographic]. Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction.

*Safety-sensitive positions pose potential risks to self, co-workers, the public or the environment (e.g., airline pilots, heavy equipment operators, medical practitioners).