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State of Wisconsin

**State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse**

1 West Wilson Street, P.O. Box 7851  
Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7851

May, 2020

To Interested Parties:

On behalf of the State Council on Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (SCAODA) I am pleased to provide you with a copy of the final report and recommendations from the Employee-Workforce Substance Use Prevention Ad-Hoc Committee: *Substance Misuse and the Wisconsin Workforce*.

Substance misuse poses significant health, social, public safety, and economic issues in Wisconsin. Employee substance misuse impacts businesses through lost productivity, absenteeism, turnover, health care expenses, disability, and worker's compensation. The workplace presents itself as a valuable asset in the prevention of substance misuse and/or the onset of a substance use disorder (SUD). There are over 3.1 million people employed in our state, meaning that a large proportion of Wisconsin adults are engaged in the workforce. Further, research estimates that 75 percent of adults with an untreated SUD are in the workforce. This creates an opportunity for employers to develop an organizational culture that promotes health wellness and addresses substance use prevention, treatment, and recovery among employees.

Since November 2017, the Employee-Workforce Substance Use Prevention Ad-Hoc Committee examined the rapidly changing landscape of substance misuse and the associated problems facing Wisconsin employers, employees, and their communities. The Committee developed recommendations to assist stakeholders in assessing evidence-based prevention, intervention, and treatment, recovery strategies focusing on employee health and safety related to substance misuse. The Committee focused this report on three major topic areas: 1) pre-employment; 2) during employment; and 3) providing support to employers and community-wide engagement.

This report will be a valuable tool for those around the state who are interested in promoting the health, safety and well-being of Wisconsin residents. If you have any questions about the *Substance Misuse and the Wisconsin Workforce* report, please contact Ad-Hoc committee chair, Jill Gamez at [jgamez@arborplace.org](mailto:jgamez@arborplace.org). If you or anyone you know would like additional copies of this report, it is available online at: [www.scaoda.state.wi.us](http://www.scaoda.state.wi.us).

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Roger A. Frings in cursive.

Roger Frings  
Chairperson

Cc: Governor Tony Evers  
Secretary-designee Andrea Palm  
Deputy Secretary Julie Willems Van Dijk

\*\*\*Please see the backside of this page for a summary of recommendations from the report.\*\*\*

[www.scaoda.state.wi.us](http://www.scaoda.state.wi.us)

## Overview of Recommendations

This report covers nine recommendations that involves state agencies and employers during the pre-employment and employment stages, and offers recommendations for community engagement.

### Pre-Employment

**PE1 Employment Readiness Programs:** Wisconsin's Department of Workforce Development and other state agencies serving individuals seeking employment should include linkages to substance use disorder prevention, treatment, and recovery resources within their online presence, workforce events, employment offices, and training programs in an effort to help Wisconsin residents overcome barriers to employability.

**PE2 Pre-Employment Drug-Screening:** Employers in Wisconsin should consider the implementation of pre-employment drug screening if deemed necessary for safety, health and well-being of employees and should include policies based on best practice.

### During Employment

**DE1 Workplace Substance Misuse Prevention Programming:** Employers in Wisconsin should implement evidence-based policies, programs, and practices for preventing substance misuse based on the needs of their specific workplace.

**DE2 Workplace Drug Screening:** Before implementing a workplace drug screening policy, employers should consider whether drug screening is required, necessary, or beneficial for employees, or for the organization/industry.

**DE3 Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs):** Employers need to provide quality EAP services by assuring those services include certified substance use disorder counselors who are able to provide evidence-based and trauma informed care.

**DE4 Employer-Sponsored Health Insurance Plans:** Employers should ensure they are offering a health insurance plan that adheres to the requirements of the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act, and that the insurance policy includes access to a comprehensive behavioral health provider network.

**DE5 Recovery-Supportive Work Environments:** Businesses should adopt practices to become recovery-supportive work environments.

### Community Engagement

**CE1 Partnering with the Community:** Employers should engage in partnerships with community organizations and public and private agencies to support and enhance both worksite and community efforts to reduce substance use-related problems.