

General Information

To comply with the regulations, the company must have a drug and alcohol policy. This policy must be provided to all drivers when they are hired, and the driver must sign a receipt for his/her copy of the policy. If the driver refuses to sign for the policy, the company cannot use the driver. The policy must explain the effects of drugs and alcohol, the tests that are required, and the regulations.

The regulations require that a driver not:

- Use controlled substances (drugs) or alcohol when on duty
- Use alcohol within four hours of coming on duty
- Not have a breath alcohol content (BAC) of 0.02 or more when on duty
 - Note: 0.02 to 0.039 will result in a 24 hour out-of-service order, 0.04 or more will result in a DUI (if caught on the road) or a failed alcohol test (if caught as part of a DOT-required alcohol test)
- Fail a drug or alcohol test
- Refuse a drug or alcohol test
- Have alcohol on the vehicle, unless it is part of a manifested shipment
- Use alcohol for the first eight hours following an accident

Here is a warning about alcohol; An average person can “clear” the alcohol from one alcoholic beverage from his/her system per hour. Where this information can prove critical to you is if you drank seven or eight drinks, then reported for duty four hours later. In this case, you are in compliance with the “four-hour” rule, but you are not in compliance with the BAC requirements.

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Your body has not had enough time to get all of the alcohol out of your system. This is why some companies have and enforce an eight-hour (or more) rule when it comes to alcohol consumption.

The Department of Transportation drug test program specifically tests for five “drug families,” including:

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Amphetamines (including methamphetamine and MDMA or “ecstasy”)
- Opiates
- Phencyclidine (also known as PCP)

To avoid errors and mistakes in the drug testing process, the collection site has strict rules that must be followed. These include:

- Asking the driver to present identification.
- Asking the driver to remove outer clothing (coats and jackets).
- Having the driver empty his/her pockets.
- Using a specific rest room only after it has been prepared
- Using specific processes and forms that guarantee the sample will be handled appropriately from the collection site to the laboratory.