Prescription Drug Use on the Job

In many of the positions on campus, employees use machinery or vehicles, which could cause harm if used by an employee experiencing a reaction to medication. Typical symptoms include dizziness, drowsiness, slowed reaction time, blurred vision, etc. Although a colleague may notice a change in behavior, the affected individual may not be aware of the reaction causing a temporary impairment in performance.

It is the goal of the University to do everything possible to create and maintain a safe working environment for all students, faculty, and staff. As part of our ongoing efforts to do this, we ask that employees who work with machinery or vehicles notify their supervisor or the Environmental Health and Safety Office when their doctor or pharmacist cautions them about possible side effects of the medication or medical procedure. In some cases, a temporary modification of the employee’s duties may be possible.

Individuals who notice a colleague operating equipment in a potentially unsafe manner should ask that person to stop, explain what they have observed, and urge them to make their supervisor aware of the reaction they are experiencing. Should the person refuse to stop or if the situation recurs, the person observing the unsafe behavior has an obligation to report it to the employee’s supervisor or to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

We appreciate your cooperation in helping to create and maintain a safe and healthy environment at the University.

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