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# Drug and alcohol testing processes

## Scheduled to attend

You will be advised by a Drug and Alcohol Coordination Unit (DCU) Officer that you have been selected to attend testing. You will receive a follow up email which includes a direction to attend testing, link to briefing video, assigned time and location. This process will differ slightly in operational areas.

You must comply with a direction given to you by an authorised person. Failure to comply may amount to non-compliance with the Department's Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy and can also lead to a referral to I&PS for consideration of a code of conduct investigation.

If you believe you cannot attend the test due to operational requirements, your Responsible Manager must contact the DCU officer to discuss alternate arrangements prior to your testing time.

If you are an armed officer, you will need to return all associated equipment to the armoury before testing.

## Briefing by DCU officer

When you arrive at the testing location, please ensure you have your departmental security pass, as an ID check will be undertaken and your unique identification number (for example your AGS number) used for recording your attendance and test results.

If you do not have your departmental security pass or other identification, your manager will be asked to verify your identity prior to the commencement of testing.

You will receive a briefing outlining information about testing and you will be given the opportunity to ask questions.

## Preparation for testing by Collector

The Collector will:

- confirm your identity and record unique ID on DCU attendance sheet
- ask you to empty your pockets, remove heavy clothing and lift your trouser legs to confirm you have nothing hidden (if applicable)
- ask you to rinse your hands in plain water (no soap or other contaminants)
- prepare the alcohol and drug testing (ADTF) consent using your unique ID

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## **Alcohol Screening Test**

You will be asked:

- if you have consumed any food (including mints/chewing gums), or fluid in the past 10 minutes. If you have, the collector will wait until 10 minutes has elapsed
- to select a mouthpiece from at least three and place in the portable testing device

If the alcohol screen test indicates a breath concentration (BrAC) below 0.020 grams of alcohol per 210 litres of breath, the Collector will record your test result on the ADTF and proceed to the drug test.

If the alcohol screening test indicates a BrAC of 0.020 grams of alcohol per 210 litres of breath or above, the collector will inform the DCU Officer and you will then undertake an alcohol breath test in 20 minutes ((see Alcohol breath test (confirmatory) section below)). You will proceed to the drug test.

The collector will also record your BrAC on the DCU management action form to three decimal places.

Additional requirements apply to workers holding a use of force permit under the Operational Safety Order 2021. ABF workers must not be impaired by alcohol (returning a Blood Alcohol Concentration (BAC) or Breath Alcohol Concentration (BrAC) over 0.00), drug or any other substance, prescribed or otherwise, that may impair performance or judgement while on duty, such as being issued or deploying with ABF Accoutrements or accessing an ABF Armory.

## **Alcohol breath test (confirmatory) if required**

This alcohol breath test is only completed if your initial alcohol screening test result was 0.020 BrAC or above. You will be asked:

- to select a mouthpiece from at least three and place in the portable testing device

If the alcohol breath test indicates a BrAC of less than 0.020 grams of alcohol per 210 litres of breath then this is considered to be a negative test result and no further action is taken.

- If the result is positive, the collector will inform the DCU officer.
- The collector will record your results on the ADTF. Your BrAC results will be recorded to three decimal places.
- Your responsible manager will be called and a management action form will be completed.
- Your manager will direct you to leave the workplace. You will be paid for the remainder of this work period or shift.
- The matter will be referred to I&PS for assessment against the drug and alcohol policy.
- In the event of a positive alcohol test result, you may request a blood test. The DCU officer will make reasonable efforts to arrange this.
- Before the commencement of your next scheduled work period or shift, you will be subject to another alcohol screening test.

## Urine drug test (on-site screening)

You will be asked:

- if you have taken any pharmaceutical products, including prescription and over the counter medications within the past 14 days and they will record these on the ADTF. You are not required to declare medications and there is no requirement to disclose any health or medical condition. However, your declaration of medications may assist should you receive a not-negative result
- to select an approved device from a minimum of three
- to take the collection cup with you to the toilet cubicle

The Collector will:

- not remain in the cubicle with you or watch you provide the sample—they will remain within sight of the toilet door
- direct you not to flush the toilet
- give you the opportunity to wash your hands
- depending on the location of testing, may cover the sample and escort you back to the screening room as require, they will ensure the sample does not leave your sight
- test the temperature of the urine, the colour and the creatinine level as part of the onsite adulteration checks and record these details on the ADTF.
- after a few minutes, will inspect the testing device for control lines. In the absence of a line next to one of the control areas (marked 'C'), another device will be selected
- will record the result on the ADTF, ask you to confirm all information including initialling and dating the form. You will be asked if you want a copy of the ADTF emailed to you.

If a line does not appear next to a drug group, this is deemed a **not-negative result**. A not-negative test result means that the presence of drugs (or their metabolites) has been detected by the initial onsite test. In this instance, the sample will need to go to the laboratory for confirmatory analysis. If the sample fails adulteration checks, the Collector will request a second sample and send both to the lab for confirmatory analysis.

## Outcome of on-site urine drug test – not-negative

If you receive a not-negative test result, the process you can expect is as follows:

- After the collector records the result on the ADTF, they will ask you to confirm all the information is correct then initial and date the form
- The Collector will notify the DCU Officer
- Your sample will be split into two samples and packaged up following chain of custody procedures—this will be sent to the laboratory for confirmatory analysis
- You will return to briefing room for a management action discussion;
  - If the result of the test is an **explained not-negative**, where you have declared medications and it has been confirmed that those medications could cause a not-negative reaction during onsite testing, then you will be allowed to return to your normal duties.
  - If the result is an **unexplained not-negative**, where you have declared medications and it has not been confirmed that those medications could cause a not-negative reaction during onsite testing or where you have made no declarations, then you will be directed to leave the workplace by your **RM**

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and be placed on leave pending the outcome of confirmatory analysis of the sample by the laboratory.

**All unexplained not-negative results are referred to I&PS for assessment.**

### Saliva test

If you are unable to provide a urine sample on the first try, you will be given a reasonable amount of time to hydrate and retry. If you are still unable to provide a urine sample, then the DCU officer will direct you to provide a saliva (oral fluid) sample.

You will be asked:

- to select an approved device from at least three
- to provide your sample
- to select a kit from a minimum of three sealed kits
- to visually confirm the kit numbers and anti-tampering stickers match
- to initial and date each seal

A seal will be placed on each saliva test tube.

The collector will also place barcodes on each test tube and the testing form, laboratory advice forms and the department's internal tracking form.

### Hair test

The collection and testing of hair samples is conducted in accordance with the Society of Hair Testing guidelines for drug testing in hair. Hair testing must also be conducted in accordance with *Australian Border Force (Alcohol and Drug Tests) Rule 2015* (the Rule), which requires that the authorised collector who is collecting the sample:

- Must use the least painful technique known and available to the authorised person to collect the sample.
- Must only collect the amount of hair necessary for the conduct of the test. Given the shorter length of body hair relative to scalp hair.
- May collect the sample from any part of the employee's body, other than the genital or anal area or the buttocks.

The collection kits will be opened in front of you and the kit numbers will be recorded on the forms.

The collector conducting the test will take two hair samples approximately the thickness of a pencil, cut close to the scalp or skin using scissors, and where possible these will be taken from the back of the crown of the head.

Following collection, the collector will place the two equal hair samples into two sample envelopes which will be labelled and sealed. The samples will be sent to the laboratory for analysis.

### Notification of results

Laboratory analysis results of not-negative urine samples are normally returned within four business days.

Where a management action was completed and the laboratory result states Negative or Positive consistent with medication, a 'Cessation of Management Action Form' will be completed and forwarded to the worker. This requires acknowledgement and signatures from the DCU officer, the responsible manager and the worker. This finalises the process and no further action is necessary. A copy of all relevant paperwork will be provided to you.

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Where a confirmed positive result is received from the laboratory that is not consistent with medication or where no medication was declared, these results will be forwarded to I&PS for further assessment and action. The matter will also be referred to a Medical Review Officer (MRO) for further assessment, verification and advice. In this scenario you will be advised by someone in I&PS about next steps.

All confirmatory targeted test results will be sent directly to I&PS. I&PS will advise you and you will need to discuss your results with I&PS.

If you have any questions relating to prescription or over the counter medications and drug testing or about the onsite adulteration checks (for example Creatinine, Urea or pH) completed during the testing process, talk to the Department's contracted collection provider (1800 633 838) or speak with your GP.

## Further information

For further information about drug and alcohol testing read the Drug and alcohol testing – Procedural Instruction or email [damp@homeaffairs.gov.au](mailto:damp@homeaffairs.gov.au)