

CT Statewide Drug and Alcohol Testing Consortium Newsletter

MARCH 2024

CY2023 Management Information System (MIS) Reporting

On behalf of Consortium Members, MIS reports for the calendar year 2023 pertaining to members' drug and alcohol testing data were successfully submitted to the Office of Federal Transit Administration (FTA) by the Greater Hartford Transit District. The submitted MIS reports have been provided to the Designated Employer Representatives (DERs) for their records. Thanks to DISA and our DERs & Alternate DERs for their diligent in preparing, reviewing, and reconciling the testing data.

Pursuant to **49 CFR 655.71(b)(1) – Retention of Records: Members are required to retain copies of annual MIS reports submitted to FTA for five years.**

INSIDE THIS ISSUE	Page No.
CY2023 Management Information System (MIS) Reporting	1
Site Visits	1
FTA National Conference	2
Consortium Random Selections	2
Consortium Training - 6/4/2024	3
FTA's Substance Abuse One-Day Seminar: 6/26/2024	4
Oral Fluid Update	4
The Positive Impact of Kindness on Health	5 & 6
Third Party Administrator - Contact Info	7
Enhance Awareness of EAP	8
Contact & Resource Info	9

Site Visits

Site visits shall begin over the next several months at each member location. The purpose of these visits is to review the agency's anti-drug and alcohol misuse testing program, assist the DERs with any questions or concerns that they might have, and help them to successfully manage their own drug and alcohol testing program.

FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference

The 17th Annual FTA Drug and Alcohol Program National Conference will be held on April 2 - 4, 2024, at:

Hilton Atlanta Hotel
255 Courtland St NE,
Atlanta, GA

This **FREE** three-day conference will provide attendees with a background on 49 CFR Part 655 (Prevention of Alcohol Misuse and Prohibited Drug Use in Transit Operators) and 49 CFR Part 40 (Procedures for Transportation Workplace Drug and Alcohol Testing Programs).

Attendees can choose from a variety of sessions to customize their experience for the specific needs of their employer and knowledge level of the regulations. The conference will include training for beginner Drug and Alcohol Program Managers (DAPMs), an update from the Office of Drug and Alcohol Policy and Compliance (ODAPC), information about DOT oral fluid testing, and various other sessions catered to running a compliant drug and alcohol program. Additionally, there will be networking opportunities, access to FTA and other federal drug and alcohol compliance experts, and much more.

There is no registration fee to attend this conference. Attendees are financially responsible for all travel related expenses, including all meals. Space is limited, and registrations are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

Consortium Random Selections

The 2nd quarter of 2024 random selections were generated and distributed on March 25th, 2024 in preparation for the April 1st begin date. You cannot begin testing on these selections until April 1st, 2024 or after. The last day to complete the selections is June 30th, 2024.

Please reach out to DISA Scheduling Team to schedule your onsite testing events at scheduling@disa.com.

It is important to note that testing is required to spread out throughout the quarter as well as around holidays that you are in service for. If you have any questions about your random selections or your testing schedule, contact Candice Rouisse at: D360Premier@disa.com or 833-347-2014 option2

Consortium Training
Presented by: DISA's partner, Current Consulting Group
TUESDAY, JUNE 4TH, 2024
Location: Connecticut DOT Bureau of Public Transportation
2800 Berlin Turnpike
Conference Room A & B
Newington, CT

DER Training
8:30AM – 11:00AM

Who Should Attend?

Designated Employer Representatives (DERs)/ Drug and Alcohol Program Managers (DAPMs).

The DOT Designated Employer Representative (DER) Drug and Alcohol Awareness Training will:

- Cover the basics of a DOT-mandated substance abuse program.
- Provide an in-depth review of all components of a testing program.
- Review all reasons for testing.
- Explain the laboratory drug testing process and the responsibilities of the Medical Review Officer (MRO).
- Provide DERs with helpful suggestions for organizing and storing documents in preparation for a federal or state audit.
- Answer some of the most frequently asked questions.

Post-Accident Training
11:15AM – 12:30PM

Who Should Attend?

DERs, Transit Supervisor, and Transit Officials.

The DOT FTA Post Accident Training will:

- Cover DOT Post-Accident Regulation Review.
- Post-Accident Testing Thresholds.
- Documentation of the Decision to Test/Not to Test.
- Review of Best Practices when it comes to Post-Accident Testing.
- Documentation of Testing Delays and Third-Party Contacts & Resources.

Reasonable Suspicion Training
1:30PM – 4:00PM

Who Should Attend?

DERs, DAPMs, Transit Supervisors and Transit Officials who are authorized to determine when it is appropriate to administer Reasonable Suspicion testing.

The DOT Reasonable Suspicion Training will:

- Cover Drug Abuse and Alcohol Misuse Impact on Society and Industry.*
- Drugs of Abuse and Alcohol Misuse and the effects.*
- Policy and Procedural Review.*
- Profile of the At-Risk Employee Confronting and Referring an Employee.*
- Review of Drug and Alcohol Testing Procedures and Referral to EAP and the Rehabilitation Process.*

For registration, contact Nhan Vo-Le at nhvole@ghtd.org

FTA's Substance Abuse One-Day Seminar is coming to Newington, CT on June 26, 2024

Host – Greater Hartford Transit District

Location: CT Department of Transportation – Conference Room A & B, 2800 Berlin Turnpike, Newington, CT

Training Date/Time: Wednesday, June 26, 2024 from 9:00AM to 4:00PM

This one-day seminar is designed to provide essential facts and information to facilitate employers' compliance with DOT's 49 CFR Part 40 and Part 655. While a high-level overview of the regulations will be discussed, this seminar will focus more on the operational side of a transit agency's functions.

The training will be conducted by a member of FTA's Drug and Alcohol Program Audit team.

For registration, contact Nhan Vo-Le at nhvole@ghtd.org

Oral Fluid Update

The HHS approved oral fluid testing, with DOT's final rule effective from June 1, 2023. However; employers cannot use oral fluid testing for DOT-regulated tests until laboratories and collection devices are certified. Currently, there are still no labs certified for oral fluid testing, DISA is continuing to monitor and will keep the consortium on updates coming from the DOT.



The Lexington Group, Inc.
Your Employee Assistance Program

The Positive Impact of Kindness on Health

When you hear the phrase "treat others as you want to be treated," it's not just about being polite; it turns out kindness can do wonders for your mental and physical health. Studies show that being kind doesn't just make the person on the receiving end feel good; it can also boost your own well-being.

Acts of kindness can make you feel less stressed, improve your emotional well-being, and even make you physically healthier. When you are kind, your body releases chemicals like serotonin and oxytocin, often referred to as "feel-good" hormones. These chemicals not only contribute to a happier mood but also play a role in strengthening social bonds and reducing feelings of loneliness. Additionally, engaging in acts of kindness has been linked to an increased lifespan, higher energy levels, and improved self-esteem. It's like a natural mood booster that not only affects your mental state but also positively impacts your overall health. On the flip side, being kind can also have remarkable effects on reducing physical ailments such as pain and lowering blood pressure. Studies have shown that individuals who regularly practice kindness tend to exhibit lower emotional reactivity, meaning they handle stress and negative emotions more effectively.

Think about times when someone was mean to you when you were feeling down; it probably made things even worse. This is especially true for a young person, it's the reason why many adults will never forget incidents in childhood or in school when a person was cruel or unkind to them. On the other hand, being kind doesn't just affect the person you are kind to; it can also positively impact those who witness the act. This creates a ripple effect, making them more likely to be kind to others.

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The Positive Impact of Kindness on Health

(Continued)

Encouraging acts of kindness is something we can all do. Leading by example is a powerful method—demonstrate kindness through your actions, inspiring others to follow suit. Additionally, providing opportunities for others to engage in acts of kindness is equally important; let them join in and be helpful.

Genuine kindness creates a positive impact, not only for the recipient but for everyone involved. Acts of kindness, whether grand or small, have the potential to uplift spirits and foster a sense of well-being. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- Say hello to someone
- Listen when someone needs to talk
- Make someone laugh
- Hold the door open for others
- Treat someone to a cup of coffee
- Pick up litter
- Compliment friends, family, or coworkers
- Keep your surroundings clean and tidy
- Send a thoughtful text to a loved one
- Invite someone who's alone to come along with you
- Let someone who wants to help you, help
- Ask for advice or other's opinion
- Share silence with someone
- Engage in random acts of kindness
- Engage in kind acts that are not random at all
- Put a surprise note or drawing on someone's desk
- Acknowledge and validate someone's post on social media

Remember, kindness is about doing something you enjoy while considering others. It's essential that your kindness is something others find helpful. You can take joy in being deliberately kind, whether it's spending time with family, talking to loved ones, or volunteering.

If this isn't you and if things are tough for you right now, that's okay. Celebrate small victories each day and find happiness in even the little things. If you find yourself persistently feeling upset, uninterested, and struggle to handle your daily tasks, it's a good idea to talk to a licensed mental health professional. Counselors are there to support you in understanding and managing your emotions, providing guidance for a positive path forward. Remember, taking care of your mental well-being is an important part of the kindness you show to yourself.

Drug and Alcohol Testing Program Third Party Administrator (TPA) DISA Global Solutions, Inc. COMPANY CONTACTS

Mobile Operations

Scheduling Department

Jason Allen – Main Telephone #800-211-4469 Extension 6051. Email: Jason.Allen@disa.com

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Senior Manager, Client Services

David Alexander - Main Telephone #281-673-2400. Email: David.Alexander@disa.com

24-Hour Drug & Alcohol Testing On-Site

Post-Accident

Reasonable Suspicion

1-800-967-3135 Toll-Free Emergency Line

Be prepared to provide the following information:

Your Name & Agency Name

Phone Number

Location of Incident

Reason for Call (Post-Accident or Reasonable Suspicion)

Medical Review Officer (MRO) Department

University Services

Richard Weinstein, MD

2800 Black Lake Place,

Suite A

Philadelphia, PA 19154

Phone: 800-624-3784

Fax: 215-637-6998

Enhance Awareness of the Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Note: This letter from The Lexington Group should be made available to safety-sensitive employees and posted in the break room



TheLexingtonGroup

Your Employee Assistance Program
A Woman Owned Enterprise Since 2000

Dear CT Drug Consortium Employees and Family Members:

The Lexington Group Employee Assistance Program (EAP) provides CONFIDENTIAL face-to-face and virtual counseling services to assist employees in identifying and resolving personal problems. Examples include marriage and family issues, job stress, alcohol and drug abuse, depression and other emotional concerns. The Lexington Group services also include referral resources for legal, financial, eldercare, and childcare through the Life Care program.

Because employee lives may be affected by problems with a spouse or other family members, this program is extended to household family members as well. You or your household family members may contact your EAP directly at any time. No matter what your situation, any assistance you seek through the EAP is held in the strictest confidence. Involvement will not jeopardize your job security, future promotional opportunities or reputation.

For confidential and immediate access, you may call The Lexington Group 24/7 at:

1-800-676-HELP (4357)

You may also request services or read more about the program online at:

www.The-Lexington-Group.com

Your unique employee password is "CTDrugConsort"

We hope you will share our enthusiasm for The Lexington Group, Employee Assistance Program, and the opportunity it presents to help you and your family.

Sincerely,
The Lexington Group



Contact & Resource Information

DISA Global Solutions, Inc.

Formerly Occupational Drug Testing (ODT)

www.Disa.com

Toll Free # 800-211-4469

The Lexington Group

www.The-Lexington-Group.com

Toll Free # 800-571-0197

Employee Assistance Program

1-800-676-HELP (4357)

Request clinical services online directly from the web site at:

www.The-Lexington-Group.com

To log on, your customer name is "CT Drug Consortium"

And your unique employee password is "CTDrugConsort"

Are you aware of the availability of program forms and resource documents on

GHTD's website? Go to:

<https://www.hartfordtransit.org/about/drug-alcohol-testing-consortium/>

Also, checkout the following materials:

What Employers Need to Know About DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing

What Employees Need to Know About DOT Drug and Alcohol Testing

Resources for The Designated Employer Representative (DER)

Lexington Newsletters

FTA Regulation Update Issues

The following FTA website provides a wealth of information such as trainings, newsletters, etc. on the Drug and Alcohol Testing Program that you might find very

helpful:

www.fta.dot.gov/12533.html

You may also find Title 49 Parts 40 and 655 (FTA regulations on the drug and alcohol testing program) by using the Search engine.