

Selecting Alternates

Random Drug / Alcohol Testing Program



A common misconception of the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Regulations regarding how to select an alternate for a random drug / alcohol test has caused many motor carriers to lose their Satisfactory Safety Rating as well as pay substantial civil penalties.

Many motor carriers are under the impression that they can replace a driver who was selected for a random drug test at will.

It is permissible to select alternates. However, it is only permissible if the primary driver selected will not be available for testing during the selection period because of long-term absence due to layoff, illness, injury, vacation or other circumstances. In the event the initial driver selected is not available for testing, the employer and/or C/TPA must document the reason why an alternate driver was tested. The documentation must be maintained for further review if requested by authorities.

“Selection of drivers shall be made by a scientifically valid method, such as a random number table or a computer-based random number generator that is matched with drivers' Social Security numbers, payroll identification numbers, or other comparable identifying numbers.” Do not just pick a random driver and send them for a test.

If you have any questions for our transportation safety consultants, please feel free to contact us at (281) 382-8400 or email us at steve@integritysafety.net.