

WVU School of Nursing Drug and Alcohol Screening Policy

The WVU SON has an obligation to protect the public and its students while also respecting students' privacy rights. Students are also obligated to follow our code of academic and professional integrity. Drug and alcohol screening policies at the academic program level must balance safety and privacy rights. This drug and alcohol screening policy applies to all WVU SON programs that incorporate a clinical component, direct patient care provision, and/or handling prescription medication. Students are required by clinical agencies to undergo a urine drug screen prior to clinical experiences. In addition, the SON and its students must follow clinical facility policies and requirements regarding drug and alcohol screening. Positive drug or alcohol screens may preclude participation in clinical rotations. This could, in turn, prevent the completion of the clinical course requirements and/or completion of the nursing program, or result in admission ineligibility or program dismissal.

Routine Urine Drug Screening Requirements Upon Program Admission

Students enrolled in programs with clinical components are required to submit a urine drug screen within six weeks of first day of classes through PreCheck/Sentry MD (see the PreCheck/Sentry MD Documentation Policy). Repeat specimen collection for a positive result is prohibited. Students are required to repeat a 'negative dilute' result and are responsible for the cost of the repeat test.

Upon admission, students will be tested for the following substances: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates, PCP, and propoxyphene.

New program applicants with a positive drug screen will be ineligible for admission to the program and will forfeit their admission "seat."

- Students who refuse substance screening upon admission will be treated as a positive result, and will be ineligible for admission to the program.
- Repeat specimen collection for a positive blood or urine result is prohibited.

Reasonable Suspicion ("For Cause") of Substance Use

- Random and "for cause" drug and/or alcohol screening may be documented through PreCheck/Sentry MD, a participating LabCorp facility, or a clinical facility. Students enrolled in courses with clinical components may be subject to additional alcohol testing and/or drug screening if reasonable suspicion for testing and/or screening is found (see Consent Form for Alcohol, Drug, and Substance Testing).
- By signing Handbook Signature Page you are consenting for the agency's laboratory to collect blood, urine, or saliva samples from me to conduct necessary medical tests to determine the presence or use of alcohol, drugs, or controlled substances. Further, consenting for the release of the test result(s) and other relevant medical information to the WVU SON Dean, Associate Dean, and Program Director. Students are responsible for posting test results and other relevant medical information into their SentryMD accounts. Refusal to consent and/or providing results of testing is considered a positive

result and associated with disciplinary actions that may include dismissal from the nursing program.

Reasonable suspicion of substance use requires some level of objective information to believe that drugs and/or alcohol are involved. Reasonable suspicion of substance (drugs or alcohol) use may be considered in the presence of the following factors:

1. Direct observation of the student engaging in drug or alcohol related activity
2. Direct observation of the student demonstrating symptoms of being under the influence, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Slurred speech
 - b. Odor of alcohol on breath or person
 - c. Unsteady gait
 - d. Dilated pupils or bloodshot/glassy eyes
 - e. Disoriented or confused behavior
 - f. Observed behaviors indicative of hallucinations
 - g. Unexplained accident or injury
3. Documented pattern of erratic behavior or sudden change in demeanor
4. Documented sudden change in performance, including, but not limited to:
 - a. Excessive absenteeism or tardiness
 - b. Decline in academic performance, including missed deadlines
 - c. Work habits in the clinical environment, including increased errors
5. Specific and reliable information from a credible source

Upon notification of suspicion, students must immediately:

- A. Follow PreCheck procedures for drug and/or alcohol testing. This would apply to students in the community setting and/or during business hours, or per facility/preceptor/faculty discretion. Students utilizing Pre-Check should follow the following steps:
 - Go to the Student Check Web Portal Page and place an order for the reasonable suspicion package.
 - Proceed to testing site to complete testing.
- OR
- B. Present to emergency department at the clinical facility for drug and/or alcohol testing. Student must use a cab or rideshare (at the student's expense) to a clinical facility for testing. This applies to students who are placed in clinical sites/off shift, or per facility/preceptor/faculty discretion. Students will upload test results and other relevant medical information into their SentryMD accounts within 24 hours of receiving results.

Students must notify their program director of the request for testing within 24 hours.

Following reasonable suspicion drug and/or alcohol testing, the student is responsible for finding transportation to and/or from the testing site at their expense. Under no circumstances will the student be allowed to drive home or return to class or clinical following testing.

Students may not be permitted to begin or return to the clinical rotation until drug screen results are available.

Prohibited Substances for Reasonable Suspicion

Prohibited substances may include but are not limited to: cannabinoids, anesthesia/anesthetics, phencyclidine (PCP), cocaine, amphetamines, benzodiazepines, barbiturates, propoxyphene, methadone, methaqualone, methamphetamine, buprenorphine, opiates, and opioids. Students may not be under the influence of alcohol while performing patient care duties or handling prescription medication.

Students utilizing pre-check for lab testing may be testing for the following: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, methaqualone, opiates, PCP, propoxyphene, oxycodone, buprenorphine, and fentanyl, and alcohol.

Students utilizing a clinical faculty may be tested for the following substances, including but not limited to: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, opiates, oxycodone, buprenorphine, fentanyl, MDMA, alcohol, or per the clinical providers discretion.

Students utilizing a clinical facility for drug testing may use the provider letter denoted in the Handbook appendix when presenting to the lab.

Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages by individuals under the age of 21 is a violation of state liquor laws. Likewise, it is illegal for anyone to provide alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 21.

Any student under the influence of drugs or alcohol during a clinical experience may pose serious safety and health risks, not only to themselves, but also to all those who work with them and to patients for whom they provide care. The unlawful possession, use, or sale of illegal drugs, prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs, and/or alcohol poses an unacceptable risk for unsafe patient care. On-campus and off-campus incidents involving alcohol or prohibited substances will be referred to the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and may result in a violation pursuant to this policy.

Prescribed Substances

Students who are prescribed any substance that may impair their alertness or cognition while enrolled in a nursing course with a clinical component must notify their instructor as soon as possible and prior to clinical experiences, medication administration, or patient care. Students are permitted to take prescribed medications that may affect urine drug screen results as long as the student is able to safely provide care. Students taking legally prescribed medications that may affect urine drug screen results must notify PreCheck when completing **drug screening**

requirements upon program admission. Students prescribed medications that may or that may impair their alertness or cognition must notify the Program Director and refrain from participating in clinical experiences. Absences from clinical may prevent the student from meeting clinical objectives and impact program progression.

Positive Alcohol and Drug Screens

Any positive alcohol or drug screen may result in a violation of academic program policies and professionalism standards.

Refusal of a Blood or Urine Screen

Refusal of a blood or urine screen, or refusal to present to a facility for testing, will be treated as a positive result. Repeat specimen collection for a positive result is prohibited

Incidents involving alcohol or prohibited substances will be referred to the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#) and may result in a sanction pursuant to this policy. Interim suspension measures or an immediate leave of absence may be necessary during the investigation and/or during follow-up treatment and support. Required documentation will be outlined in a formal outcome letter and will be maintained with the student's academic program record.

The WVU SON recognizes that chemical dependency is an illness that can be treated. Assistance for students who are dependent on a chemical substance is available through WVU and [WV Restore](#), and any sanction regarding a violation of this policy will result in a WV Restore referral. If, through disciplinary proceedings and the resulting sanctions, the student is permitted to return to the academic program, full compliance with the recommendations of the counseling/support program will be required.

Under the University's [Campus Student Code](#) and WV law, bystanders and those affected by drug or alcohol overdose may be safe from prosecution and may not face charges if they seek medical assistance in an emergency.

Cannabis Policy

Nurses are not prohibited from receiving a cannabis certification from a healthcare practitioner and possession of a valid identification card issued by the Bureau for Public Health within the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources under 16A-1-1 simply by virtue of their profession; however, a cannabis certification is not considered a prescription, and consumption is not permitted while enrolled in the nursing program. Positive drug screens, regardless of certification status, will be sanctioned as outlined in this policy.

Appendix:

Dear Provider,

_____ (student name) is a current student at the WVU School of Nursing. The student is reporting to your clinical facility for drug testing. The SON suggests the student be tested for the substances listed below. You may add additional substances per your discretion and clinical judgement.

Students utilizing a clinical faculty may be tested for the following substances, including but not limited to: amphetamines, barbiturates, benzodiazepines, cocaine, marijuana, methadone, opiates, oxycodone, buprenorphine, fentanyl, MDMA, alcohol, or per the clinical providers discretion.