

“Why is this program so important?”



Safety is our no. 1 priority at the U.S. Department of Transportation. And a cornerstone of our safety policy is ensuring that transportation providers across all modes – on roads, rails, water, or in the air, over land and underground – employ operators who are 100 percent drug- and alcohol-free. We want – and we insist upon – safety-conscious employees at all times and under all circumstances.

Fortunately, the transportation industry over time has worked hard to reduce the number of accidents and crashes directly related to drug and alcohol use. Nevertheless, human risk factors remain – and some transportation workers do use illicit drugs, or abuse alcohol, despite serious efforts to deter them.

We must never stop trying to improve our safety record where substance abuse is concerned. We can start by making sure that employees are properly educated on the personal and professional consequences of drug use and alcohol misuse. Supervisors must be appropriately trained to identify signs and symptoms of drug and alcohol use.

Employers must also have strong drug and alcohol testing programs. And employees must be removed from safety-sensitive duties immediately after they violate drug and alcohol testing rules. It is very important that employees are not returned to safety-sensitive duty until they are referred for evaluation and have successfully complied with treatment recommendations.

I know you will support these important measures, so that we can assure the traveling public that our transportation system is the safest it can possibly be.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ray LaHood". The signature is stylized and fluid.

Ray LaHood
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
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