



## **Substance Use and Mental Wellness**

20.2 million adults in the U.S. had a substance use disorder last year. A recent study found that 13.3% of adults reported new or increased substance use as a way to manage stress due to COVID-19. The COVID pandemic has caused issues for those who were seeking help or wanted to seek help. Guidance and treatment for substance abuse issues are heavily dependent on face-to-face meetings, which have been canceled or suspended due to shutdowns and social distancing. Added stressors like fear of losing a job, income instability, burnout among essential workers, and risk of infection have increased the relapse rate among those in recovery. It is known that social isolation fuels substance abuse.

### **How do you know if you or someone you care about might have an issue with substance abuse?**

- 1 drink is considered: 12 ounces of beer, 8-9 ounces of malt liquor, 5 ounces of wine, 1.5 ounces of spirits like vodka and whiskey.
- For men, if you drink more than 5 drinks in a day or more than 15 drinks in a week, you may be drinking too much.
- For women, if you drink more than 4 drinks a day or more than 8 drinks a week, you may be drinking too much.
- Any use of illegal drugs is considered substance abuse
- Taking more prescription medication than what a doctor prescribes or obtaining it through channels other than legal prescriptions is considered substance abuse. Certain medications prescribed for pain or after surgery have powerful addictive qualities. Be sure to talk to your doctor about the risks of addiction if you are prescribed painkillers for a legitimate health issue.

## **RESOURCE**

For some, a company Employee Assistance Program (EAP) can help find rehab facilities on either an inpatient and outpatient basis or get you connected with a therapist or counselor who specializes in substance abuse. For others, your local union or a community service program may be a good option. Please take advantage of this resource if you think you need help and remember, Employee Assistance is completely confidential and private.

A Safety Awareness Campaign on Mental Wellness is an extension of our Company's Injury and Illness Free program and is meant to create an open dialogue on mental wellness. Please consider sharing your thoughts and experiences about the discussion questions. You just may save a life.

### **Discussion with crew:**

Have you or someone you know struggled with a substance issue?

How did you or that person seek help?

What have you done to help that person or yourself?