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Toolbox Talk – Physical or Mental Impairment

Date _____ **Company Name** _____
Supervisor _____ **Job Name** _____

In this Toolbox Talk, we will talk with your employees about the different ways that they may experience difficulties while performing their jobs. This talk is important because your employees need to know what is considered relevant to their work, and what is important to communicate to you (their employer). After all, you can't make considerations for someone unless you understand what they are going through. Guidelines for Discussion: If you are experiencing a condition, physical or mental, that in any way affects your ability to perform your job, you should disclose it to your employer. This way, all necessary precautions can be made to ensure your safety, and the safety of your coworkers. Plus, you can experience the proper care and consideration you deserve. Physical and mental impairments include:

- **Dyslexia:** this can affect a worker's ability to read and comprehend signs, warning labels, training manuals, and other work-related materials.
- **Color blindness:** this can affect a worker's ability to heed warning signs and other safety-related symbols.
- **Mental health problems:** depression, bipolar disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and other mental health problems can affect your ability to work. If you feel emotionally or mentally overwhelmed by a certain task or other aspects of work, it is important to communicate this to your employer.
- **Physical impairments:** any chronic health problems should be communicated to your employer. This includes diabetes, heart disease, or chronic pain in a certain area of your body.

Today's Toolbox Talk also includes impairment by drugs, alcohol, or other substances. A worker may not enter or remain at any workplace while his or her ability to work is affected by alcohol or drugs. Alcohol and drugs are not to be consumed at any worksite. There is a 100% no tolerance policy here. If you choose to disregard this, you will immediately lose your job. If you suspect that any of your coworkers are impaired while performing their jobs, please report your suspicions to your supervisor. This doesn't mean you should snitch on your friend whenever he is slow to finish a task. What we mean is this: if a coworker is denying impairment but your perceptions tell you otherwise, then your report could prevent a lot of suffering in the future. This applies to all causes of impairment: physical, mental, or drug/alcohol-induced. Perhaps your co-worker returned to work after a long injury, but he still seems to struggle with basic tasks...to the point where he presents a danger to everyone around him. Perhaps one of your coworkers erupts in loud, angry outbursts whenever you ask a question, preventing any necessary communication. If there are any problems that can't be resolved by talking with your co-worker one on one, you should speak to (name of manager/HR rep). Your report will be completely confidential.

Additional Discussion Notes:

Leave extra time after this discussion, and make yourself available to any employees if they wish to speak with you privately.

Safety Recommendations _____

Job Specific Topics _____

Attendees

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