

Article 20.

Controlled Substance Examination Regulation.

**§ 95-230. Purpose.**

The General Assembly finds that individuals should be protected from unreliable and inadequate examinations and screening for controlled substances. The General Assembly also finds that employers who test employees for controlled substances shall use reliable and minimally invasive examinations and screenings and be afforded the opportunity to select from a range of cost-effective and advanced drug testing technologies. The purpose of this Article is to establish procedural and other requirements for the administration of controlled substance examinations. (1991, c. 687, s. 1; 2001-487, s. 66(a).)

**§ 95-231. Definitions.**

As used in this Article, unless the context clearly requires otherwise:

- (1) "Approved laboratory" means a clinical chemistry laboratory which performs controlled substances testing and which has demonstrated satisfactory performance in the forensic urine drug testing programs of the United States Department of Health and Human Services or the College of American Pathologists for the type of tests and controlled substances being evaluated.
- (1a) "Controlled substance" is as defined in G.S. 90-87(5) or a metabolite thereof.
- (1b) "Controlled substance examination" means all actions related to drug testing for the purpose of determining if an examinee has used controlled substances.
- (2) "Examiner" means a person, firm, or corporation, doing business in the State, including State, county, and municipal employers, who is the employer or prospective employer of the examinee and who performs or has performed by an approved laboratory a controlled substance examination.
- (3) "Examinee" means an individual who is an employee of the examiner or an applicant for employment with the examiner and who is requested or required by an examiner to submit to a controlled substance examination.
- (4) "Screening" means initial controlled substance examination performed for the purpose of determining use of controlled substances by an examinee. (1991, c. 687; 1993, c. 213, s. 1.)

**§ 95-232. Procedural requirements for the administration of controlled substance examinations.**

(a) An examiner who requests or requires an examinee to submit to a controlled substance examination shall comply with the procedural requirements set forth in this section.

(b) Collection of samples: the collection of samples for examination or screening shall be performed under reasonable and sanitary conditions. Individual dignity shall be preserved to the extent practicable. Samples shall be collected in a manner reasonably calculated to prevent substitution of samples and interference with the collection, examination, or screening of samples. Samples for prospective or current employees may be collected on-site or at an approved laboratory.

(c) Screening test of samples:

- (1) Prospective employees: a preliminary screening procedure that utilizes a single-use test device may be used for prospective employees.

(2) Current employees: the screening test of samples for current employees shall only be performed by an approved laboratory.

(c1) Confirmation test of samples: if a screening test for a prospective employee produces a positive result, an approved laboratory shall confirm that result by a second examination of the sample utilizing gas chromatography with mass spectrometry or an equivalent scientifically accepted method, unless the examinee signs a written waiver at the time or after they receive the preliminary test result. All screening tests for current employees that produce a positive result shall be confirmed by a second examination of the sample utilizing gas chromatography with mass spectrometry or an equivalent scientifically accepted method.

(d) Retention of samples: a portion of every sample that produces a confirmed positive examination result shall be preserved by the laboratory that conducts the confirmatory examination for a period of at least 90 days from the time the results of the confirmed positive examination are mailed or otherwise delivered to the examiner.

(e) Chain of custody: the examiner or his agent shall establish procedures regarding chain of custody for sample collection and examination to ensure proper record keeping, handling, labeling, and identification of examination samples.

(f) Retesting of positive samples: the examinee shall have the right to retest a confirmed positive sample at the same or another approved laboratory. The examiner, through the approved laboratory, shall make confirmed positive samples available to the affected examinee, or a designated agent, during the time which the sample is required to be retained. The examinee must request release of the sample in writing specifying to which approved laboratory the sample is to be sent. The examinee incurs all reasonable expenses for chain of custody procedures, shipping, and retesting of positive samples related to this request. (1991, c. 687, s. 1; 1993, c. 213, s. 2; 1995, c. 383, s. 1; 2006-264, s. 52(a); 2009-535, s. 1.)

**§ 95-233. No duty to examine.**

Nothing in this Article shall be construed to place a duty on examiners to conduct controlled substance examinations. (1991, c. 687.)

**§ 95-234. Violation of controlled substance examination regulations; civil penalty.**

(a) Any examiner who violates the provisions of this Article shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to two hundred fifty dollars (\$250.00) per affected examinee with the maximum not to exceed one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per investigation by the Commissioner of Labor or his authorized representative. In determining the amount of the penalty, the Commissioner shall consider:

- (1) The appropriateness of the penalty for the size of the business of the employer charged; and
- (2) The gravity of the violation.

The determination by the Commissioner shall be final, unless within 15 days after receipt of notice thereof by certified mail with return receipt, by signature confirmation as provided by the U.S. Postal Service, by a designated delivery service authorized pursuant to 26 U.S.C. § 7502(f)(2) with delivery receipt, by electronic means to include an electronic mail address provided by the person to the Commissioner, with a delivery receipt, that will be effective to give the person notice, or via hand delivery, the person charged with the violation takes exception to the determination, in which event final determination of the penalty shall be made in an administrative proceeding

pursuant to Article 3 of Chapter 150B and which final determination shall be subject to judicial review in a judicial proceeding pursuant to Article 4 of Chapter 150B.

(b) The amount of the penalty when finally determined may be recovered in a civil action brought by the Commissioner in the General Court of Justice.

(c) The clear proceeds of civil penalties provided for in this section shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2.

(d) Assessment of penalties under this section shall be subject to a two-year statute of limitations commencing at the time of the occurrence of the violation.

(e) The Commissioner of Labor may adopt, modify, or revoke such rules as are necessary for carrying out the provisions of this Article. The rules adopted shall promote individual dignity and privacy while not posing an undue burden on employers. (1991, c. 687, s. 1; 1993, c. 213, s. 3; 1998-215, s. 113; 2003-308, s. 7; 2007-231, s. 11; 2024-3, s. 7.1.)

**§ 95-235. Certain federal agencies exempted.**

The provisions of this Article shall not apply to a controlled substance examination required by the United States Department of Transportation or the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission. (1993, c. 213, s. 4.)

**§§ 95-236 through 95-239. Reserved for future codification purposes.**