

Random Drug Testing for Public Safety Communication Operators: Necessary precaution or paranoia?

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A dilemma confronting today's law enforcement managers, particularly those who manage civilian personnel are the sensitive issues surrounding drug testing of employees. This research examines current issues relating to drug testing, with specific emphasis on random drug testing administered to law enforcement telecommunicators. Attention was focused on identifying an acceptable rationale for drug testing civilian personnel employed by a law enforcement agency. The legal justification to test or not, may be based in part, on the determination of a 'critical' or 'safety-sensitive' classification for law enforcement telecommunications positions. Additional emphasis was strongly placed on the evaluation and incorporation of relevant data from a survey instrument and a thorough review of applicable case law and current legal precedents relating to this topic.