



6 Mistakes to Avoid with Post Offer Employment Testing (POET)

Life would be much easier if there was a set formula for implementing a POET program. But because every company is different, with its own functional job descriptions (FJD), the success of your program depends on your making the right decisions from the start.

At WorkWell, we've come to the rescue of all types of companies whose POET programs weren't helping them. What we've found is that the same mistakes are made over and over — mistakes that are avoidable when you have expertise on your side.

Here are some of the land mines that can negatively impact your POET program if you're not careful with your implementation:

1. Using outdated FJDs.

Yes, updating your functional job descriptions on a steady basis can be time-consuming. But it's vital if you want to minimize your risks and assure your POET process is valid. An out-of-date FJD can lead to a new hire not being able to handle physical job requirements — leading to injuries, increased litigation risk and loss of productivity.

2. Failing to document everything.

POET litigation may be rare, but you don't want your company to be the example when it does. It is very important to have an internal process that defines what needs to be documented, how it is stored and who will have access.

3. Not having clear rules.

Like so many other policies in your company, POET deserves its own written, comprehensive documentation. A formal policy and procedures manual should be in place with accurate FJDs, policies for reasonable accommodation, and scoring guidelines for the pass/fail decision. This forms the foundation of your defense if ever needed.



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4. Concern it will slow your hiring process.

In our experience, there is no need to exclude critically-needed applicants from the POET process because you think it may take too long or scare off candidates. POET usually takes just 2-3 days from request to result; both background and drug tests often take longer. In addition, POET is not meant to fail numerous applicants, just to identify high-risk hires who are a minority of your applicants.

5. Trying to copy your competition.

Your POET program should be totally based on your company's specific needs, not on what you may see somewhere across town. Your labor pool, your hiring practices and your safety issues are what count. When instituting your program, knowing what is common in your industry can spur discussion but should not be blindly followed.

6. Using the wrong criteria to select a provider.

Above all, any third-party provider you work with should consider POET their forte, not their sideline. Your provider should know what works and what doesn't by having experience with many companies similar to yours. Most important, providers with significant experience can be invaluable at helping you avoid litigation and grievance filings.

Remember, a sound POET program helps you optimize your hiring outcomes, and that leads to higher productivity and lower turnover. Factor in a typical reduction in Workers' Compensation claims and indirect costs, and you can expect up to a six-fold ROI on your program costs.

WorkWell has helped hundreds of businesses avoid mistakes in launching a POET program. For more information, contact WorkWell at (866) 997-9675 or network@workwell.com.



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