

D.C. DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES

Paruresis (“Shy Bladder”) Fact Sheet

Overview

Paruresis, commonly known as “shy bladder,” is the medical term given to the “inability to initiate or sustain urination where individuals are present due to the fear of perceived scrutiny from others.”¹ This condition may impact our workplace drug testing program when a candidate or employee cannot provide a sufficient urine sample for testing purposes.

Shy Bladder Procedure

When candidates or employees must undergo drug testing and cannot provide a sufficient urine sample, the individual conducting the drug test (the “collector”) will take the following steps established under federal guidelines:²

1. Provide the employee up to 40 ounces of fluid over the course of up to three hours or until the employee has provided a sufficient urine sample, whichever comes first;
2. Complete a “Shy Bladder Log,” tracking the volume of water provided and the number of the attempts the employee made to produce a sufficient sample; and
3. If the employee cannot provide a sufficient sample, notify the Designated Employee Representative (DER) of the situation and note the reasons why the employee could not complete the drug test in the remarks section of the Custody Control Form (CCF).

Required Medical Evaluations

After the collector notifies the DER that a candidate or employee cannot provide a sufficient urine sample, the DER must schedule a “Shy Bladder Medical Evaluation.” The DER must immediately contact the DCHR Program Coordinator, Torey Draughn, by phone at (202) 308-3922 for further guidance.

The Program Coordinator will direct the DER to send an e-mail with details relating to the drug testing to torey.draughn@dc.gov, copying dchr.compliance@dc.gov. The email **must** contain scanned copies of the following documents:

- The Custody and Control Form (signed by the collector and the employee);
- The “Shy Bladder Log” or equivalent form; and,
- The random notification or testing acknowledgement form signed by the employee, if applicable; or the reasonable suspicion form signed by the manager, if applicable.

¹ Kuoch, Kenley L J et al. “A systematic review of paruresis: Clinical implications and future directions.” *Journal of psychosomatic research* vol. 98 (2017): 122-129. doi:10.1016/j.jpsychores.2017.05.015.

² For example, see U.S. Dep’t of Transportation, *DOT Rule 49 CFR Part 40 Section 40.193*, available at <https://www.transportation.gov/odapc/part40/40-193>.

DCHR will schedule a "Shy Bladder Medical Evaluation" within five days of the failed drug test. For purposes of this evaluation:

- DCHR will provide the DER notice of the appointment details by email;
- The DER will inform the employee of the appointment date;
- The DER shall accompany the employee to the appointment; and,
- The employee shall be placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the evaluation.

Results

Following a "Shy Bladder Medical Evaluation," DCHR will notify the agency of one of the following outcomes: whether the drug test is considered cancelled, or whether it is considered a refusal to test.

Cancelled Test

If the evaluation establishes that there is a medical justification for the individual's inability to produce a sufficient sample, DCHR will deem a drug test "cancelled," and direct the agency to continue with the candidate's recruitment or return the employee to duty.

Refusal to Test

If the evaluation concludes that there is no medical justification for the employee's inability to produce a sufficient sample, DCHR will deem the employee's inability to produce a sample as a refusal to submit to a drug test. In accordance with Title 6-B of the D.C. Municipal Regulations (D.C.M.R.) at [§ 428.1](#), a "refusal" is considered cause for an unsuitable finding. Candidates shall be disqualified from further consideration for employment and employees shall therefore be subject to appropriate summary action.³

³ 6-B D.C.M.R. § 1616.