



The 26th Annual Drug Testing Industry Survey Results

WHAT'S INSIDE

State of the Drug Testing Industry
Legal Marijuana & Drug Testing
California & Washington
Drug Test Cheating

Volume #11 | SPECIAL ISSUE: DTIS 2024
954.944.0400 | CurrentConsultingGroup.com



State of the Drug Testing Industry

The Current Consulting Group’s 26th Annual Drug Testing Industry Survey identified new trends as well as the most significant developments affecting drug testing providers and their customers, including the advancement of some interesting new emerging technologies, drug test cheating strategies and the ongoing threat from the legalization of marijuana.

This year’s highly anticipated industry survey was made possible by the generous support of the following companies:

- Abbott
- ClearStar
- DrugPak
- eMed Screen
- Hound Labs
- NDASA
- OraSure
- Premier Biotech
- Quest
- Wondfo



CLICK ON THE LOGOS TO
LEARN ABOUT OUR SPONSORS

The 2024 survey included 450 drug testing professionals, including representatives from laboratories, device manufacturers, Medical Review Officers (MROs), third-party administrators (TPAs), background check companies, collectors, and substance abuse professionals.

“Among the key things we learned from this year’s survey,” said Bill Current, founder of the Current Consulting Group, as well as the Drug Testing Industry Survey, “is that drug testing is on solid ground. Sales in 2024 are strong, as nearly four-out-of-five respondents said sales are either up or are at least the same compared to 12 months ago, and nearly half believe sales will increase by the end of 2024. This is great news in light of the ongoing legalization of marijuana and its impact on how employers protect their companies from drug-related impairment.”

Current added, “Drug testing providers are also looking for ways to meet their customers’ needs in the age of legal marijuana when urine testing is under attack in a growing number of states like California and Washington. Significant percentages of survey participants said they already offer or are considering adding alternative testing methods, -

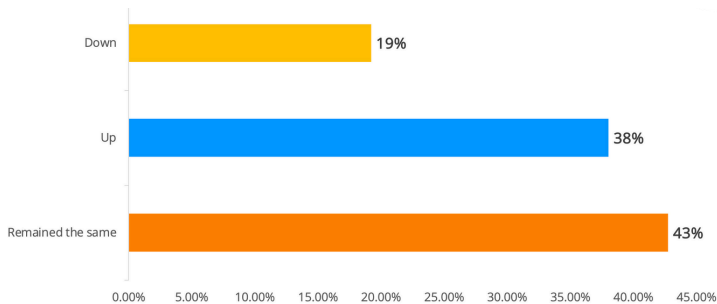
Continues on the next page

State of the Drug Testing Industry Cont.

- including rapid-result devices, oral fluid, hair, and breath THC, as well as proctored testing and non-drug-testing impairment screens. This means that while drug testing is safe, it will likely look different in the coming years.”

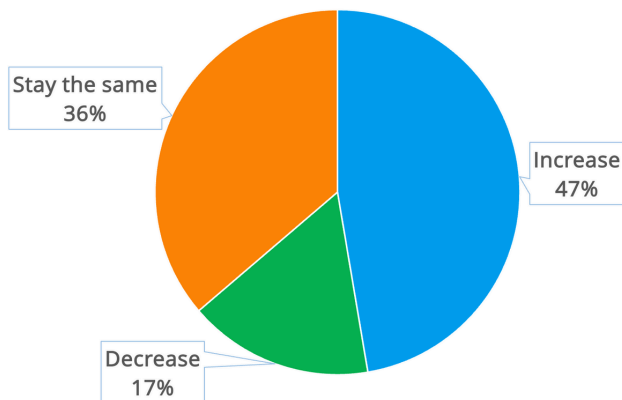
State of the Drug Testing Industry

Drug testing sales: up or down?



Just over **38%** of the survey respondents said drug testing sales in 2024 have increased compared to the previous year and nearly **43%** said they are unchanged. By comparison, **19%** indicated sales are down this year. Also, **48%** believe drug testing sales will increase by the end of 2024, while **16%** predicted they will decrease. Another **36%** said sales will stay the same.

Will sales change by the end of 2024?



For more information about Current Consulting Group's 2024 Drug Testing Industry Survey or to become a corporate sponsor of the 2025 survey, please contact info@currentconsultinggroup.com.

Drug Test Prices and Processes

Drug testing has always been a price-sensitive business. Some employers make important decisions about how to conduct drug testing and which providers to use based almost exclusively on price. And whether or not that is wise may be irrelevant, given that most providers admit drug test prices are increasing.

When asked, “Have you increased drug testing prices to your clients?” just over three-quarters said yes, or they’re about to do so. In the survey, **55%** said they have already increased prices in 2024 and **21%** said they haven’t raised prices yet, but plan to do so before the end of the year. Only **24%** said they have no plans to increase prices this year.

And what is driving these price increases? Nearly three-quarters (**71%**) blamed laboratories and another **25%** said collectors have raised their prices. Only **5%** said MROs have increased prices.

Another challenge faced by many has to do with lab-turnaround times. When asked, “In the last year, have your lab result turnaround times changed?” **38%** said it is taking longer to get results from labs, versus only **9%** that indicated it’s taking less time. That said, **52%** said turnaround times are the same, which doesn’t necessarily mean they’re good, just that they haven’t gone up or down.

[CONTINUE READING HERE >](#)



Legal Marijuana & Drug Testing

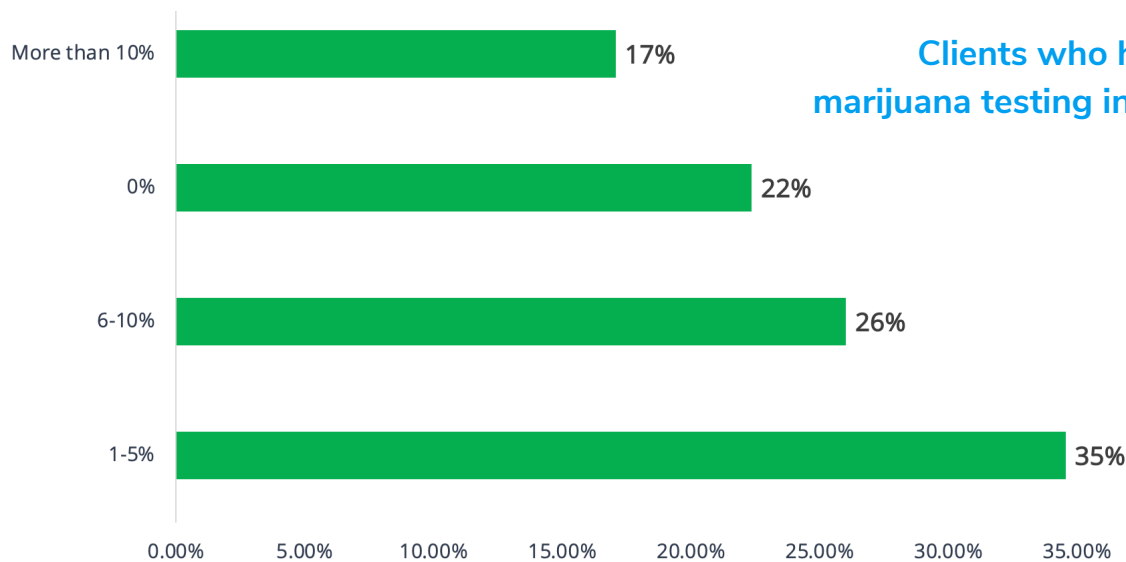
How many states have legalized marijuana? Most of them, right? And even if a state has not legalized marijuana, do they enforce marijuana laws? And in those states, do employers conduct drug testing?

The legalization of marijuana has not been kind to the drug testing industry in the last several years, and that trend is ongoing. Nearly **17%** of respondents in Current Consulting Group's 26th Annual Drug Testing Industry Survey said the legalization of marijuana is having a negative effect on drug testing sales while about **39%** said it is having an effect on sales, but it is minimal. Conversely, **32%** said legal marijuana has had no effect on sales.

When asked, "What percentage of your clients have dropped marijuana from their drug test panel in the last 12 months?" **22.4%** said that none of their clients have dropped marijuana. However, **35%** said between **1%** and **5%** of their clients have stopped testing for marijuana, **26%** said between **6%** and **10%** have, and **17%** said more than **10%**.



Clients who have dropped marijuana testing in the last year



Continues on the next page

Legal Marijuana & Drug Testing Cont.

When asked, “Why have clients dropped marijuana from their drug-test panel?” the responses were as follows:

- They believe it makes it harder to hire people: **61.83%**
- To avoid the risk of a legal challenge from an applicant or employee: **43.57%**
- It’s not legal to test for marijuana in their state(s): **33.61%**
- They don’t want to know who uses marijuana: **12.03%**
- They don’t believe it is right to test for marijuana: **8.30%**
- They don’t believe testing for marijuana makes the workplace safer: **7.88%**
- They probably use marijuana and don’t want to be hypocrites: **6.22%**
- We discourage our clients from testing for marijuana: **1.66%**
- Don’t know: **9.54%**

Most survey participants believe this trend of dropping marijuana from drug tests will continue, as **70%** said yes versus **30%** who said no. More than **43%** said they do not believe companies that drop marijuana will ever reinstate testing for marijuana and **23%** were not sure. That said, **17%** believe most, if not all, of these companies will reinstate testing for marijuana and another **16.7%** said some but not many will reinstate it.

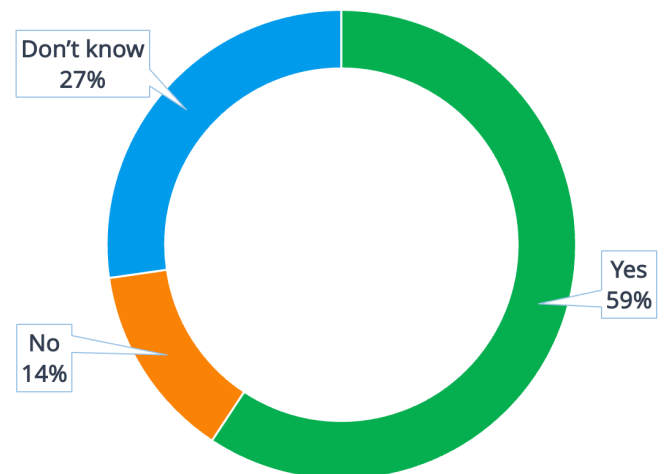
i. Workforce Drug Test Cheating Surged in 2023, Finds Quest Diagnostics Drug Testing Index Analysis of Nearly 10 Million Drug Tests. May 2024. <https://newsroom.questdiagnostics.com/2024-05-15-Workforce-Drug-Test-Cheating-Surged-in-2023,-Finds-Quest-Diagnostics-Drug-Testing-Index-Analysis-of-Nearly-10-Million-Drug-Tests>

ii. Cannabis Use During the Workday. Hound Labs. April 2023. <https://houndlabs.com/2024/02/29/survey-offers-new-insights-about-cannabis-use-at-work/>

The negative consequences of not testing for marijuana are clear in numerous reports, including the 2024 Quest Diagnostics Drug Testing Indexⁱ and a 2024 survey of employed marijuana users conducted by Hound Labs.ⁱⁱ

In the CCG survey, **59%** of participants said they believe the decision to discontinue testing for marijuana encourages employees to consume marijuana before work. Only **14%** said it does not and **27%** said they weren’t sure. The Hound Labs survey aligns with this finding. Among the employed marijuana users who participated in that survey, **31%** admitted to using marijuana while on their way to the workplace. Additionally, **48%** admitted to using marijuana at work, including during breaks as well as while actively working. The survey also found that **60%** of participants work for companies that do not conduct drug tests.

Has dropping marijuana encouraged its use?



[CONTINUE READING HERE >](#)

California & Washington

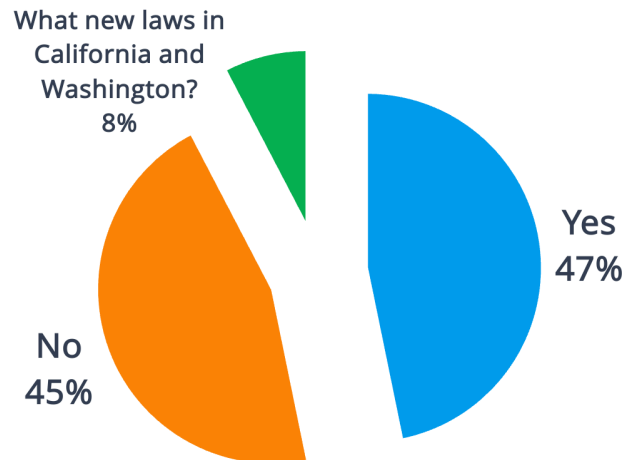
Last year's biggest development was the issuance of final oral fluid testing regulations from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT). This year, the single most captivating issue so far involves new laws in California and Washington that, among other things, restrict traditional drug testing methods such as urine testing that solely reveal the presence of the non-psychoactive metabolite of cannabis.

However, both laws contain language that suggests that drug testing methods that reveal $\Delta 9$ -tetrahydrocannabinol, the psychoactive form of THC often referred to as the "parent" drug, is acceptable. This has resulted in many employers and drug testing providers turning to alternative testing methods that meet the laws' new requirements, most notably lab-based and rapid-result oral fluid and, to a lesser extent, breath THC testing, both of which are permitted in each state.

According to the survey, among participants' clients that have decided to continue testing for marijuana in California and Washington, **62.5%** have added or switched to oral fluid testing, while **7.5%** have added or switched to breath THC testing. "The new laws in California and Washington are already changing how employers look at drug testing," said Todd Bailey, founder of Premier Biotech. "This year's drug testing industry survey shows that companies in those states are starting to adjust their drug testing programs, switching primarily to oral fluid testing. And we'll likely see more states pass similar laws, which will result in more companies switching to oral fluid testing."

Nearly **47%** of drug testing providers in Current Consulting Group's 2024 Drug Testing Industry Survey indicated they have clients who are subject to the new laws in California and Washington. Another **45%** said they do not. Nearly **8%** said they were unaware of these new laws. Further, **67%** said they have had clients discontinue testing for marijuana in light of the new laws; **33%** said they have not.

Clients subject to new drug testing laws?



Continues on the next page

California & Washington Cont.

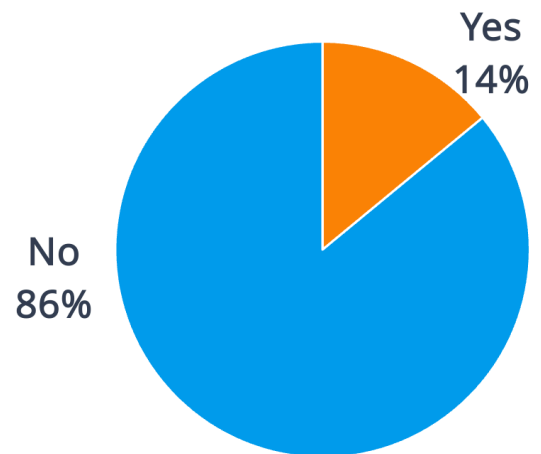
Premier Biotech's OralTox was voted the #1 recognized brand in rapid-result oral fluid testing in the brand-name recognition section of Current Consulting Group's industry survey. "It is important for drug testing providers to understand that these two laws do not prohibit employers from testing applicants and employees for marijuana," Bailey said. "However, they require employers to use testing methods that reveal parent THC, which is possible with oral fluid testing."

A relatively new technology, THC breath testing, also detects parent THC and is also an option in California and Washington. "There is a growing list of companies throughout the country that have started using breath THC testing in conjunction with other testing methods," said Aaron Atkinson, Vice President of Marketing for Hound Labs, a leading provider of breath THC tests. "In today's age of legal marijuana, advanced drug testing methods such as THC breathalyzers make it possible for employers to comply with legal marijuana laws without compromising their commitment to workplace safety."

When survey participants were asked if they were advising clients to stop testing for marijuana in these states, **14%** said yes and **86%** said no. However, suggesting to clients that they drop marijuana from their drug-test panel is unnecessary. Drug testing providers and employers should be aware of the following facts in both states:

1. Drug testing is still permitted.
2. Testing for marijuana is still permitted.
3. Prohibiting employees from being under the influence of marijuana while on the job is still permitted.

Have you advised clients to stop testing for marijuana in CA and WA?



Both states use similar language in their laws to clarify that their laws do not prohibit an employer from relying on "scientifically valid" drug screening "conducted through methods that do not screen for non-psychoactive cannabis metabolites." This strongly suggests that neither law was intended to stop employers from testing for marijuana, but rather to direct how testing for marijuana can occur.

The fact that oral fluid testing is "scientifically valid" was confirmed in 2019 when the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) issued final guidelines for lab-based oral fluid testing of federal employees.

[CONTINUE READING HERE >](#)



Drug Test Cheating

Efforts to subvert drug tests, often referred to as drug test cheating, continue to be a problem for providers.

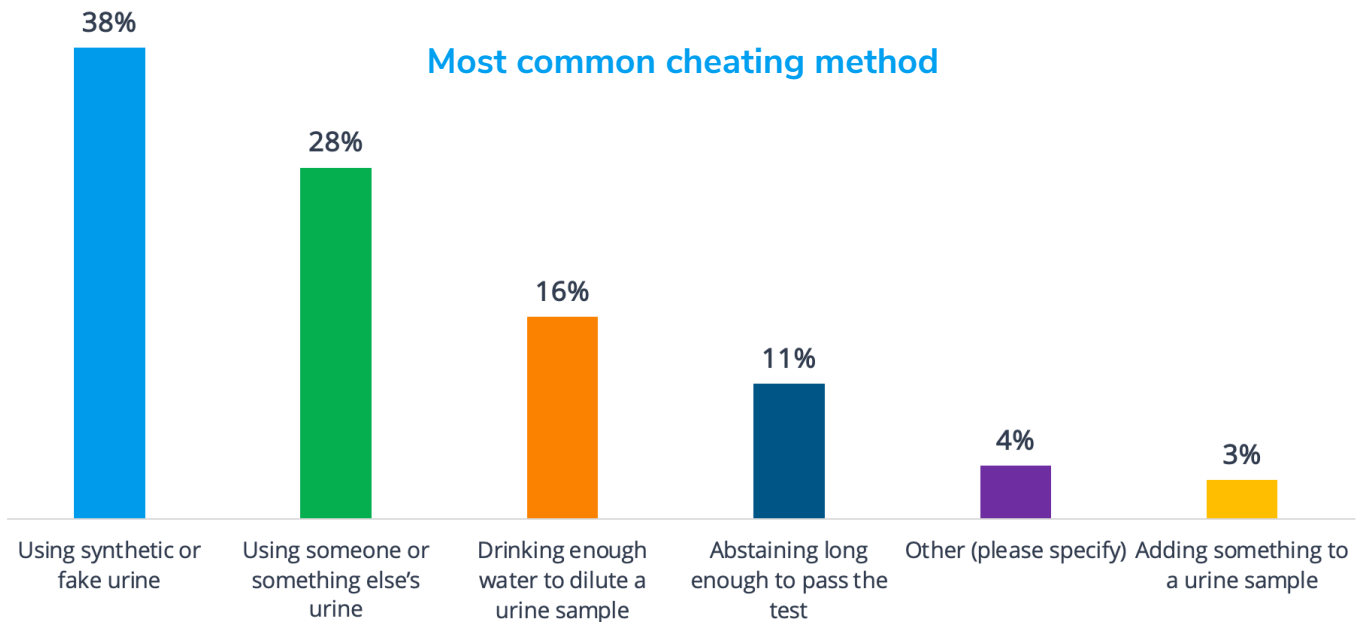
In Current Consulting Group's 2024 Drug Testing Industry Survey, when asked, "Do you believe some people are cheating on their drug tests?" **82.4%** of drug testing providers said yes, people try to cheat to pass a drug test, while only about **8%** said there's no cheating going on. Another **10%** were not sure.

"The sad truth is drug-test cheating has become a booming industry," said Brian Drake, Vice President of Sales & Marketing at Wondfo USA.

"A quick search of the internet will yield thousands of websites and blogs featuring advice on how to subvert a urine drug test as well as products such as fake urine to help people with drugs in their system pass a drug test."

"At the same time, it is virtually impossible to find valid products or useful advice on how to subvert an oral fluid test," Drake continued. "If an employer is concerned about the costs that drug-test cheating adds to his or her drug testing budget, oral fluid testing is a valid alternative because common cheating methods simply do not work with oral fluid testing."

[CONTINUE READING HERE >](#)



Want to see the 2024 Drug Testing Industry Survey results?

RESULTS



Participate in our Survey!

The Current Consulting Group's
**2024 Annual Employer Drug Testing
Survey** is now live.



Let's get started. >



Contact us to be **Current**

954.944.0400

CurrentConsultingGroup.com

©2024 The Current Consulting Group, LLC. All rights reserved. No portion of this data may be reproduced, retransmitted, posted on a website, or used in any manner without the written consent of the Current Consulting Group, LLC. When permission is granted to reproduce this data in any way, full attribution to the author and copyright holder are required. This information is provided for educational purposes only. Reader retains full responsibility for the use of information contained herein.