

# Driving Toward the Drug-Free Cab

One trucking leader adds Psychemedics hair testing to the mandatory DOT regimen and uncovers a full load of benefits.

› About The Client

For 50 years KLLM has been transporting perishable commodities throughout the country. Initially a truck brokerage, the company began its own fleet of equipment in 1967. Today the company is among the top three refrigerated carriers and offers OTR, Regional and Dedicated services to a major portion of 48 states and Mexico on a daily basis. KLLM serves the needs of both dry freight customers and those requiring temperature-controlled services.

› Background

*A drug-free cab starts with better hiring.*

As a member of the Trucking Alliance, whose mission is to advance safety reforms that can achieve zero large truck crash fatalities, KLLM has long recognized that a drug-free fleet is a safer fleet. The company also recognized that *hiring* drug-free was the first step toward a drug-free fleet.

Implementation

Program Results

Operating 3,000 trucks for a broad and diverse set of customers, the company balances the constant need to recruit and train new drivers with an unwavering commitment to public safety. After hearing from other Alliance members that urine tests missed 9 out of 10 users identified by a hair test, KLLM added Psychemedics to their pre-employment hiring process with several objectives in mind.

- › Improving the quality of their driver team
- › Reducing their exposure to incidents and associated claims
- › Reinforcing customer relationships by visibly pursuing a drug-free cab
- › Recovering wasted recruiting time and money on undesirable applicants

Extending the mandatory DOT testing regimen to include Psychemedics hair testing immediately yielded results; 14% of driver applicants and up to 20% of driving school applicants tested positive for drug use. With that data in hand, the company implemented a proactive approach to educate prospective drivers and the driver population at large that a Psychemedics hair test was an employment prerequisite. The results speak for themselves.

On average **9 of 10** drug users that are identified by a **hair test** are missed by a DOT urine test.

*Best practice:* The pre-employment drug testing program is clearly communicated up-front by all job applicants.

*"With urine testing, virtually nobody fails. We wanted extra insurance that we would keep lifestyle users out of our cabs. There is peace of mind knowing you have built everything you can to hire better."*

Wilson Risinger  
VP Safety, KLLM



> Implementation

Applicants are alerted in the first phone call that a **hair test will be required.**

The testing program was implemented as a pre-employment test, and with the ultimate goal of deterring drug users from even applying for a job as a KLLM driver. On the first phone call, recruiters alert applicants that a Psychemedics drug test using hair is required. The test is administered in company-owned or contracted test centers at their school or near hiring locations. KLLM has opened its own clinic in the company's Jackson Mississippi home.

> Program Results

The program has improved quality of the hiring pipeline, **helped avoid costs of bad hires** by deterring drug users from applying, and reduced the number of applicants rejected later in the process.

KLLM had been conditioned by other Trucking Alliance members to expect a very high failure rate when they first initiated the pre-employment test using Psychemedics, but to also expect the rates to come down. Those predictions proved true with 14-15% of driver applicants and 20% of those applying for driving school failing the drug test. But as word got out about the new pre-employment test, positive rates fell to 6%-7% within a year. Many users opt out of the application process when recruiters alert them to the hair test and there is now a general awareness in the driver community that KLLM is testing with hair. One company Vice President credits this to the threat of guaranteed **detection** being such a great **deterrent**.

Although there was initial concern that the test would negatively impact recruiting, the company says that after a short period of adjustment there has been no issue with staffing. In fact, rejection rates for drivers that have been passed along for hire have fallen, a measurable indicator of program success.

With per-driver hiring costs ranging from \$4000-\$7000 across the industry, KLLM is impacting costs at the very front end of the process and avoiding costly hiring mistakes. All while driving to that ultimate objective, a drug-free cab.

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**Hair Testing Pioneer & Leader**

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For over three decades, Psychemedics Corporation has been the world's leading drug testing company using hair. Psychemedics' patented hair analysis technology is trusted by Fortune 500 companies, police forces, courts, schools and parents all over the world.

