



907 Substance Abuse for Lawyers

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Faculty Biographies

Sean Carter

Sean Carter is a lawyer, syndicated columnist, author, public speaker, and trainer from Meza, Arizona. Mr. Carter writes a humor column for lawyers that appear weekly in the ABA e-Report and a weekly syndicated legal humor column entitled *Lawpsided*. *Lawpsided* has been published in newspapers in 30 states and on countless web sites. Mr. Carter is also the author of *If It Does Not Fit, Must You Acquit?: Your Humorous Guide to the Law*. Finally, Mr. Carter is a public speaker and trainer. Currently, he presents programs to more than 100 audiences each year. His topics run the gamut from legal education to speaker training to motivation. However, all Mr. Carter's speeches have one thing in common - humor and lots of it. Drawing on his background as a stand-up comedian, Mr. Carter has the uncanny ability to find the humor in any topic and share it with his audience in a way that is both entertaining and powerful.

He has practiced law at major law firms in both Boston and Los Angeles, representing such clients as GNC, Experian, The Boston Beer Company, Homeside Lending, Safelite Auto Glass, and J. Crew. Most recently, he was the general counsel of NC Capital Corporation, an Irvine-based mortgage lender.

Mr. Carter earned his law degree from Harvard Law School.

DETECTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

"An ounce of detection is worth a kilo of cure."

What is Substance Abuse?

Substance abuse is the compulsive use of drugs or alcohol even in the face of negative consequences. The decisive factor is NOT the amount or frequency of consumption but rather the impact the drugs or alcohol have on the person's life.

The Scope of the Problem

18 million Americans have a drinking problem
 14.8 million Americans are "current" illicit drug users
 4 million Americans are addicted to prescription drugs

The estimated economic cost to American society for substance abuse is over \$300 billion. The cost, in terms of just lost productivity, medical claims and accidents, amounts to half of that total.

One of every 144 American adults is behind bars for a drug or alcohol-related crime. Furthermore, 25-50% of the men who commits acts of domestic violence have a substance abuse problem and substance abuse is one of the two leading factors in child mistreatment cases.

Lawyers are even at greater risk of substance abuse. For instance, it's estimated that 15% to 18% of lawyers have a drinking problem. This is compared with a 7% to 10% rate for the general population. Substance abuse is a causal factor in over 50% of all disciplinary and malpractice complaints.

Symptoms to Watch For

- Attorney shows up in the office or in court under the influence
- Attorney exhibits rude or inappropriate behavior in the office
- Attorney shows up or late or fails to report at all to work, court or appointments with clients
- Attorney's work product indicates excessive mistakes and/or neglect
- Attorney experiences legal problems (e.g., DUIs, public drunkenness, assault, domestic violence)
- Attorney experiences marital problems
- Attorney experiences financial problems

From *Lawghter is the Best Medicine* by Sean Carter

<http://www.lawhumorist.com>

SUBSTANCE ABUSE BINGO

1	5	9	13
2	6	10	14
3	7	11	15
4	8	12	16

1. Does your colleague lie about A&D use?
2. Does your colleague have trouble stopping A&D use once he/she starts?
3. Does your colleague show up to work under the influence?
4. Does your colleague avoid social interaction with peers?
5. Does your colleague behave irritably with co-workers?
6. Does your colleague's work product indicate excessive mistakes or neglect?
7. Does your colleague miss important meetings or court dates?
8. Does your colleague call in "sick" more than twice a month?
9. Has your colleague been arrested for DUI?
10. Has your colleague been arrested for public drunkenness?
11. Has your colleague been involved in a fight recently?
12. Is your colleague having "serious" marital difficulties?
13. Has your colleague been accused of malpractice?
14. Is your colleague experiencing financial difficulties?
15. Has your colleague requested to borrow money?
16. Has your colleague been having excessive car trouble?

From *Laughter is the Best Medicine* by Sean Carter

<http://www.lawhumorist.com>

PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

"He who laughs ... lasts."

The Lawpsided Three-Step Procedure to Get "High" on Laughter

1. Read a joke – Read the funnies, a humor column or your favorite humor website
2. Tell a joke – Share the funnies. Tell or send a joke to a colleague, client and even opposing counsel
3. Be a joke – Don't take life so seriously. Find the humor in all situations.

Legal Humor Sites

www.lawpsided.com
www.lawhaha.com
www.lawhumor.com

www.legalhumour.com
www.madkane.com
www.lawsongs.com

www.dumblaws.com
www.lawcomix.com
www.stus.com

Other Humor Sites

www.khaha.com
www.ajokeaday.com
www.jokes2go.com
www.punoftheday.com

www.todayschuckle.com
www.comics.com
www.davebarry.com
www.wbrucecameron.com

www.lewisgrizzard.com
www.thenetwits.com
www.bobpayne.com
www.theonion.com

TREATMENT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Resources for Lawyers

Program	Phone Number	Website
Alcoholics Anonymous	(212) 870-3400	www.aa.org
ABA Standing Committee on Substance Abuse	(202) 662-1784	www.abanet.org/subabuse/home.html
AL-ANON	(888) 425-2666	www.AL-Anon-Alateen.org
California Lawyer Assistance Program	(800) 341-0572	www.calbar.ca.gov
Drug Help	(800) DRUG-HELP	www.drughelp.org
National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information	(800) 729-6686	www.health.org
Narcotics Anonymous	(818) 773-9999	www.na.org

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