

### **A sample letter to healthcare facility partners:**

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), a 100% smoke-free and tobacco-free campus policy is the most comprehensive and provides the best health and safety benefits for employees, patients, visitors, and the public. Your organization's policy will be clearer and easier to enforce if it is applied in the most comprehensive manner possible, with no exceptions.

Because each organization has its own policy needs and requirements, this document is intended to provide a menu of considerations that may be used to help you achieve a clear and comprehensive tobacco-free policy.

In order to meet the healthcare facility tobacco policy benchmark criteria, the policy should include the following elements:

- ✓ Description, purpose, and/or rationale for the policy.
- ✓ Prohibits tobacco use on physical (hospital, clinic, or office) premises (all facilities owned, leased, or rented by the organization, including parking lots).
- ✓ Discusses any physical boundaries of the policy, which should be the boundaries of the facility (does not include designated smoking areas).
- ✓ Prohibits tobacco use in personal vehicles while on the physical premises.
- ✓ Comprehensive definitions of products covered under the policy should include all types of smoking and smokeless tobacco products.
  - Includes smoking devices (e-cigarettes) regardless of how nicotine is derived (tobacco versus synthetic nicotine).
- ✓ Encourages/requires referrals to tobacco cessation resources and/or assistance.
- ✓ Encourages/requires enforcement for violations. Includes compliance guidelines, responsibilities, and consequences.
- ✓ Incorporates policy review guidelines (e.g., standardized timeframe for revisiting policy to ensure quality and effectiveness of monitoring and enforcement).

**Sample Healthcare Facility Tobacco-Free Policy – Long Version**

**POLICY MANUAL SECTION – ENVIRONMENT OF CARE**

**Effective Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE: TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

**This is a new policy in the (organization name) Policy and Procedure Manual.**

**PLEASE NOTE: This policy supersedes all agency policies referencing tobacco or smoking.**

**I. PURPOSE/ RATIONALE**

It is the policy of (name) to prohibit smoking, or the use or sale of, any tobacco products on the (name) campus/workplace.

As a health care provider committed to the health and safety of staff, patients, physicians, visitors, and business associates, (name) is taking a leadership role on the major public health issue of tobacco use. To promote (name's) commitment to public health and safety and to reduce the health and safety risks to those served and employed at the workplace, all of (name's) facilities, campuses, and properties are tobacco-free environments as of (date). No smoking of cigarettes, cigars, or pipes, or use of chewing tobacco, e-cigarettes in any form, or any other tobacco product will be permitted in facilities or on properties of (name) on or after that date.

This policy is applicable to all staff on the (name) campus whether they are employees of (name) or other agencies, to medical staff, visitors, students, volunteers, vendors, lessees and contractors. This policy is applicable to all inpatients and outpatients. A ban on tobacco use does not take away an individual's rights as there is no right to smoke or use tobacco in Texas. (Name) does not require staff, patients, or visitors to stop using tobacco; however, it is required that people do not smoke or use other tobacco products on this [or on all] organization's physical sites including during work time.

The purpose of this policy is to describe how the tobacco-free workplace requirements will be implemented and enforced.

## DEFINITIONS

**Option 1 Tobacco or Nicotine Delivery Products** is defined as: cigarettes, pipes, pipe tobacco, tobacco substitutes (e.g., clove cigarettes), chewing tobacco, cigars, e-cigarettes.

**Option 2 Tobacco or Nicotine Delivery Products** is defined as: cigarettes, cigars, pipe, pipes or rolling tobacco, tobacco substitutes (e.g. clove cigarettes), chewing or spit tobacco, or any type of electronic smoking device.

**Smoking** is defined as: inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying or possessing any lighted or heated tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, hookah, and other lighted or heated combustible plant material. Smoking also includes the use of electronic smoking devices (even if synthetic nicotine is being used).

**Electronic Smoking Device** is defined as: any product containing or delivering nicotine or any other substance intended for human consumption that can be used by a person to simulate smoking through inhalation of vapor or aerosol from the produce the product. The term includes any such device, whether manufactured, distributed, marketed, or sold as an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, e-hookah, vape pen, nicotine inhaler, or under any other product name or descriptor.

**Tobacco Paraphernalia** is defined as: cigarette papers or wrappers, pipes, holders of smoking materials of all types, cigarette rolling machines, and any other item designed for the smoking, preparation, storing, or consumption of tobacco products.

**Nicotine Replacement Products/ Nicotine Replacement Therapy** is defined as: treatment that uses special products to give various doses of nicotine to help stop cravings and relieve withdrawal symptoms that occur when a person is trying to stop use of tobacco products. These products include nicotine gum, nicotine lozenges, nicotine patch, nicotine inhaler, and nicotine nasal spray.

**Campus/Workplace** is defined as: facilities or properties including but not limited to patient care buildings, clinics, facilities, office buildings, parking lots, (name)-owned vehicles, or property leased or rented out to other entities. This policy applies regardless of whether a (name) facility or property is owned and whether or not the other tenants follow similar guidelines. Employees and patients at off-site patient activities shall not use tobacco products.

**Premises** is defined as: all of (name) owned and leased buildings and grounds, parking lots and ramps, organization-owned vehicles, and private vehicles parked on organization property.

## **II. ACCOUNTABILITY**

It is the responsibility of all staff members to enforce (name's) tobacco-free environment policy by encouraging their colleagues, patients, visitors, and others to comply with the policy. Supervisors are responsible for implementing and enforcing (name's) tobacco-free environment policy. The community, staff, patients and visitors will be informed of the policy through a variety of communication methods.

## **III. PROCEDURE**

### **GENERAL POLICY PROVISIONS**

1. No tobacco products or related paraphernalia such as lighters and matches shall be used, sold, or bartered anywhere on the (name) campus and may be possessed only in locked personal vehicles.
2. Signs declaring this campus/workplace "tobacco free" shall be posted at the (name) campus/workplace entrances and other conspicuous places, including areas that were previously designated as smoking areas.
3. (Name's) employees and other employees who work on the (name) campus will be advised of the provisions of this policy during New Employee Orientation.
4. (Name) will post this policy in employee common areas and in the (name's) New Employee Orientation Handbook.

### **A. Employees, Volunteers, Physicians, Students and Contract Workers**

1. Respectful enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of all of (name's) employees.
2. Employees, students, medical staff, volunteers, vendors, lessees, and contractors are expected to comply with this policy.
3. This policy will be explained to employees during New Employee Orientation.
4. Job announcements for all positions on the (name's) campus/workplace will display a notice that (name) has a tobacco-free work environment policy.
5. Employees are prohibited from smoking or using other tobacco products during any and all parts of their paid work shift, excluding breaks. Employees may not smoke or use other tobacco products in their private vehicles while the vehicle is on (name's) grounds. Employees are prohibited from trespassing and/or occupying adjacent properties for reasons such as to utilize tobacco products.

6. Employees who encounter staff or visitors who are violating the tobacco policy are encouraged to politely explain the policy. For staff in violation, they are expected to report the violation to the person's supervisor, if known.
7. Staff who fail to adhere to this policy or supervisors who fail to hold their employees accountable may be subject to progressive discipline culminating in corrective or disciplinary action as defined in (name's) Human Resources and Staff policies.

#### **B. Patients (or Clients)**

1. Inpatients and outpatients are prohibited from smoking or using tobacco on campus.
2. All patients admitted to (name) will be assessed for history of tobacco use and the need for interventions related to nicotine addiction, such as nicotine replacement and cessation education.
3. Patients may not possess any tobacco-related items on the campus except in their locked personal vehicle.
4. Employees who encounter patients who are violating the tobacco policy are encouraged to politely explain the policy, and report the violation to the patient's treatment team, if known.
5. Violation of this policy by patients is a treatment issue to be addressed by the treatment team.

#### **C. Visitors**

1. Signs will be posted at campus/workplace entrances and in selected locations inside and outside of the facility.
2. Employees who encounter a visitor who is violating the tobacco policy are encouraged to politely explain the policy to the visitor.
3. Visitors who become agitated or unruly or repeatedly refuse to comply when informed of the tobacco-free campus policy may be reported to (name of appropriate department or personnel). (The identified department or personnel) will respond to the situation as appropriate, according to their professional judgment and need to maintain a safe environment.

#### **D. Outside Groups**

Outside groups who use (name's) facilities for meetings will be advised of this policy. Violation of the policy will result in the rescinding of approval for the group to meet on the campus/workplace.

**E. Guidelines for Employee Enforcement**

Violation examples	First Offense	Second Offense	Third Offense	Fourth Offense
Smoking outside on property but complies with request to stop.	The supervisor must have verifiable reports of the infractions and/or have witnessed the infraction directly.	The supervisor must have verifiable reports of the infractions and/or have witnessed the infraction directly.	The supervisor must have verifiable reports of the infractions and/or have witnessed the infraction directly.	The supervisor must have verifiable reports of the infractions and/or have witnessed the infraction directly.
Smoking outside on property and refuses to comply with policy.	Verbal intervention with employee. Review policy and perimeter of the campus, give clear expectation it is not to reoccur.	Repeat first offense interventions and document all discussion in a supervisory log.	Present the employee with a Memorandum of Expectation or a Performance Improvement Plan clearly stating the expectation and consequences if the policy is violated again.	Document the new infraction and forward with previous documentation to the appointing authority for consideration of a meeting for corrective or disciplinary action that may affect pay, status, or tenure and possible termination.
Smoking in personal vehicle on campus.				
Excessive absences from the workplace during assigned shift (extra breaks, longer lunch breaks, etc.).	Review any cessation education available and possible assistance with nicotine replacement and alternative therapies for difficulties with compliance while at work.	Refer also to the first verbal intervention and make the expectation clear in writing. Sign the log and have the employee sign that this was reviewed and discussed with them.	Clarify that the behavior will affect the performance rating and may result in further corrective or disciplinary action.	
Employee's clothing smells strongly of tobacco smoke.		Again, review the assistance available to comply at work.		

Staff who witness infractions of any kind are asked to remind the person of the tobacco-free campus policy. If the offender is a client/patient, please report the offense to the treatment team, if known. If the offender is staff, please report the offense to the supervisor if known.

Leadership Signature/s: \_\_\_\_\_

**Sample Healthcare Facility Tobacco-Free Policy – Short Version**

**POLICY MANUAL SECTION – ENVIRONMENT OF CARE**

Effective Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**TITLE: TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT**

**This is a new policy in the (organization name) Policy and Procedure Manual.**

**PURPOSE/ RATIONALE**

(Name) recognizes the hazards caused by tobacco use on the health of our citizens. Accordingly, we shall implement the following policy to provide a tobacco-free environment for all employees, patients and visitors on the property owned, leased, or operated by (Name).

**POLICY**

It is the policy of (Name) to provide a tobacco-free workplace and environment, prohibiting the use of all tobacco products and electronic smoking devices on premises owned by the (Hospital, Clinic, or Office), on (Hospital, Clinic, or Office) grounds (leased or owned), outpatient facilities, business entities, vehicles parked on facility grounds, in parking lots and ramps, and in all (Hospital, Clinic, or Office)-owned vehicles. Staff, physicians, inpatients, hospital-based outpatients, visitors, students, vendors and volunteers are prohibited from using tobacco on all (Hospital, Clinic, or Office) premises. Staff members are prohibited from trespassing and/or occupying adjacent properties for reasons such as to utilize tobacco products. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in personal or private vehicles if the vehicle is on (Hospital, Clinic, or Office)-owned property. Violations of this policy by staff could lead to disciplinary action, up to and including termination from employment.

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**Premises** is defined as: all of (name) owned and leased buildings and grounds, parking lots and ramps, organization-owned vehicles, and private vehicles parked on organization property.

## **PROCEDURES**

1. Staff members, physicians, inpatients, outpatients, visitors, students, vendors, contractors, subcontractors, volunteers and others are prohibited from using all tobacco products, and electronic smoking devices on all (Name) premises.
2. Signs will be posted at all entrances and displayed in prominent, visible areas regarding use of tobacco products in accordance with this policy.



3. Organization leadership will orient staff members to the tobacco-free policy. Human Resources will also inform employment candidates of this policy during interviews and in new staff orientation. Inpatients will receive information regarding the tobacco-free policy upon admission. Physicians should notify patients prior to their appointment or admission that the organization has a tobacco-free policy.
4. Assistance, (via cessation programs, nicotine replacement therapy, quit line referrals, etc), will be provided to individuals who wish to stop smoking/using tobacco.
5. If a visitor or patient adamantly refuses to comply with this policy, organization police/security may be called. Visitors who refuse to comply with this policy may be asked to vacate the premises. In the case of a patient failure to comply, the treatment team should be notified, if known.
6. In the case of staff failure to comply with this policy, their supervisor should be notified, if known. Employees who fail to comply with this policy will be subject to corrective action. Verbal counseling, initial written warning, final written warning, suspension, and termination are progressive corrective actions that will be followed if violations continue.
7. Staff members are also expected to help enforce the policy for anyone on (name's) premises, including other staff, patients, and any visitors (including but not limited to contractors).

Leadership Signature/s: \_\_\_\_\_