

## **Sample Hospital Tobacco Free Environment Policy**

### Purpose:

It is the policy of this Hospital to promote the health, well being, and safety of the patients, visitors, and employees while on the Hospital campus.

Tobacco is a proven health and safety hazard, both to the tobacco user and nonsmokers who are exposed to secondhand smoke, carrying very serious health risks. It has been proven to be the leading cause of preventable death in the United States, and is inconsistent with our healthcare mission.

The Hospital is committed to:

- Create and provide a safe and healthy environment for all of its patients, employees, volunteers, and visitors.
- Make no tobacco use the norm on hospital property.
- Encourage staff to present a positive image to the public by not using tobacco on the hospital property.
- Assist both patients and employees who wish to quit using tobacco products.

### Definition:

Tobacco use refers to the use of any tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco products.

### Policy:

The use of tobacco products is prohibited:

- In all areas within hospital buildings;
- On all hospital property and grounds, whether owned or leased, including parking lots and adjacent sidewalks [They may need to check whether they have the authority to extend the policy to sidewalks.];
- In all vehicles owned, leased, or rented by the hospital; and
- In all employee vehicles when parked on hospital property.

In order to further support a no tobacco use norm, no tobacco products will be sold in the hospital.

This policy covers all individuals working, visiting, or receiving medical care within the boundaries of this hospital property. This policy also includes vendors and contractors.

General Policy Provisions:

1. No tobacco products shall be sold anywhere on hospital property.
2. Signs stating that the entire hospital campus is tobacco-free will be prominently posted at all campus and building entrances and in other conspicuous places. All ash receptacles will be removed from the hospital grounds.
3. The hospital will post this policy in employee common areas. Supervisors will be responsible for notifying their employees of the provisions of this policy and assisting with enforcement. New employees will be advised of the provisions of this policy during new employee orientation. This policy will be communicated to the public through signs, announcements, newsletters, advertisements, media events, and the hospital website. All employees are authorized and encouraged to communicate this policy with courtesy and diplomacy to patients and visitors.
4. Employees may attend tobacco cessation counseling free of charge (during paid time off). [Consider stating how this offer will be publicized to employees.]
5. Employees who remain tobacco free for one year may be reimbursed by the hospital for any purchase of nicotine replacement therapies (proof of purchase and receipts required). [How will quit status be confirmed? They may want to consider providing free NRT up front instead, if they can afford it, maybe through the employee occupational health clinic. Requiring employees to quit first and then reimbursing them retroactively may have limited impact in prompting employee quit attempts. Consider referring employees to the state quitline and to the national network of quitlines (1-800-Quit Now, 1-800-784-8669). Finally, again, consider stating how this offer will be publicized.]
6. Employees smoking or using tobacco products on the hospital campus are in violation of the stated policy and subject to corrective action, as follows:

- A. First offense – verbal warning
- B. Second offense – written warning
- C. Third offense – may result in termination

[Consider stating how employee offenses will be documented.]

7. Violations of this policy by volunteers, students, or contracted employees will be addressed through the existing Human Resources Policies.

Employees will be educated on the policy and opportunities for cessation counseling [assistance?] throughout the corrective action process. [Again, consider combining education with making medications available and referring employees to the state quitline.]

8. Security staff are responsible for approaching employees, patients, and visitors who are violating this policy to remind them of the policy and to complete an incident report for supervisory follow up.

10. Patients and visitors will be notified of this policy prior to arrival whenever possible or during the admission process.

[Consider combining items #11 and #12.]

11. Standing orders [Prescriptions?] approved by the medical staff may be requested for a nicotine dependent patient. Recommended:

[Check dosages recommended in the PHS cessation guideline.]

- 21 mg nicotine patch for a patient who smokes more than one pack per day
- 14 mg nicotine patch for a patient who smokes a pack a day or less
- Anti-anxiety drug (i.e. Xanax 0.25 mg) should be considered.  
[Consider prescribing bupropion SR in place of Xanax.]

12. Patients will be advised by a nurse or physician regarding cessation counseling, nicotine replacement therapy and the policy. A patient who insists on using a tobacco product (after all other means of care and counseling have been exhausted) will be asked to leave the hospital grounds and to sign an AMA [consider spelling out what this stands for] form. The supervisor [which supervisor?] and the attending physician will be notified. The patient will be escorted to the door of the building but will not be

escorted outside. Appropriate forms will be completed for the patient's record and actions will be documented.

[Here or above, consider including language about assessing the tobacco use status of all patients upon intake and about referring patients to community cessation resources.]

13. Visitors will be informed of the policy and offered alternatives to using tobacco products on campus (for example, sugar-free hard candy, using a meditation room, social service visit). Visitors who refuse to comply with the policy should be reported to security for immediate follow-up action. Under rare circumstances, visitors may be allowed to smoke in their own vehicles only when all other options have been exhausted. Noncompliant visitors may be escorted off the property by security. [The policy description on p. 1 states that tobacco use in employee vehicles only. Does the policy also apply to tobacco use in the personal vehicles of visitors and others? If so, this should be stated explicitly. My sense is that this provision could be difficult to enforce for non-employees and could cause a public relations backlash.]

14. Neighboring properties will be notified of the new policy and its effective date, and provided with a contact in the security department to approach regarding concerns such as loitering and littering.

15. Any questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the Chair of the Hospital Safety Committee.