

businesses

AN INCREASING NUMBER OF BUSINESSES ARE GOING SMOKE-FREE VOLUNTARILY BECAUSE SMOKE-FREE ESTABLISHMENTS ARE MORE APPEALING TO CUSTOMERS AND EMPLOYEES. THE MAJORITY OF NORTH CAROLINIANS SUPPORT SMOKING RESTRICTIONS, SO PROVIDING A SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT IS A WISE BUSINESS STRATEGY.

Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke

- There is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke.¹
- An estimated 35,000 deaths per year are attributed to heart disease as a result of short- and long-term exposure to secondhand smoke.²
- The CDC warns that all patients at risk for coronary heart disease or with known coronary artery disease should avoid all indoor environments that permit smoking.³
- Regular exposure to secondhand smoke may increase an individual's chance of stroke by up to eighty percent.⁴
- Each year secondhand smoke kills an estimated 3,000 adult nonsmokers from lung cancer.⁵
- 30 minutes of exposure to secondhand smoke increases cholesterol and decreases blood flow to levels similar to a full-time smoker, for up to 8-12 hours after exposure.⁶
- Secondhand smoke increases the number of asthma attacks and the severity of asthma in about 20% of the country's 2-5 million asthmatic children.⁷
- Three out of four nonsmokers have lived with smokers, and nearly half (45%) are worried that secondhand smoke might cause them serious health problems.⁵

Why should businesses be 100% SMOKE-FREE?

why not?

- To reduce maintenance cost from litter and smoke-related damage to computers, floor coverings, paint, and furnishings.
- To save money on health care costs, absenteeism and lost productivity. Employees who smoke cost their employer an average of \$4600 per year.
- To reduce the risk of legal liability for health problems due to secondhand smoke. Businesses that allow indoor smoking may be legally liable for employee health problems related to secondhand smoke.
- To reduce insurance costs and fire risk.
- To avoid expensive ventilation system which are not an effective method of removing smoke from a room.
- To build or maintain a competitive edge. Businesses can increase their customer base by providing a smoke-free environment that is more appealing to families, youth, and people with health problems that are exacerbated by secondhand smoke.
- To support patrons and employees trying to quit. Smoke-free environments make it easier for smokers trying to kick the habit.
- To increase employee morale.
- To show customers and employees that you care about their health.

What Does 100% Smoke-free Mean?

Smoking use is prohibited by anyone (including, but not limited to, employees, patients, volunteers, visitors, physicians, residents, students, emergency medical staff, and contractors) at any place, at any time while on the grounds.

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What We Know About Smoking Bans

- Studies show an immediate improvement in worker health and indoor air quality after the implementation of smoke-free policies.^{8,9}
- The quit ratio is greater for employees working in establishments with smoking bans than for employees in workplaces without a ban.¹⁰
- Employees who work in a smoke-free environment and continue to smoke consume fewer cigarettes per day compared to employees who work in non-smoke-free environments.¹⁰

Steps For Success

- The initiative should be leadership led. Members of senior management should have responsibility and authority for coordinating the adoption and implementation of the tobacco-free policy.
- Staff involvement and employee participation is a strong determinant of compliance.
- The geographic area covered by the policy should be clearly specified, as well as the definition of 100% smoke-free.
- Accessible cessation services should be available to tobacco users.
- Stakeholders from a variety of departments should be involved in implementing the policy.
- Staff should be trained on how to actively enforce the policy and be able to refer individuals to cessation resources.
- Consistency in the communication and application of the policy is important.

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