

Clearing the Air at Workplaces with Policies to Support Tobacco-Free Living

RATIONALE

- Smoking is the number one cause of preventable death and disease in Ontario killing more than 13,000 residents every year.
- Smoking costs businesses money an estimated \$4,256 annually per employee who smokes from unsanctioned breaks and absenteeism. (Conference Board of Canada 2012)
- People who smoke are in the minority. Some 22% of adults in our region, 20 years of age or old report they smoke, and of these people 16% are daily smokers (CCHS 2014).
- Ongoing surveying of adult smokers in Simcoe Muskoka show the majority are considering quitting in the next six months.

Under the **Smoke-Free Ontario Act** all enclosed workplace, including work vehicles are No Smoking to protect workers and the public from the hazards of secondhand smoke.

If you want be a healthy workplace leader we can support you with resources to develop a comprehensive tobacco-free policy. We can also help employees who want to quit with an onsite STOP on the Road workshop that includes free nicotine replacement therapies for eligible participants. Call Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-8720 for details.

GETTING STARTED

Steps you can take to go above and beyond the minimal requirements of the legislation:

- **Suggestion 1:** Total bans on smoking/vaping on all workplace property, or at minimum, restrict the location of smoking areas outdoors (no smoking at least 9 metres of any window, door, and intake vent).
- **Suggestion 2:** Enhance existing policies to ensure all employees are protected from secondhand smoke/vape while on the job. For example, when workers enter a private home to perform their job, they have the right to be protected from exposure to SHS.
- **Suggestion 3:** Demonstrate corporate responsibility by having a policy that refuses any sponsorship from, and business with, tobacco companies.

For more resources and supports for developing workplace policies, and in providing cessation supports and resources, please see below:

- [Health Canada: Smoking Cessation in the Workplace: A Guide to Helping Your Employees Quit Smoking](#)
- [Costs of Smoking in the Workplace – The Conference Board of Canada](#), August 2013
- [Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit – Supports to Help You Quit Smoking](#)
- Call Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520

SAMPLE POLICIES

Suggestion 1: Sample Policy – Smoke-Free/Vape-Free Property

(Adapted from “Towards a Healthier Workplace: A Guidebook on Tobacco Control Policies, Sample Policy #1)

Purpose

ABC Company is committed to providing a smoke-free/vape-free working environment. There is recognition that secondhand smoke/vape from tobacco industry products including cigarettes and e-cigarettes is a significant health hazard and smoke-free/vape-free environments both protect the health of the employees and have a positive impact upon cessation efforts. In order to eliminate hazards and ensure a safe and healthy workplace, the ABC Company, buildings, and properties, shall be entirely smoke-free/vape-free effective _____.

Policy

All buildings, offices, and vehicles owned or leased by the ABC Company are “smoke-free/vape-free areas” in accordance with the *Smoke-Free Ontario Act*.

In addition to the legislation, the company prohibits the use of tobacco products on all outdoor property belonging to the company. Appropriate signage will be posted at key locations in the parking lot and at entranceways. Copies of this policy will be available to all employees.

All visitors to ABC Company are to be asked to observe the No Smoking/Vaping policy while conducting business on company property.

Those employees who smoke/vape and who want to quit tobacco products are invited to participate in the quitting supports being offered by ABC Company.

Information about these supports is available from the Human Resources Department. The success of this policy will depend on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of all employees of ABC Company. We all share responsibility for adhering to this policy.

Signature of CEO or President

Suggestion 2: Sample Policy –Tobacco-Free Workplace Protection On and Offsite

Purpose

Company ABC is committed to providing a working environment that is free of all tobacco products for all employees, volunteers, and students. This policy extends the same protection that the Smoke-Free Ontario Act provides to home healthcare workers and to all Company ABC employees when providing services in clients’ homes.

Policy

All employees have the right to ask a person not to smoke/vape in their presence while they are providing services.

When a person refuses to comply with the request not to smoke/vape, employees have the right to leave a location due to the presence of secondhand smoke/vape without providing further services – unless doing so would present an immediate, serious danger to the health of any person.

Procedure

When an employee is making arrangements to provide services in a client's home, the client will be informed that there must be no use of tobacco industry products by anyone in the home during the time that the services are being provided. If there is evidence of active smoking/vaping in the home at the time of the visit, the employee has the right to leave.

If a person refuses to comply with the request not to smoke, the employee will follow the following procedure:

1. Notify their supervisor/manager within 30 minutes, or as soon as reasonably possible of the following if applicable:
 - a) That the worker has left;
 - b) Whether an appropriate person is present and available to care for the person to whom the services were being provided or were to be provided;
 - c) If the person to whom the services were being provided or were to be provided would require services in the next 24 hours;
 - d) In what situation the person to whom the services were being provided or were to be provided was when the employee left; and
 - e) Whether there are any unusual circumstances and if so, what they are.
2. In cases involving service coordination, the employee needs to notify appropriate agencies as soon as possible that the service was not performed, if applicable.
3. In cases of ongoing service disruptions, the employee is to work with the client to find viable solutions (change of location, etc.), if applicable.

Signature of CEO or President

Suggestion 3: Sample Policy – Corporate Policy on the Exclusion of Tobacco Industry Sponsorship

Purpose

Tobacco industry products will kill one out of every two long term users. This epidemic is courtesy of a legal industry selling a legal product. Its legitimacy was established more than 50 years ago, before research unequivocally showed that tobacco was a killer. We now know that while it may be a legal product the industry is not ethical or moral.

It is important to know that the tobacco industry continually attempts to buy legitimacy by providing corporate sponsorship funds and donations.

By refusing to accept sponsorship from the tobacco industry and any company doing business for or with the tobacco industry, you are refusing to align your company with an industry whose strategies and tactics divert attention from the truth about their products.

Policy

Throughout the process of securing corporate sponsorship, Company ABC must retain its credibility in the eyes of the public. Potential risks associated with corporate sponsorship may include: loss of credibility should the public view the sponsor as inappropriate; perceptions of favoritism to sponsors in the application of legislative duty; perceptions of conflict of interest.

The ABC Company will consider a corporate sponsor where the moral integrity and interests of the sponsor are aligned with interests of the ABC Company and the image of Company ABC is maintained or enhanced.

Sponsorship may occur in many ways: a financial donation, production of materials, free or at-cost distribution of materials, publicity, meeting space, prizes, supplies, equipment or food, expertise or organizing special events.

Procedure

When seeking sponsorship for Company ABC initiatives, staff must ensure that the following criteria's are met:

The message conveyed through the sponsorship or provision of product or services is compatible with the intent of the project.

- The sponsorship agreement is consistent with the policies, practices, or objectives of the ABC Company and of the project.
- The corporate sponsor is in good public standing and their product or service is not seen to be in conflict with the mandate of Company ABC.
- Acceptance of sponsorship from a company, whether a financial contribution or products or services will in no way interfere with or influence Company ABC.
- The ABC Company will exclude the tobacco industry and companies that work with or support the tobacco industry from any form of sponsorship.

Signature of CEO or President

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