

Smoke and Vape-Free Offices Policy

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Introduction

Smoking, either from direct exposure or through secondhand smoke (SHS) is a significant health hazard and causes premature death and disease in people who do not smoke but are exposed to it. It is well established that there is no safe level of smoking or SHS exposure.

E-cigarettes are a relatively new and quickly evolving technology. The full health effects, short-term and long-term, related to exposure to the vapour from e-cigarettes and similar products remains unknown and thus prudent avoidance is recommended given that these products expose non-smokers and bystanders to nicotine and a number of other toxicants. Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit endeavors to provide, maintain and promote working environments that safeguard the health and welfare of its employees, students, and volunteers. Such environments are free from smoking and vaping. In addition, it is recognized that smoke-free environments protect health, and promote healthy role modeling to youth, and have a positive impact upon cessation efforts.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to inform Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) Board of Health members, employees, students, volunteers, contractors, suppliers and members of the public of their obligations regarding smoking and vaping on SMDHU properties and while conducting SMDHU business and to provide protection from SHS and e-cigarette vapour in all SMDHU office environments and on SMDHU properties.

Legislative Authority

Ontario Health and Safety Act (1990)
Smoke-Free Ontario Act (2006)

Policy Definitions and Interpretation

Employee: includes all full time, part-time, contract, temporary, or casual staff.

Supervisor: the person to whom the employee directly reports or in the absence of the direct supervisor, another management representative of the SMDHU.

Secondhand smoke: the smoke in the air generated by burning tobacco and/or other smoked products or exhaled by a person using the product that is inhaled involuntarily or passively by someone who is not using the product. SHS may also refer to the smoke and toxins that persist in the environment long after the burning has ended and is often referred to as third hand smoke.

Environmental e-cigarette vapour: a visible exhalation, as vapour, fog, mist, steam, or noxious gas, diffused through or suspended in the air that is generated by the heating of a liquid, which may or may not contain nicotine, usually by an e-cigarette or vaporizer, or similar product. The vapour exhaled by a person using the device is then inhaled involuntarily or passively by someone who is not using the product.

Smoke-free environment: An environment that is free of smoke caused by smoking or lit tobacco or other products, and is free from the usage of any type of tobacco and/or other products as defined in this policy.

Tobacco-like products: any product containing, made, or derived from tobacco that is intended for human consumption, whether chewed, smoked, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled, snorted, sniffed, or ingested by any other means, but does not apply to regulated products intended for use in tobacco cessation.

Common types of tobacco products include, but are not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, cigarillos, blunt wraps, beedies, shisha, chew, plug, snuff, and snus. Tobacco products also include electronic cigarette products but are not limited to, electronic cigarettes, mods, cigars or pipes containing nicotine or not, as well as cartridges of nicotine solutions and all related products.

Policy

In order for SMDHU to satisfy its obligations under the Ontario Health and Safety Act and ensure the protection of its employees, the use of tobacco, tobacco-like products, e - cigarettes and the smoking of other products is prohibited in all buildings, offices, and vehicles owned or leased by the SMDHU. Smoke-free outdoor grounds will be negotiated as required via Human Resources and Infrastructure Services.

Exclusions and accommodations to this policy can include medically prescribed products and for those products used in cultural practices. In these instances, the individual or groups making a request to be accommodated or excluded to the policy shall make the request to their respective supervisor.

All employees, students, and volunteers of the health unit are encouraged not to use tobacco or tobacco-like products, e-cigarettes, or other smoked products while on work time.

Procedures

1. Directors, managers and supervisors are required to orient staff to this policy and the expectations for staff conduct. Staff are encouraged to reinforce this policy with other staff, students, volunteers, visitors, contractors, and suppliers.

Complaints Procedure

1. Staff members are encouraged to promote and reinforce the Smoke and Vape-Free Grounds Policy in their interactions with other staff and the public and to address identified non-compliance with the policy directly with the individual(s) involved.
2. Complaints regarding noncompliance with the policy by staff, students or volunteers should be directed to one's own supervisor or manager for follow-up.

3. That supervisor/manager will work with HR and the supervisor or manager of the individual who is non-compliant to reinforce the policy.

Related Policies

HR0506 Access to Tobacco Product Cessation Supports

HS0110 Protection from Secondhand Smoke and E-Cigarette Vapour

Related Forms

Final Approval Signature: _____

Review/Revision History:

Revised – October 25, 2017

September 2010 Policy re-numbered, previous number B2.010

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