

A guide to developing a smoke-free workplace.



**Cancer
Council**
WA

MAKE SMOKING
HISTORY®



Why introduce a smoke-free policy?

Introducing a smoke-free policy (including combustible cigarettes and e-cigarettes) in the workplace formalises smoking restrictions and protects staff and visitors from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke. A smoke-free policy encompassing all indoor, outdoor, garden areas and car parks creates a healthy work environment by substantially reducing the risk of exposure to second-hand smoke. A policy that is supportive and non-discriminatory can create a space where smokers feel supported to quit.

Smoking and the law

- Under the *Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984* (WA), employers shall, as far as is practicable, provide and maintain a working environment in which employees are not exposed to hazards. Employees must not do anything at work which adversely affects the safety or health of any other person.
- Employers also have a duty of care under the common law.
- Exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke is considered a workplace hazard. The chemicals found in tobacco smoke can cause a wide range of adverse health effects, including respiratory diseases, heart disease, heart attacks, strokes and cancers.
- The *Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1999* (WA) prohibit smoking by employers, employees and self-employed persons in enclosed workplaces, including in a vehicle.
- Smoking outside is prohibited within 5 metres of a public entrance to an enclosed public place, or within 10 metres of an air conditioning intake on an enclosed public place: *Tobacco Products Control Regulations 2006* (WA).

The benefits of introducing a smoke-free policy

Smoke-free workplaces are cleaner, safer and have been shown to be more productive workplaces. There are benefits for both employers and workers in creating a smoke-free workplace:

- Reduces the risk of legal action from workers exposed to second-hand smoking.
- Increases productivity through reduced absenteeism and down-time lost during smoke breaks.
- Reduces the risk of tension between smoking and non-smoking staff.
- Healthier staff and increased awareness of the health risks of smoking.
- Provides a supportive environment for smokers to reduce their smoking and quit.
- Reduces cleaning and maintenance costs.
- Reduces the risk of fire and explosions.
- Reinforces your organisation's commitment to the health of their workers.
- Promotes a positive corporate image and improves retention rates.
- Provides a healthy environment for the majority of staff and visitors who do not smoke.
- Provides clear guidelines for staff to follow that are long-term.

More information on smoking and the law can be found at [MakeSmokingHistory.org.au](https://www.makesmokinghistory.org.au)

Checklist: how to develop a smoke-free workplace policy

With a little planning a smoke-free policy is easy to implement especially if employees, both smokers and non-smokers, are involved in its development. The following are points to consider:

1. Establish a workplace committee

Include representatives from all parts of the organisation. Senior management support and commitment is vital.

2. Involve employees (smokers and non-smokers)

Involving employees and incorporating their suggestions is essential to the success of the policy. It is important to assess staff attitudes or concerns about the workplace becoming smoke-free, so they can be addressed. This can be done through meetings, focus groups or surveys.



3. Formulate a written policy

The objectives of the policy and how these will be achieved need to be clear. It's a good idea to integrate the policy with other programs and procedures related to health and safety in the workplace. The written policy should cover:

- Purpose of the policy (i.e. to avoid the harmful effects of smoking and exposure to second-hand smoke).
- A link between the smoke-free policy and organisational values.
- Time frame for implementation.
- A clear statement of where smoking is not permitted, for example on the premises, in work vehicles, at work functions and whilst wearing work uniforms.
- Person/department who will enforce smoke-free policy e.g. Human Resources.
- Details of support available for smokers such as the Quitline (13 7848), My QuitBuddy App and Nicotine Replacement Therapies.
- Consequences of non-compliance with the policy.
- Contact persons who can answer questions related to the policy.

A policy template can be found on the Healthier Workplace WA website.

4. Communicate the policy to employees

Inform employees from the outset and well before implementation. Emphasising benefits of a clean air policy for both smokers and non-smokers is less confrontational and more acceptable than emphasising individual rights of non-smokers.



5. Provide information and support to smokers

Newsletter, flyers, posters and email are useful communication tools for promoting the benefits of quitting and for providing information on the risks of smoking. Allow employees time to access quit support services such as telephone information and counselling via Quitline (13 7848) and Employee Assistance Programs.

6. Determine consequences of non-compliance

Some organisations develop a clear process for working with employees who continue to smoke in the workplace. This should be fair and consistent with sanctions for breaches of other company policies.

7. Follow a timetable for implementation

A timetable allows for easy implementation of the policy in stages. It is important to note that after the policy is announced a transition stage is required to give employees time to adjust to the new environment. A good time frame for development of the policy and its implementation is 4 to 12 months.

8. Provide training

Provide training to health and safety and other key personnel on implementation of the policy and support available to smokers. Offer quit smoking services to employees in the workplace. Develop a referral system to other quit smoking services outside the workplace.

9. Evaluate and monitor implementation

Review the policy to assess whether it is achieving its objectives. A review is recommended every 12 to 18 months.

Information and useful links

1. Health effects of smoking

Below are some useful links for information on the effects of smoking and second-hand smoke

Facts and information on tobacco and smoking (Cancer Council WA)

www.cancerwa.asn.au/prevention/tobacco

Smoking and physical health (Make Smoking History)

makesmokinghistory.org.au/why-should-i-quit/smoking-and-physical-health

Smoking around others (Make Smoking History)

www.makesmokinghistory.org.au/why-should-i-quit/smoking-around-others

The health effects of second-hand smoke (Tobacco in Australia - Facts and Issues)

www.tobaccoinaustralia.org.au/chapter-4-secondhand

Key Facts on Tobacco (World Health Organisation)

www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/tobacco

2. Economic benefits of a smoke-free policy in the workplace

Identifying the Social Costs of Tobacco Use to Australia in 2015/16 (National Drug Research Institute, Curtin University)

ndri.curtin.edu.au/NDRI/media/documents/publications/T273.pdf

A detailed economic study shows tobacco smoking costs in Australia are a staggering \$19.2 billion a year. Lost workplace productivity costs from absenteeism and presenteeism amounted to \$5.0 billion in 2015/16, representing 26% of total tangible costs.

3. Information and examples of smoke-free policies in the workplace

Going smoke-free: a guide for workplaces

www.quit.org.au/downloads/resource/communities/workplace/going-smokefree-guide-for-workplaces.pdf

Supporting smoke-free workplaces – a policy implementation guide

www.commerce.wa.gov.au/sites/default/files/atoms/files/supporting-smoke-free-workplaces.pdf

4. Make Smoking History for Community Services

The Make Smoking History for Community Services Program aims to reduce tobacco-related inequities experienced by people accessing health and community services, whilst raising awareness of the social injustice caused by smoking.

The program takes health and community services through an organisational change approach and develop tailored strategies to support staff and clients to reduce and quit tobacco use, and to create healthy smoke-free environments. For further information go to makesmokinghistory.org.au/communityservices/


5. Quit smoking help and support

The QuitCoach www.thequitcoach.org.au#

The Quitline 13 7848 (13 QUIT) makesmokinghistory.org.au/communityservices/training-and-resources/where-do-i-refer-people-for-support/quitline

Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Each workplace may have their own service provider to assist individuals to quit smoking and deal with other personal and work related issues. For further information go to Employee Assistance Professional Association Australia www.eapaa.org.au.



6. Healthier Workplace WA

Healthier Workplace WA offers free services to all Western Australian workplaces to help them implement a successful workplace health and wellbeing program that assists their workers to make positive lifestyle changes. For further information go to healthierworkplacewa.com.au

Resources

Displays of posters, information, brochures and signage are helpful in promoting smoke-free policies as well as where people may or may not smoke. You may also choose to produce your own signage and resources in keeping with your own corporate style.

Make Smoking History

A guide for developing smoke-free signage and a range of posters are available at: makesmokinghistory.org.au/communityservices/training-and-resources/training-and-resources

Cancer Council WA


Cancer Council WA produces a range of posters, stickers and fact sheets on smoking and health available for order at: www.cancerwa.asn.au/resources/publications/prevention/mshpublications/

Department of Health

'No smoking' signage in relation to smoking regulations and government policy has been produced by the Department of Health Western Australia and can be previewed online with instructions for ordering at: ww2.health.wa.gov.au/Articles/F_1/Forms-and-signage-for-tobacco-control#signage

General information on publications and resources is available through the Department of Health Western Australia's Online Publication Ordering System at: dohquickmail.com.au/

You can view resources available for ordering or place an order on this site. Alternatively, you can place a resource order through HealthInfo on 1300 135 030.





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HISTORY

FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES CP

I'M READY TO QUIT

I'M THINKING OF
QUITTING

WHY SHOULD I QUIT?

HOW DO I STAY QUIT?

REAL QUITTING
EXPERIENCES

Search



YOU QUIT. YOU WIN.

QUIT THE EXPENSE. THE BAD
BREATH, BEING **CONTROLLED**.

[campaign info](#)

YOU CAN MAKE SMOKING HISTORY

To have the best chance of quitting and staying a non-smoker, you need to know what you're up against, what your options are, and where to go for help. No matter what stage you're at with your quitting, whether you're thinking, ready or trying to stay quit, you'll find the information you need here.

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Every minute Every hour Every day

For support and information on cancer and cancer-related issues,
call our Cancer Nurses on **13 11 20**.

This is a confidential service for the cost of a local call.

Cancer Council Western Australia

Level 1, 420 Bagot Road

Subiaco WA 6008

T: 08 9212 4333

F: 08 9212 4334

Supporter Hotline: 1300 65 65 85

CANCERWA.ASN.AU

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