

Smoke-free Policies Fact Sheet

Cigarette smoking continues to be a public health issue worldwide. In Florida alone, tobacco use accounts for 28,700 deaths each year.¹



But nonsmokers are also at risk: Secondhand smoke (SHS) is a combination of the smoke exhaled by the smoker plus the smoke created by the burning of a lit cigarette. SHS is toxic, containing over 4000 chemical compounds, 200 of which are poisonous and over 60 are known to be carcinogenic.^{1,2} The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) classified SHS as a Group A carcinogen, indicative of the true danger passive smoke poses to a nonsmokers health.^{1,2}

Any level of exposure to secondhand smoke places a person at risk for cancer related problems, respiratory problems, and cardiovascular diseases.^{1,2} More than 126 million nonsmoking Americans continue to be exposed to secondhand smoke in homes, vehicles, public places, and *workplaces*.¹ In fact, rates of SHS are 2 to 6 times higher in the office setting as compared to homes with smokers, thus placing nonsmoking employees at a greater risk for adverse health effects.¹

The benefits to a smoke-free work environment include³:

- A reduction in employee exposure to secondhand smoke
- Controlling high healthcare costs and insurance premiums
- Improved employee health
- Reduced absenteeism
- Increased productivity

Attaining a smoke-free workplace includes implementing workplace-based programs designed to decrease smoking prevalence and SHS levels through a combination of educational, behavioral, and environmental modifications.

Basic components of a successful smoke-free workplace:

- Educational anti-tobacco programming
- Behavioral programming such as implementing smoking cessation classes
- Encouraging a smoke-free work environment
 - Developing a smoking policy, if one does not currently exist
 - Place signage indicating where smoking is allowed and not allowed
 - Provide documentation to all staff about smoking regulation with indication of repercussions of not following the policy
 - Incentives for participating

Healthy People 2010, a set of health objectives for the Nation to achieve by 2010, sets forth the following tobacco-specific goals:

- Goal 27-12: Increase the proportion of worksites with formal smoking policies that prohibit smoking or limit it to separately ventilated areas.
- Goal 27-13: Establish laws on smoke-free indoor air that prohibit smoking or limit it to separately ventilated areas in public places and worksites.

Act now! Make your workplace smoke-free and help your organization become a healthier, more productive, and overall better place to work.

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¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2001, December 14). State-specific prevalence of current cigarette smoking among adults, and policies and attitudes about secondhand smoke – United States, 2000. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* [serial online]. 50(49); 309-310. Retrieved June 4, 2008, from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5049a1.htm>

² Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2005, July 8). State smoking restrictions for private-sector worksites, restaurants, and bars – United States, 1998 and 2004. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* [serial online]. 54(26); 649-653. Retrieved June 4, 2008, from: <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5426a1.htm>

³ American Lung Association (2007a, June) Secondhand smoke fact sheet. Retrieved June 9, 2008, from: <http://www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK9O0E&b=35422>