



Tobacco Independence:

Freedom from a
deadly addiction

Countdown to a Smoke-free Policy

- ★ **Draft a smoke-free policy.** Creating a total smoke-free environment is the best method of protecting employees from the dangerous consequences of secondhand tobacco smoke. This policy is also the easiest to enforce because it is simple and clear-cut. Clearly identify all areas where smoking is prohibited and define enforcement procedures.
- ★ **Select a commencement date for implementing the smoke-free workplace policy at least two months in advance.** The new policy should begin on a Monday. However, your company may choose to enact a smoke-free policy on a special day such as January 1 or the American Cancer Society's Great American Smokeout (the third Thursday of November).
- ★ **Meet with upper management, middle management, and union or other employee representative groups.** Emphasize the company's commitment to a healthy smoke-free work environment. Explain the process of enforcement. Identify those responsible for enforcement and implementing disciplinary procedures.
- ★ **Send a memo, two months in advance of implementation to all employees announcing the smoke-free policy plan.** Explain why the company has decided to implement a smoke-free policy. Examples include:
 1. Elimination of exposure to secondhand smoke which has been shown to cause various cancers, heart disease and respiratory illness;
 2. Elimination of disputes over tobacco smoke in the workplace;
 3. Reduction in tobacco-related illnesses that increase costs for everyone.
 4. Reduction in relapse rates of addiction patients
- ★ **Send a memo one month prior to the commencement date and repeat the reasons for the smoke-free policy.** To increase the effectiveness and acceptance of the new smoke-free policy, explain the health and legal reasons behind its development.
- ★ **Show support for smokers by offering smoking cessation resources and ensuring coverage for cessation prescriptions.**
- ★ **Send another memo to all employees one week before the smoke-free policy takes effect.** Remind employees that smoking will no longer be permitted in the workplace after that date. Explain that maintenance personnel will remove all ashtrays and post NO SMOKING signs over the weekend. If smoking will be allowed outside on the property, clearly identify designated smoking areas (e.g., 50 feet from buildings). Reiterate the number and person to call to handle any compliance problems or disputes.
- ★ **The Friday before the policy goes into effect, instruct maintenance personnel to remove all ashtrays and post NO SMOKING signs as necessary over the weekend.** Employees returning to work on Monday will now have a smoke-free workplace.
- ★ **Enjoy your new smoke-free work environment!**

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