



# Tobacco Independence:

Freedom from a  
deadly addiction

# OASAS Tobacco Independence Initiative

In 2008, New York became the first state in the nation to require that all prevention, treatment, and recovery providers be tobacco-free.

## Background

**1996:** Two Addiction Treatment Center's (ATC) became tobacco-free facilities.

**2003:** OASAS began communications with providers, NYS Department of Health (DOH) and American Cancer Society about becoming tobacco-free.

**2003:** OASAS holds five statewide provider forums to discuss the proposed initiative and identify general needs and steps to move forward including:

1. free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT),
2. free training and
3. an OASAS regulation requiring everyone to be tobacco-free.

**2005:** All OASAS ATC's became tobacco-free facilities.

**2006:** NYS DOH agrees to support the initiative and fund \$8 million for training and NRT.

**July 24, 2007:** OASAS announces that all funded and/or certified providers must develop a tobacco-free policy.

**February 21, 2008:** Governor's Office of Regulatory Reform (GORR) authorizes OASAS to file regulation with the NYS Department of State.

**March 12, 2008:** NYS Department of State publishes the regulation in the NYS register; the 45 day comment period ensues.

**May 28, 2008:** OASAS adopts the regulation and a notice of adoption is filed and published in the NYS register.

**July 10, 2008:** OASAS provides information to over 8,000 people since January, 2007. This includes workshops, trainings, and group presentations.

**July 24, 2008:** Regulation becomes effective.

## Resources

- OASAS published a Tobacco Independence Technical Assistance Packet which was mailed to all providers and is available upon request.
- OASAS Tobacco-Free Website (<http://www.oasas.state.ny.us/tobacco/index.cfm>) includes various tools, resources and useful information for the providers and the public.
- For questions and concerns a Tobacco-Free Mailbox was established: [tobaccofree@oasas.state.ny.us](mailto:tobaccofree@oasas.state.ny.us)

- Tobacco-free questions can be directed to: (518) 457-8299.
- OASAS Mentors are available and can be found on our webpage at <http://www.oasas.state.ny.us/tobacco/providers/mentors.cfm>.
- The NYS DOH Tobacco Control Program supports the OASAS tobacco-free initiative and provides funding for training and NRT. DOH selected Partners in Corporate Health, LLC., A Be Better Company (<http://www.nrtdistribution.com>) to handle the NRT distribution to OASAS programs. Additionally, DOH awarded The University at Albany, Rockefeller College, Professional Development Program (PDP) the statewide training grant. PDP selected five Regional Technical Assistance and Training Centers (RTATCs) to provide training.

1. DePaul Addiction Services of Rochester, NY
2. BRIDGES of Canastota, NY
3. The Center for Addiction Prevention and Education in Poughkeepsie, NY
4. Cicatelli Associates in Manhattan, NY
5. Outreach Development Corporation in Richmond Hill, NY

Additionally, the Professional Development Program serves as the RTATC for the Capital and Northeastern Regions.

- The NYS Smokers Quitline is available 24-hours a day at: 1-866-NY-QUITS.

## Facts

- 21 percent of the nation uses tobacco, whereas in New York, 18.2 percent of the population smokes. In the addiction field, up to 92 percent of the population uses tobacco.
- Tobacco use causes nearly one out of three cancer deaths (186,000 people a year) and one out of five total deaths (430,000 a year). This is more than the deaths from alcohol, heroin, cocaine, HIV, homicides, suicides, fires and accidents combined. (Centers for Disease Control)
- In NYS, 25,500 people die each year from smoking caused illnesses.
- 70 percent of all smokers want to quit.
- NYS Clean Indoor Air Act was passed July 24, 2003.
- Smoking bans and restrictions are effective interventions to reduce second-hand smoke and decrease cigarette smoking.
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report: 389,000 New York youth under the age 18 alive today are projected to die from smoking.

**New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services**

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