

WORKPLACE NO-SMOKING POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

The Health and Safety At Work Act 1974 places a duty on the Council to provide an environment for employees, and for others such as the public who may come onto our premises, that is safe and without risks to health. This includes consideration of the effects of exposure to second-hand or "passive" smoke.

Passive smoking - breathing other people's tobacco smoke - has now been shown to cause lung cancer and heart disease in non-smokers, as well as many other illnesses and minor conditions¹.

The reasons for updating the Council's existing No Smoking Policy are to -

- Acknowledge that the proportion of people who smoke is declining and the majority of people do not smoke.
- Reduce the harm associated with tobacco use amongst staff and visitors, particularly exposure to second-hand smoke.
- Respond to requests from staff and others to ban smoking within Council workplaces.
- Recognise that smoking is detrimental to the appearance and corporate image of the Council.
- Provide leadership in the community as regards reducing the harm associated with smoking.

This workplace no-smoking policy, therefore, seeks to guarantee non-smokers the right to work in air free of tobacco smoke. However, the Council recognises that it is difficult for smokers to stop and therefore it will take all reasonable steps to support those staff in adjusting to the policy.

¹ US EPA (1992) Respiratory Health Effects of Passive Smoking: Lung cancer and other disorders

2. APPLICATION

With effect from 1st October 2005 smoking is not permitted at any time in any part of Council premises or the curtilage of the property including car parks and yards attached to the premises, entrances/exits, nor in Council-owned vehicles or any vehicles being used on Council business, by any person regardless of their status.

It applies to all staff, Councillors, tenants of premises where Council staff are employed, visitors and contractors, at all times including Civic functions, evening meetings and out-of-hours working.

Employees should note that they will not be permitted to smoke at any time when they are carrying out their official duties.

3. ARRANGEMENTS FOR SMOKERS

No designated smoking areas will be provided either inside or outside buildings. Anyone who wishes to smoke must do so in their own time, must vacate the premises altogether and move away from entrances/exits so that staff or others entering or leaving the premises are not exposed to second-hand tobacco smoke.

There will be no provision for smoking breaks.

4. ASSISTANCE FOR SMOKERS

This policy is not concerned with *whether* anyone smokes, but with *where and when* they smoke and the effect that this has on non-smoking colleagues. However, the Council realises that it will impact on smokers' working lives.

In an effort to help individuals adjust to this change, therefore, the following help will be provided via Personnel Services -

- The assistance of the North Staffordshire Quit Smoking Service
- Supplies of nicotine substitute products to purchase at a discount price
- Access to counselling support

5. RECRUITMENT PROCEDURES

All job information material sent out to applicants will include reference to this policy.

On appointment, all new staff members will receive a copy of the policy and it will be explained to them on the Corporate/Health and Safety Induction Course.

6. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Council has formally informed all staff 90 days in advance of the implementation date and has provided all staff with a copy of the policy, which is also available on the Intranet.

The implementation date will also be publicised in the following ways -

- The policy will be included as an agenda item on meetings and team briefings
- Details of the policy will be posted on the Intranet and in Grapevine
- Posters advertising the date will be displayed on notice boards
- A note will be attached to pay slips
- A global e-mail will be sent out

It is the responsibility of Chief Officers and all managers/supervisors to ensure that their staff are aware of the implementation date and to monitor compliance with the policy.

Any problems or complaints from staff on the operation of the policy should be raised through the Council's grievance procedure.

Any breaches of the policy will be dealt with through the Council's disciplinary procedure.

The policy will be reviewed after one year to ensure it is working effectively and to update it if necessary. Trade Unions and health and safety representatives will be consulted regarding any proposed changes.

MJK
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