



GOING SMOKE-FREE: Your workplace kit



A healthy
workplace
is good for
business



A joint Australian and State Government initiative

Department of Health and Human Services



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- The Department of Health and Human Services (Tasmania):
 - Public Health Services
 - Alcohol and Drug Services
 - Workplace Health and Wellbeing
 - Mental Health Services
 - Tobacco Policy and Programs
- QUIT Tasmania
- Cancer Council of Tasmania.

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Copies of this publication can be downloaded from the Department of Health and Human Services website:
<www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace>.

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Quit Tasmania on (03) 6242 8122 or <admin@quittas.org.au>.

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The following symbols are used throughout the kit to link you to resources and tools that help you on your way to a smoke-free workplace.



This symbol indicates that a fact sheet has been provided.



This symbol indicates that a template or example has been provided.



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Going smoke-free: Your workplace kit

Having a smoke-free workplace is one of the best things you can do for the health of your employees. And what's good for the health of your employees is also good for business.

There are many simple and effective ways to reduce or stop smoking in your workplace, some of which are cost-free. These strategies can make a real difference to the health of your employees and their families.

“Smoking has a significant effect on the health of your employees which, in turn, can affect the productivity and profitability of your organisation.”

Going smoke-free: Your workplace kit is full of practical and straightforward information to help your workplace go smoke-free and support your employees to reduce smoking.

Topics include the benefits of reducing smoking in the workplace, your legislative responsibilities, how you can help employees to reduce or quit smoking, relevant signage and tips on evaluating your program. Case studies show how other Tasmanian workplaces have gone smoke-free, the challenges they met and the benefits they've gained.

The kit includes a CD-ROM inside the back cover with easy-to-use templates and fact sheets. The templates help minimise your work in going smoke-free and are easily adapted to your needs.

Going smoke-free: Your workplace kit is available at:

<www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace>.

WHY SHOULD I ADDRESS SMOKING IN MY WORKPLACE?

Smoking fast facts

- 82% of Australians support measures to ban smoking in the workplace.¹
- Tobacco smoking costs Australia over \$30 billion a year in health, business and social costs. The costs to business alone are over \$5.7 billion.²
- Smokers' health problems can impact on their work performance and affect productivity through more frequent sickness-related absences.³
- In 2011–2012, the rate of smoking amongst Tasmanian adults was 21.7%, which was above the national average of 18%. Smoking rates were higher amongst males (25.8%) compared to females (17.9%).⁴
- Several years of research shows that cigarette smokers have a higher incidence of health problems and a lower life expectancy than the general population. Smoking causes a range of serious health problems including cancer, heart disease, stroke, asthma, emphysema, vascular disease and damage to most body organs.
- Tobacco smoking not only affects the smoker directly, but has a range of negative health impacts on non-smokers exposed to tobacco smoke. Legislation exists to protect non-smokers from the effects of 'second-hand' or environmental tobacco smoke.
- Smoking is the single greatest cause of preventable death in the world.⁵

A **smoke-free worksite** can bring many positive benefits, for both employers and employees.

For employers, benefits include:

- increasing productivity through:
 - reduced absenteeism from smoking-related health problems
 - reduced presenteeism (employees performing poorly due to attending work when they're not well)
- meeting 'duty of care' responsibilities towards employees, clients and visitors
- generating a positive corporate health image
- reducing the risk of litigation from non-smokers who may develop health problems related to passive smoking
- lowering the risk of workers compensation claims from smoking-related health problems
- potentially reducing fire risks, resulting in lower insurance costs
- complying with legislation including the *Public Health Act 1997* and the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012*.

For employees (both smokers trying to quit and non-smokers), benefits include:

- being able to work in a smoke-free environment,



which helps to reduce the number of cigarettes employees consume daily and lowers the overall rate of smoking in the workplace^{6, 7, 8, 9, 10}

- having access to a support program, known to help people cut down or stop smoking¹¹ while improving health, life expectancy and financial wellbeing
- a more pleasant and safer working environment for non-smokers, with protection from the harmful effects of environmental tobacco smoke (the chemicals and toxins released whenever someone smokes a cigarette)
- potentially creating fair working conditions for both smokers and non-smokers, as it is generally perceived that smokers take more work breaks than non-smokers.



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For more information on the health effects of smoking for both smokers and non-smokers, download the following resource from the attached CD-ROM or from <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace>.



Fact sheet 1 - Health effects of smoking

In Tasmania, there are laws to make sure that employees are protected from the effects of environmental tobacco smoke. Organisations must comply with the requirements of the *Public Health Act 1997*, which prohibits smoking in all indoor and some adjacent outdoor areas. In addition, the *Work Health and Safety Act 2012* requires employers to provide a safe working environment for employees.

For more information on legislation around smoking in the workplace, download the following resource from the attached CD-ROM or from <www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace>.



Fact sheet 2 - Smoke-free legislative requirements



WHAT CAN I DO TO ADDRESS SMOKING IN MY WORKPLACE?

There are two main things you can do to address smoking in your workplace:

1. Develop a smoking cessation support program for your employees.
2. Create a smoke-free worksite policy, where the worksite
 - ❑ has designated smoke-free areas, or
 - ❑ is a totally smoke-free environment.

Whether you do one or both of these things will depend on the needs of your organisation. Regardless of the approach you take, keep the following points in mind:

- Nicotine is widely recognised as an addictive substance and can cause significant health and social problems for people addicted to smoking. Physical and emotional symptoms of nicotine withdrawal can happen when opportunities to smoke are restricted, so it will be important to provide information and practical support for employees who might be having trouble not smoking during work hours.
- If your organisation decides to create a smoke-free worksite policy, there are benefits to supplementing this with a smoking cessation support program. A supportive attitude from managers and colleagues, along with access to smoking cessation support, is likely to encourage smokers who want to quit, and is likely to improve cooperation and compliance with the policy.
- To promote goodwill, and provide employees with the opportunity to trial symptom management options before smoking restrictions occur, develop and implement your cessation support program at or before your policy implementation date.
- Some smokers may see the introduction of a smoke-free worksite as an opportunity to cut down or even stop smoking. Other smokers might be encouraged to think about their own situation if they are given good information about the benefits of quitting.





Research suggests it is more effective to introduce a totally smoke-free environment with no designated smoking areas.¹²

I. Developing a smoking cessation support program for your employees

There is no 'one size fits all' approach to smoking cessation. You can consider a range of strategies to support your employees, depending on what best suits your workplace.

For more information about developing smoking cessation support programs, download the following resource from the attached CD-ROM or from www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace.



Fact sheet 3 - Smoking cessation support

2. Creating a smoke-free worksite policy

A **smoke-free policy** is a **formal, written document** addressing the issues relating to smoking in your worksite. A formal policy that has been endorsed by managers will:

- provide clear direction to all employees as to why their worksite has become a smoke-free environment
- make it clear what is expected of both the organisation and all employees
- let all staff and visitors know that the organisation takes a firm stance on the issues of smoking and exposure to environmental tobacco smoke.

For more information about developing a smoke-free worksite policy, including links to a fact sheet, sample templates, brochures, a sample media release and No Smoking signage, download the following resource from the attached CD-ROM or from www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace.



Fact sheet 4 - Guidelines for developing a smoke-free worksite policy



HOW DO I KNOW IF OUR PROGRAM HAS BEEN A SUCCESS?

The best way to find out if your program has been a success is to look at the impact of any changes you have made to your worksite. It's a good idea to work out how you are going to do this early on, so you can ask the right questions and collect the right information.

It is essential to collect some information before you start your program, for example:

- What percentage of employees currently smoke?
- How many cigarettes do they smoke?
- Do they smoke at home, work or both?
- Are your employees motivated to quit smoking?

This data will only be useful if it matches your program and its objectives. For example, if the majority of your employees smoke at home and not at work, then it may be a higher priority to focus on smoking cessation, rather than implementing a smoke-free worksite policy.

The baseline data you collect will be essential when you come to evaluate your program, as you can ask the same questions

and see whether the figures are different. Then you will be able to identify if your program has been effective, or whether you need to change your program to provide better support to your employees.

There are many questions you can ask that will help you evaluate your program, including:

- Is there understanding and acceptance of your smoke-free worksite policy (if you have one)?
 - Are employees and site visitors aware of the policy and its requirements?
 - Does your signage get your message across (e.g. do you have the right number and type of signs, are they still in place and legible)?
 - Is there staff support for the policy?
 - Are site visitors aware of the policy?

- Are your employees making good use of the support offered as part of your program?
 - What is the level of employee participation in your program?
 - How many employees have taken up nicotine withdrawal support (if that option was provided)?
- Can you see that employees and visitors have accepted the requirements of your policy and/or program?
 - Is there evidence of smoking on site (e.g. cigarette butts have been found, employees or visitors have been seen smoking)?
 - What are employees saying about the policy and the expectation that they will comply with its requirements?
- What has been the effect of the program on employees?
 - Has the percentage of smokers changed since implementation (needs baseline data)?
 - Has the average cigarette consumption changed since implementation (needs baseline data)?
 - What do your employees think about the program (do they think it has been effective)?



How you collect this information will differ depending on your organisation's size and regional spread. There is a range of data collection methods that you could try, such as surveys, interviews and discussion groups.

For more information on evaluating your program, download the following resource from the attached CD-ROM or from www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace.



Fact sheet 5 - A simple guide to evaluation



HOW HAVE OTHERS DONE IT?

Port Arthur Historic Site

The Port Arthur Historic Site set a new benchmark in workplace health and visitor comfort when it became the first major tourist attraction in Tasmania to go smoke-free.

Carol Armstrong, the Human Resource Manager who was responsible for planning the change, said the move was inevitable.

“Our visitor feedback regularly showed negative comments about smoking on the site. We also wanted Port Arthur to be a place where staff and visitors were safeguarded from the health effects of passive smoking, and the environment was not degraded by litter.”

Previously, staff and visitors had been able to light up whenever they wanted. Now there are two designated smoking areas (including one in the car park), and employees who smoke are only permitted to do so during their award rest breaks.

Ms Armstrong said as well as being a worksite, the site was also a family environment. School and educational groups were regular visitors, so it made sense to present healthy behaviour models. “With the recent World Heritage listing, we also considered it important to follow best practice.”

Some staff had expressed concerns about telling visitors to ‘butt out’, but Ms Armstrong said education sessions and role-play had been helpful to practise a polite approach to the situation. There was also an emphasis on informing visitors as much as possible, with signage on site, verbal advice at the ticket counter, and information on tickets and in brochures.

Port Arthur Historic Site employs 130 permanent staff, with an additional 40 in peak tourist season. For the staff who were smokers, support was provided to help them manage their smoking, or use this as an opportunity to quit altogether.

Staff have access to a subsidy of \$250 for nicotine replacement therapy for up to three months, with the local medical centre and pharmacy on board to provide advice, support and the subsidised smoking cessation products. These products help smokers to manage cravings during work hours and assist those who want to stop smoking.

An employee has been trained to deliver smoking education groups, and Quit group sessions are run in February—an opportune time to coincide with New Year’s resolutions, but after the disruption of the festive season.

Ms Armstrong said that the nature of Port Arthur differed from many other workplaces because there were external as well as internal stakeholders to prepare for.

After the success of the project at Port Arthur, other Historic Sites managed by the Management Authority—Cascades Female Factory and Coal Mines at Saltwater River—are now also smoke-free.

In offering advice to others, Ms Armstrong said “I’ve learned it takes much longer than you’d think. It’s more than just putting up a sign. It takes leadership, commitment and perseverance to make it happen, but there are very good reasons to go smoke-free and the Board and Executive were one hundred per cent behind it all along.”

While there was some resistance from a handful of staff during the policy implementation period, the majority of employees were strongly supportive of a smoke-free worksite, and resistance largely evaporated after introduction of the policy.

A resource kit to support implementation of the smoke-free policy, provided by the Department of Health and Human Services, proved useful in planning the change.



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Union workplace delegates provided valuable input into the development of the policy, and were not opposed to the policy introduction.



“We understand that this is a very difficult addiction to give up and therefore our approach is one of support and education.”

Pulse Youth Health South

Pulse Youth Health South, based in Glenorchy, provides a range of health promotion and support services for young people aged 12–24 years in southern Tasmania.

For some time, the service had recognised the importance of modelling healthy behaviours to young people and their communities, and had been working informally on various workplace issues related to smoking. For example, over the last four years, employees who smoke had agreed to be more discreet when smoking during work hours.

This trend was formalised when the service introduced a smoke-free worksite policy, explicitly requiring clients and staff to leave the premises to smoke.

Under the new policy:

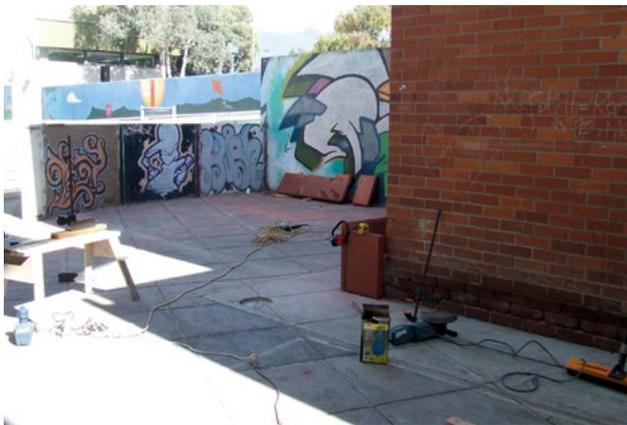
- staff who choose to smoke must smoke out of view of the centre
- staff who choose to smoke are asked to smoke individually, not as a group or in pairs
- clients and other visitors are encouraged to smoke away from the centre's premises.

As part of the smoke-free initiative, employees were offered a subsidy for the purchase of smoking cessation products, and Pulse workers provided a clear message to clients that they could support them to be smoke-free or increase their smoke-free time. Employees were trained to run smoking cessation groups for clients, and to promote a smoke-free lifestyle for all young people. This has become an integral part of the services offered by Pulse.

The service had a lead-in time to prepare for and enable cultural change at a grass-roots level. During this time, many discussions were held between service management, employees and clients. This helped everyone to prepare and resulted in better understanding, support and cooperation when the smoke-free worksite policy was introduced.

Putting the new policy in place presented an opportunity to give the old courtyard a 'facelift', and create a healthy and appealing smoke-free space for employees and clients to use. This was an important step in acknowledging the change in workplace culture, and involved young people, staff, artists and community groups.

Going smoke-free: Your workplace kit and regular support from the project officer responsible for this kit helped Pulse maintain a focus on going smoke-free and manage challenges that arose.



One ongoing challenge is that Pulse shares the building and grounds with other services. This means there must be agreement from all building tenants before designating common areas of the premises, including the car park, to be smoke-free. Pulse continues to work with the co-tenants to achieve smoke-free status in common areas.

Getting ready to go smoke-free also took longer than expected. All planning and communication about the changes needed to fit in with the demands of a busy health service. The commitment and motivation of the staff leading the project was an important element in the project's success.

Pulse employees are pleased to have taken this important step towards a healthier workplace environment, while recognising the needs of smokers and non-smokers. Some employees have acknowledged that the introduction of the policy has helped them to increase smoke-free time, or to be smoke-free. Importantly, by promoting a smoke-free environment, Pulse employees are helping to change the mindset that smoking is normal and OK for young people.

The Pulse Youth Health South courtyard before and after implementation of the smoke-free worksite policy



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Northern Suburbs Community Centre Inc

The Northern Suburbs Community Centre Inc is a not-for-profit organisation, operating from three separate premises in the northern suburbs of Launceston. The centre provides a range of services to support the local community, with programs including a child-care centre and parenting groups.

Many children and young people use the Centre, and its employees are conscious that adult role models have a major influence on the choices young people make, and hence the potential future health of young people.

For this reason—and to demonstrate its commitment to healthier lives in healthier communities—the organisation decided to make the worksite, including all buildings and grounds, smoke-free.

The Northern Suburbs Community Centre Inc is managed by a board of management. As the support of management is an important factor in the success of any new initiative, a submission was provided to and approved by the Board, giving the green light to implementing a smoke-free worksite policy.

Communication with all groups that would be affected by the change was a high priority. Because of this:

- a working group, with representatives of those who would be affected, was established to manage and oversee the change
- when the smoke-free worksite policy document was drafted, it was circulated to employees and centre users with an invitation for feedback
- time was invested talking to employees and users of the Centre, explaining the purpose of the draft policy and inviting feedback
- managers kept an 'open door' policy throughout the change period, and were available to discuss any concerns on an individual basis
- a regular newsletter was circulated, informing employees and centre users of progress towards implementing the smoke-free worksite policy.

The organisation recognised that supporting employees to reduce or quit smoking was an integral part of going smoke-free. Employees were offered subsidised smoking cessation products to help manage withdrawal symptoms while at work and while trying to quit.

Towards the end of implementation, some concern was expressed by a small number of employees and centre users. This was largely because of a misunderstanding about the purpose and intent of the policy. Although the policy was implemented effectively, if the process were to be repeated, the working group would endeavour to make it clear from the outset that employees and centre users were not being asked to give up smoking, just to refrain from smoking on the premises.

The policy was introduced after a four-month implementation period, and was accepted by both employees and centre users. It does not appear to have affected attendance at the centre. Since the implementation process commenced, two employees have given up smoking, and other employees are considering quitting.

In the future, employees will be trained in smoking cessation support and smoking cessation groups will be organised. Other cessation programs will also be provided for the users of the centre.

Employees at the Northern Suburbs Community Centre Inc consider their smoke-free worksite policy to be a great success. They are pleased to be a healthy example to the community while also protecting the health of the young people using their service.



Northern Suburbs Community Centre Inc, Rocherlea site



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WHERE CAN I GO FOR MORE INFORMATION?

There are several organisations that can assist you with smoking cessation programs and information for employees.

For a list of these organisations, their contact details and the services they can provide, download the following resource from the attached CD-ROM or from www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/publichealth/healthy_communities/smoke-free_workplace.



Fact sheet 6 - Where to go for more information

For more information on general workplace health and wellbeing programs, including healthy eating, physical activity and mental health, contact WorkSafe Tasmania's Workplace Health and Wellbeing Advisory Service on 1300 366 322 or visit www.betterwork.tas.gov.au.





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