



## Tobacco Free Ohio State Leader/Supervisor Toolkit

---

### Overview

Ohio State strives to enhance the general health and well-being of faculty, staff, students and visitors in support of our goal to become the world's healthiest university. We desire to support individuals to be tobacco free, achieve their highest state of health and to graduate students into their careers at a high level of health and well-being. To support this commitment, we intend to create a tobacco free environment in part by prohibiting the use of tobacco in or on all university owned, operated or leased property, including vehicles.

One frequently asked question is how the policy will be enforced. Ohio State strives to create a culture that encourages compliance by promoting and supporting a healthy environment. Managers, when notified of policy violations, should strive to be non-confrontational and respectful of all members of our campus community, including tobacco users. Use this toolkit for guidance on how you can support this change and navigating potential challenges with policy compliance.

### Your Role

As a leader within your college/unit, you are a strategic partner in implementing this policy. Consistency in communicating the policy and addressing violations is imperative to the success of the initiative. Your role is to support the tobacco free initiative and to be the **BEST** leader:

1. **Be Informed:** Educate yourself on the policy, FAQs and resources.
2. **Educate:** Communicate the policy courteously and non-confrontationally to faculty, staff, students and visitors in your college/unit.
3. **Support:** Connect your employees with appropriate resources, which include stress management, tobacco cessation and nutrition and fitness.
4. **Take Action:** Hold employees accountable and address matters of repeated violations consistently in the same manner as you would violations of other policies. It is important to assess the impact of the repeated violation in relation to the university's values and expectations. Tobacco-use violations are not a vehicle to accelerate corrective action of problem performers. College/unit HR representative and your employee and labor relations consultant within the Office of Human Resources are available to consult on specific situations, as needed.

### How to Educate Your Faculty, Staff and Student Employees

Below is an example of an effective messaging strategy which can be used to educate your faculty and staff on the policy:

*Ohio State has adopted a tobacco free policy that supports a healthy environment for all members of the Buckeye Nation. Effective January 1, 2014, the use of all types of tobacco products is prohibited in all university buildings and on all university-owned properties, including parking lots, garages and all outside areas.*

*Our tobacco free policy is intended to encourage employees, students and visitors to improve their health by eliminating the use of tobacco products. It is **not** intended to drive tobacco use from on campus to our off-campus neighbors. The consideration and cooperation of tobacco users and non-tobacco users alike is needed to fully implement the policy. The university is highly committed to supporting all faculty, staff and students who wish to stop using tobacco. The tobacco free website includes resources to overcome tobacco or nicotine addiction and manage stress through the OSU Health Plan, the Student Health and Wellness Centers and other campus providers. [tobaccofree.osu.edu](http://tobaccofree.osu.edu)*

It is important to incorporate this communication into meetings, emails, publications and other communication vehicles directed toward your faculty and staff. Consider planning one-on-one meetings with tobacco users to proactively bring awareness to the initiative and offer assistance in connecting individuals with appropriate resources. Additional resources on messaging can be found [online](#).

Lastly, advise all faculty and staff of the importance of respecting our surrounding neighborhoods. The university is committed to being a good neighbor in our campus communities and that includes being mindful of litter, loitering and second-hand smoke as a result of off-campus tobacco use.



### Talking Tips for Supervisors

1. Meet in a private place to discuss the problem.
2. Let the employee tell his/her side of story.
3. Be respectful and cognizant that this change can be difficult for tobacco users.
4. Be direct. Make a clear statement that this is an important policy to the university and it is an expectation that everyone adheres to this policy.

"I know that this is a new policy and, as a tobacco user, this must be a significant change for you. Even though this is a new policy, it is important for you to understand that violations to university policy are not acceptable and I need your cooperation."

5. Help the employee develop an acceptable plan that takes all university policies into account. If the employee wants to quit, make sure to tell the employee about all available resources. If the employee does not want to quit, reinforce policy expectations.
6. Summarize the meeting and expectations moving forward.
7. To avoid future issues of noncompliance, schedule a follow-up meeting to determine if the agreed upon plan is working. If there are continued violations, identify the impact of the employee's actions and manage it appropriately. You are encouraged to contact your college/unit HR representative for assistance.

### Responding to repeated policy violations

1. **Give the individual the opportunity to tell his or her side of the story.** *"It's been brought to my attention that you continue to use tobacco products on university property and I'd like to give you an opportunity to share your perspective on the information that was reported."*
2. **Double-check that you understand (summarize what the employee said).** *"So, what you've just said to me is [restate what you heard]."*
3. **Gain commitment; ask the individual to come up with actions steps that will resolve the problem.** *"Now that we've discussed the importance of complying with the tobacco free policy, here are some resources I encourage you to consider utilizing in your efforts to remain compliant under the university's policy." Provide the employee the [cessation and stress management resources](#) handout or refer to the tobacco free policy [resources](#) page.*
4. **If resolution is not achieved, consider corrective measures. Briefly document the event and the subsequent conversation and place in your supervisor's file.** The manager may pursue corrective action when previous problem-solving strategies have not been effective. Managers should do so in consultation with their college/unit HR representative.

### Responding to employees' concerns about repeated policy violations of their colleagues

1. Give the employee time to tell his or her side of the story.
2. Reassure the employee that their concerns have been heard and are being addressed appropriately.
3. Reeducate the employee who has voiced the concerns, if applicable, on the policy compliance expectations.
4. Document and take appropriate action as it relates to BEST (see page 1 'Your Role').



## Where to go for help

- For general policy questions, contact the Office of Human Resources at 614-292-2800.
- For questions about the policy or violations of the policy, contact your Employee and Labor Relations consultant ([university](#), [Medical Center](#)).
- Ohio State Police will not respond to calls of policy violation; however, if you approach someone to remind them of the policy and the situation escalates to the point where you feel threatened or endangered, please call 911.

## Resources

[Tobacco Free Ohio State policy](#) includes resources and frequently asked questions

[Tobacco Free Ohio State Website](#)

[Tobacco Cessation Resources](#), [Ohio State EAP](#) stress management and other well-being resources

## Approaching someone who is using tobacco

The following scenarios and scripts are designed to help members of the Ohio State community remind people of the Tobacco Free Ohio State initiative.

Ohio State expects all members to be respectful and courteous when approaching someone using tobacco products on campus. If the tobacco user becomes agitated or hostile, please do not escalate the situation. Simply walk away. If the situation escalates to the point where you feel threatened or endangered, please contact call 911.

### **Situation: You see a person using tobacco products on campus.**

**Response:** “Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am an (employee, student) here at Ohio State. I want to let you know that we are now a tobacco free campus, meaning that using tobacco products is prohibited on our grounds. This policy went into effect on January 1st. Thanks for your cooperation.”

### **Question: “Where am I allowed to smoke?”**

**Response:** “Ohio State became a tobacco free campus on January 1<sup>st</sup> prohibiting tobacco use of any kind. The use of tobacco products is not allowed anywhere on the campus. If you choose to smoke or use tobacco products, you will need to leave the campus. Thank you for respecting our policy.”

### **Situation: Making arrangements with a vendor or contractor.**

**Communication:** “I'd like to let you know that Ohio State is a tobacco free environment. We respectfully ask that representatives from your organization refrain from using tobacco products on our property, grounds or parking areas. We have employees, students and patients who are trying to quit using tobacco and want to create an environment that will help them in their cessation efforts.”

### **Situation: Giving notice to prospective students and their families.**

**Communication:** You want to proactively communicate the Tobacco Free Ohio State initiative to prospective employees and prospective students and their families, prior to visiting Ohio State campus: “I'd like to let you know in advance of your visit that Ohio State is a tobacco free environment. The use of tobacco products is not allowed on our property, grounds or parking areas. Thank you for respecting our policy.”