THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Tobacco Free Ohio State, 7.20

University Policy

Applies to: Faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors

Responsible Office

Office of Human Resources

POLICY

Issued: 07/01/1987
Revised: 01/01/2014
Edited: 10/08/2025

The university strives to enhance the general health and wellbeing of its faculty, staff, students, and visitors and desires to support individuals in becoming tobacco free. To support this commitment, the university is a tobacco free environment. Smoking and the use of tobacco are prohibited in or on all university owned, operated, or leased property including vehicles.

Purpose of the Policy

To provide guidance and expectations to support the requirement of a tobacco free environment at the university.

Definitions

Term	Definition
Tobacco	All tobacco-derived or containing products, including and not limited to, cigarettes (e.g., clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes, cigars and cigarillos, hookah smoked products, pipes and oral tobacco (e.g., spit and spitless, smokeless, chew, snuff) and nasal tobacco. It also includes any product intended to mimic tobacco products, contain tobacco flavoring, or deliver nicotine other than for the purpose of cessation.

Policy Details

I. The university is strongly committed to supporting individuals in becoming tobacco free.
   A. Tobacco cessation programs and support are available to faculty, staff, and students as defined below.
   B. Nicotine replacement therapy products for the purpose of cessation are permitted.

II. The success of this policy depends upon the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of tobacco users and non-tobacco users. Leaders and those to whom this policy applies share the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing the policy.
   A. Concerns about tobacco use should be respectfully addressed in the moment whenever feasible.
   B. Continued concerns should be referred to the appropriate unit for review and action. For faculty, staff, and student employees, issues should be referred to the employing unit head. For students in the non-employment setting, issues should be referred to Student Conduct. For volunteers and visitors, issues should be referred to the hosting unit head.

III. The university will not advertise tobacco on university owned, operated, or leased property or at any university sponsored event or university owned or sponsored media.

IV. Sale of tobacco is prohibited on university owned, operated, or leased property.

V. Research involving tobacco is an exception from this policy. Acceptance of tobacco-funded research grants will be evaluated by the vice president for research and the appropriate dean/administrator prior to acceptance of the funds.

VI. Additional exceptions are identified in Tobacco Free Policy Approved Exceptions.

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PROCEDURE

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I. Cessation
   A. The university is committed to supporting all faculty, staff, and students who wish to stop using tobacco or nicotine products.
   B. Assistance to faculty and staff to overcome tobacco or nicotine addiction is available through The Ohio State University Health Plan and the resources identified below.
   C. Assistance to students to overcome tobacco or nicotine addiction is available through the Student Health Center, Student Wellness Center, student health insurance, and the resources identified below.

II. Communication
   A. Leaders, managers, supervisors, and building coordinators are responsible for leading by example and respectfully communicating the policy to faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors.
   B. Faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors who observe individuals using tobacco on university property are encouraged and empowered to respectfully explain that its use is prohibited.

III. Signage
   A. Installation and maintenance of signage are the responsibility of Facilities Operations and Development (FOD), in consultation with the Office of Human Resources.
   B. Signage must be placed appropriately on entrances to and exits from buildings, including parking garages and on university owned and leased vehicles.
   C. Areas that experience difficulties with tobacco use may request supplemental signage from Facilities Operations and Development (FOD).

IV. Compliance with Ohio Smoking Ban Law (Ohio Revised Code Chapter 3794)
   A. The Office of Human Resources is available to consult with and support units that receive a complaint from a public health department. See Addressing Violations of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law.
   B. When complaints are sent by a public health department directly to a unit, the unit must:
      1. Make a good faith effort to find out what behaviors are occurring or occurred to trigger the complaint.
      2. Follow up with involved faculty, staff, students, vendors, volunteers, and/or visitors to ensure that prohibited behavior stops.
      3. Issue a letter of response to the public health department within 30 days of the university receipt of the complaint. See Sample Letter of Response to an Allegation of Violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law.
      4. Ensure that state law and university policy are being followed.
      5. Communicate to faculty, staff, students, vendors, volunteers, and/or visitors the requirements of the university's tobacco free policy and/or state law. See Sample Email Regarding Tobacco Free Policy and Ohio Smoking Ban Law.
      6. Work with FOD to ensure that signage is appropriately displayed on building entrances and exits.
   C. When complaints are received from a public health department by the Office of Human Resources or other units not the subject of the alleged violation:
      1. The Office of Human Resources or other receiving unit must forward the complaint within five days to the head of the appropriate unit for response.
      2. The unit head must respond to the complaint as described in IV.B above.

Applies to: Faculty, staff, students, volunteers, and visitors

V. Compliance

A. All students, faculty, staff, vendors, volunteers, and visitors are expected to comply with this policy. Individuals are encouraged and empowered to respectfully inform others about the policy in an ongoing effort to support individuals to be tobacco free, improve individual health, and encourage a culture of compliance.

B. University leaders, managers, supervisors, and building coordinators are expected to support individuals becoming tobacco free and to promote compliance in their areas of responsibility and on the larger campus.

C. Student Life staff have a special responsibility to promote compliance among students.

Responsibilities

Position or Office	Responsibilities
Employing or volunteer sponsoring unit	1. Communicate policy expectations to individuals. 2. Work with FOD to ensure that signage is appropriately displaced on building entrances and exits. 3. Provide information on tobacco cessation resources. 4. Address policy violations with faculty, staff, and student employees. 5. Forward complaints of violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law to the appropriate unit within five days. 6. Respond to complaints from a public health department about the Ohio Smoking Ban Law and this policy.
Facilities Operations and Development, building coordinators	1. Communicate policy expectations to individuals. 2. Install and maintain signage. 3. Communicate policy violations to leaders and managers in specific areas where problems occur.
Individuals	1. Comply with the policy. 2. Inform others about the policy when possible. 3. Use cessation resources as desired.
Office of Human Resources	1. Communicate policy expectations to the university community. 2. Consult with units on this policy. 3. Forward complaints of violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law to the appropriate unit within five days. 4. Consult with & support units that receive complaints of violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law.
Office of Student Life	1. Communicate policy expectations to the university community. 2. Address policy violations with students in the non-employment setting. 3. Offer tobacco cessation support to students.
OSU Health Plan	Offer tobacco cessation support through the health plans.
University leaders, managers and supervisors	1. Communicate policy expectations to the university community. 2. Hold individuals responsible for compliance with the policy. 3. Communicate policy violations to leaders and managers in specific areas where problems occur. 4. Forward complaints of violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law to the appropriate unit within five days. 5. Address and respond to complaints of violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law and this policy.

Resources

Governance Documents

Ohio Smoking Ban Law (ORC 3794), codes.ohio.gov/orc/3794

Tobacco Free Ohio State Policy Approved Exceptions, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-exceptions.pdf

Additional Guidance

Addressing Violations of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-addressing-violations.pdf

Boundary Map, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-map.pdf

Frequently Asked Questions, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-faq.pdf

Guide to Successful Implementation, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-implementation-guide.pdf

Leader/Supervisor Toolkit, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-supervisor-toolkit.pdf

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Sample Email Regarding Tobacco Free Policy and Ohio Smoking Ban Law, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-sample-email.pdf

Sample Letter of Response to an Allegation of Violation of the Ohio Smoking Ban Law, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-response-letter-allegation.pdf

Talking With Individuals Who Use Tobacco on University Property, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-talk-with-users.pdf

Tobacco Cessation and Stress Management Resources, hr.osu.edu/wp-content/uploads/policy720-cessation-resources.pdf

Contacts

Subject	Office	Telephone	E-mail/URL
Concerns regarding faculty	Office of Academic Affairs	614-292-5881	oaa.osu.edu
Concerns regarding students in the non-employment setting	Student Conduct, Office of Student Life	614-292-0748	studentconduct@osu.edu studentconduct.osu.edu
Policy questions	HR Connection	614-247-myHR (6947)	HRConnection@osu.edu
Signage and other facilities issues	Facilities Operations and Development, Administration and Planning	614-292-4357	service2facilities@osu.edu fod.osu.edu

History

Issued:	07/01/1987	Issued as Nonsmoking
Approved:	06/01/2013	Renamed Tobacco Free Ohio State; BOT approved the development and adoption of a Tobacco Free policy, Resolution #2013-72 (future policy changes do not require BOT approval) \
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