

**New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services
Tobacco Free at Work Policy
Frequently Asked Questions**

What are the boundaries of the Department for the purposes of this policy?

The boundaries include any property owned, operated, leased, occupied, or controlled by NH DHHS. For purposes of the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy, this includes property in the State of New Hampshire including but not limited to all buildings and structures, sidewalks, parking lots, walkways, attached parking structures, and Department-owned vehicles.

DHHS is developing maps that will be made available on the DHHS Intranet.

Does the policy apply to the entire NH DHHS?

Yes. The policy includes the Department main campus and all other buildings or facilities owned, operated, leased, occupied, or controlled by DHHS in the State of New Hampshire.

Can persons smoke on town/city streets or sidewalks that are not Department owned/maintained?

In certain locations, NH DHHS has both Department and city streets outside its facilities. The use of tobacco, including smoking, is prohibited on all Department owned or controlled streets and sidewalks. The Tobacco-Free at Work Policy does not apply to city streets or sidewalks that are not owned or controlled by NH DHHS. However, per the policy, the use of tobacco products is prohibited during paid work time and paid breaks.

Does the policy apply to visitors/clients that visit our facilities?

Yes. Organizers and attendees at public events, such as conferences, meetings, public lectures, social events, and client service appointments are required to abide by the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy. Organizers of such events are responsible for communicating the policy to attendees.

Does this policy apply to DHHS State Cars?

Yes. There is a policy that prohibits smoking in all DHHS vehicles. This policy is comprehensive and includes the same language about tobacco use in State owned/leased vehicles.

Field staff often travel in their personal vehicles to homes to provide services while on paid time. If an employee is driving to a location in their personal vehicle, are they prohibited from the use of tobacco products while in transit?

The primary purpose of this new policy is about the health of DHHS employees and clients alike. The policy applies to all staff on paid time when providing services. We recognize that there are instances that employees are on paid work time, traveling to meetings in their own vehicle. In this case we are asking, not mandating, that employees not smoke or use tobacco products including electronic cigarettes when on paid work time.

Can people who work in a residential facility and cannot leave at lunchtime smoke or use tobacco products?

No

Is the Department requiring that people quit using tobacco products?

No. However, we are encouraging current tobacco users to explore this option. The Department is committed to supporting all employees who wish to stop using tobacco products with cessation

resources. Employees choosing to continue using tobacco products may do so, but only on their own time and in areas not owned, operated, leased, occupied, or controlled by NH DHHS.

Can I smoke on my break?

No. Most NH State Employees are paid for two (2) 15 minute break periods. The policy does not allow tobacco use/electronic cigarette/device use on property rented, owned, or leased to or by NH DHHS.

Will the use of e-cigarettes be permitted?

No. The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has not determined if e-cigarettes is a safe nicotine delivery system. No manufacturer has applied to the FDA for the purpose of determining if electronic cigarettes are a cessation strategy and there use is prohibited on Department property for purposes of this policy. Other FDA approved forms of nicotine replacement therapy such as gum and patches may be used on the property and are available through the State's health benefits package. See FDA information on [e-cigarettes](#).

Does the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy prohibit the use of chewing tobacco?

Yes. The use of all tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco products such as chewing tobacco and snuff, is prohibited on all Department property or in Department vehicles for purposes of this policy.

Are clove cigarettes (Bidis or Kreteks) permitted?

No. The use of clove cigarettes is prohibited by the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that smoking clove cigarettes is associated with an increased risk for lung damage. See CDC information on [clove cigarettes](#).

Is the nicotine oral inhaler the same as an e-cigarette?

No. The nicotine oral inhaler or the nasal spray is a nicotine replacement product used for smoking cessation. The inhaler looks like a plastic cigarette holder. Designed to wean the body off cigarettes, these products supply the body with nicotine in controlled amounts while sparing the chemicals found in tobacco products. The nicotine oral inhaler and nasal spray is available by prescription-only and users should consult with their health care professional about the use of nicotine replacement therapy. (U.S. Food and Drug Administration)

Will there be designated smoking or tobacco use areas?

No.

Can Employees Leave a DHHS property on a break to use a tobacco product?

No. The Tobacco Free at Work Policy is consistent with the DHHS Human Resources Memo issued June 28, 2013 relative to DHHS employees and the requirement to stay on grounds (DHHS locations rented/leased/owned) during 15 minute paid breaks.

Will there be signs to tell people they cannot use tobacco?

Notices bearing the message Tobacco-Free at Work Policy in place and signs will be posted at major Department vehicular, pedestrian, and building entrances. However, the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy applies to all Department property whether or not a notice or sign is posted.

What if people don't abide by the policy?

For visitors, we believe reminders about the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy will be important and the Department will provide messaging on Department-affiliated materials, websites, work contracts, and for special events/public meeting notices. For employees, we expect cooperation with a policy that directly supports our Department's mission of health and welfare of all residents. As with all DHHS policies, employees will be accountable for adhering to the Tobacco-Free at Work Policy. Non-cooperation of any employee to abide by this policy will be cause for management/supervisor intervention and may result in corrective or disciplinary action in accordance with the New Hampshire State Personnel Rules.

Have other State of NH Departments implemented a tobacco-free campus?

Yes. The NH Department of Corrections has had a policy in place for over 10 years. NH DHHS is the first Department in 10 years to implement a similar policy. Countless hospitals, universities, private companies, and other State governments, some as early as 2003, have implemented similar policies and the number continues to increase. There are over 600 college and Department campuses all across the United States that have enacted 100% smoke- or tobacco-free campuses.

What resources are available to help those who want to quit using tobacco products?

Assistance to employees to overcome addiction to tobacco products is available through our existing health benefits package by way of tobacco cessation medication, Community Health Education programs, and the Employee Assistance Program. See the [Tobacco Cessation Resources](#) page of this website for a list of available resources.

What resources are available to part-time employees who want to quit?

1. The State of New Hampshire Employee Assistance Program offers the American Lung Association "Freedom from Smoking" Program: call 800-852-3345 ext 4336.
2. The NH Tobacco Helpline 1-800-QUIT-NOW (800-784-8669) or www.trytostopnh.org offers free Nicotine Replacement Therapy in the form of the patch, quit tobacco services and materials, and confidential telephone counseling with quit counselors. The Helpline services are currently available to all New Hampshire residents regardless of their insurance status. The nicotine therapy patches will be available at no-cost to part-time employees of DHHS and their family/household members, while supplies last and to those who qualify (medically, ready to quit in 30 days, and are at least 18 years old.) Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to access the patch.

With your cooperation and respect for the health and wellbeing of all employees, we can make the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services a healthier place to work. Thank you.