

Frequently Asked Questions About the Tobacco-Free State Properties Policy

What is happening?

On Jan. 1, 2013, the State of Oregon will begin phased implementation of a tobacco-free state property policy. The tobacco-free state campus policy will prohibit use of all tobacco products at all times on State of Oregon property. The policy will be phased in, with campuses of facilities wholly owned or operated by the State of Oregon being first to implement on Jan. 1. Shared properties and campuses will go tobacco free on July 1, 2013, while Department of Corrections and Oregon Youth Authority properties and campuses will be tobacco free no later than Dec. 31, 2014. Agency heads are charged with developing a plan for taking state parks and lands tobacco free.

I thought smoking already was prohibited. How will the new tobacco-free state campus policy be different?

Smoking is prohibited inside all State of Oregon facilities in accordance with Oregon's Smokefree Workplace Law that went into effect in January 2002. This policy differs from the Smokefree Workplace Law in two significant ways. First, the new State of Oregon policy prohibits use of all tobacco, not just cigarettes, including cigars, pipes, chew, snuff, electronic cigarettes and smokeless tobacco. Second, it prohibits use of tobacco products on the grounds or campuses of state locations.

Why are tobacco-free property or campus policies necessary?

The State of Oregon's health mission is better health, and better health care quality, at lower cost. Providing a tobacco-free environment is one of the most effective ways we know to improve the health of employees, clients and visitors to our facilities. Evidence of the dangers of smoking and secondhand smoke continues to mount; research shows that smokeless tobacco also poses serious health risks to users. By establishing tobacco-free zones, not just smokefree ones, we are creating a policy that addresses all the health risks associated with tobacco use and supports healthy choices.

Who do the policies apply to?

The policy applies to anyone on State of Oregon property, including employees, clients, vendors, volunteers and visitors.

How will people know that tobacco use is prohibited?

The State of Oregon is taking a proactive approach to planning and implementing this policy. This includes developing educational materials and communicating with employees, clients and visitors several months prior to Jan. 1, 2013. After Jan. 1, permanent signs will clearly indicate that no tobacco use is allowed on the grounds or in the buildings. Printed materials with information about the policy also will be available. Additionally, managers and staff who work directly with clients and the public will receive information and training on educating visitors about the policy.

Why aren't the policies being implemented at all State of Oregon facilities at the same time?

A phased-in approach allows all agencies to have the time needed for successful implementation. Locations selected for implementation on Jan. 1, 2013, are properties where the State of Oregon occupies the entire building or property, with the exception of Corrections facilities. Locations that the state shares with other organizations or businesses will be required to have tobacco-free campuses by July 2013, and Corrections facilities will be tobacco free on Dec. 31, 2014. Agency directors are required to present a plan for taking state parks and lands tobacco free by Dec. 31, 2014, as well.

Why is smokeless tobacco being prohibited?

Both cigarettes and smokeless tobacco pose serious health risks. Smokeless tobacco products,

including chew, snuff, tobacco strips and candies, and electronic cigarettes, contain nicotine, which is absorbed directly into the bloodstream and can lead to addiction and dependence, just like cigarettes. Smokeless tobacco contains 28 cancer-causing agents. Users also have an increased risk of developing mouth cancer and other oral health problems, including lesions (i.e., leukoplakia) and recession of the gums.

The State of Oregon is concerned with protecting and promoting the health and well-being of Oregonians. While using smokeless tobacco products does not interfere with non-users in the way secondhand smoke does, products like chewing tobacco, snuff, tobacco strips and candies, and electronic cigarettes, can be addictive and pose serious health risks to those who use them. Because of this, the policy covers all tobacco products. All resources being offered in conjunction with the policy are available to smokeless tobacco users who want to learn more about the risks or quit.

Isn't it a person's choice to smoke or use tobacco?

No one will be prohibited from using tobacco. The tobacco-free state campus policy states only that tobacco use will not be allowed on State of Oregon property.

What if I see a staff member smoking on campus?

Enforcement of the tobacco-free state campus policy is everyone's responsibility. If you see someone smoking on a state property campus, please ask that person if they are aware of the State of Oregon's tobacco-free campus policy. Most tobacco users will be happy to comply with the policy once they are made aware of it. If a particular employee is seen repeatedly violating the policy, please mention it to the employee's manager.

What if I see a client or member of the public smoking on campus?

Again, enforcement of the policy is everyone's responsibility. If a client is seen smoking on campus, please ask that person if they are aware of the State of Oregon's tobacco-free campus policy. Most tobacco users will be happy to comply. If a client does not comply, don't insist.

Are there resources to help employees quit smoking or using tobacco?

Yes, there are many resources available to employees to help them quit, and most are free. PEBB provides employees excellent quitting benefits including telephone coaching, nicotine replacement therapy (patches, gum, lozenges) and medication. PEBB members can visit www.oregon.gov/DAS/PEBB/pages/freeclear.aspx or call 1-866-QUIT-4-LIFE (1-866-784-8454). Those not covered by PEBB or other insurance can also receive help through the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW (1-800-784-8669), or by visiting www.quitnow.net/oregon.

What are the options if someone is not ready to quit tobacco?

Quitting takes time, and multiple attempts, for some people. Whether or not you are ready to quit, call one of the numbers or visit one of the websites above. The Quit Coaches can answer any questions you may have about quitting and give you information that may help you make your decision.

Where can I get more information about the policy?

The policy, information and resources can be found at healthoregon.org/tobacco-free-state-properties.

Implementing the Tobacco-Free State Properties Policy

How does this policy apply to semi-independent agencies, such as the Oregon Board of Optometry?

Semi-independent agencies are covered by the Executive Order and face the same timelines as other agencies.

Does the Executive Order cover the use of smokeless tobacco in state vehicles?

Yes.

Does the Executive Order cover adjacent properties such as sidewalks, or adjacent (non-state property) parking lots?

Sidewalks used to enter, exit and cross state properties are covered. Public sidewalks that run parallel to streets are not. The order covers parking lots owned or leased by the state.

If the state has leased a private facility and it is the sole tenant, will the effective date be January 1 or July 1?

All property wholly owned *or controlled* by the state needs to be tobacco-free by January 1. When an agency is the sole tenant, the property is controlled by that agency.

How can the state partner with the Legislature?

The Legislature has been informed of the policy by the Governor's Office.

The Capitol Mall is a park, therefore not immediately covered by the Executive Order. Can Oregon Parks and Recreation address this area with a specific policy to be implemented when adjacent facilities go tobacco-free?

Yes, Oregon Parks and Recreation is permitted to develop a policy for the Capitol Mall.

DAS announced that it would provide up to 5 signs and 10 stickers for each state facility. Since then, the potential number of eligible facilities has grown substantially. Will DAS pay for up to 5 signs and 10 stickers no matter how many are ordered?

No. DAS has a limited budget. The good faith offer to pay for signs and stickers was based on a much smaller number of facilities. Once the total number of requests is submitted, DAS will determine how far the amount of money it budgeted can cover. Agencies should submit sign and sticker requests with the understanding that DAS may not cover all costs.

When should external signs be posted? When should posters and flyers announcing the policy be posted?

DAS will install metal signs in DAS-owned buildings before the January 1 and July 1 implementation dates. Agencies are responsible for installing signs in buildings not owned by DAS. Agencies are free to post stickers anytime prior to the implementation dates. Posters and flyers informing employees, clients, vendors and visitors about the policy are in development and should be ready to post by mid to late September.

Will there be an exception to the policy for properties where it is difficult for a smoker to leave, smoke and return to the property during a short break?

No. It is the employee's responsibility to manage his or her tobacco use while at work just as it is his or her responsibility to manage any other activities they may have. For employees ready to quit, PEBB offers excellent cessation benefits, or anyone can call the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW.

Is the best approach for leased offices in private facilities to use stickers on doors/windows rather than signs at the private property?

Properties leased from any entity other than the state will require negotiations with the owner to implement the policy to the extent possible by July 1, 2013. Agencies can use their best judgment about whether stickers or signs are most appropriate for their facilities.

Can ashtrays be at the door or perimeter of a property with a note saying  please extinguish

cigarettes here ♦?

The Executive Order requires the removal of ashtrays and smoking shelters. Agencies can request that employees and visitors take responsibility for safely disposing of cigarette butts without littering.

Are storage units, warehouses, depots and remote facilities such as ODOT gravel storage units or Forestry's wildfire spotting stations required to post signs or stickers?

Agencies should use their best judgment on whether it would be effective or an efficient use of limited resources to install signs or stickers in such places. The purpose of the signs and stickers is to alert and remind state employees, the public and vendors that tobacco products cannot be used on state-owned or state leased properties. When considering where to put signs and stickers, agencies should determine the best way to get the message out.

Which facilities should order bilingual signs and how many?

Agencies should use their best judgment about where to post signs and stickers in languages other than English. If agencies decide to post bilingual signs, they may request the number they need.

This document can be provided upon request in an alternate format for individuals with disabilities or in a language other than English for people with limited English skills. To request one of these publications in another format or language, contact the Oregon Health Authority Publications and Design Section at 503-378-3486, 711 for TTY, or email dhs-oha.publicationrequest@state.or.us.