



Smoke-Free Toolkit for Mississippi Businesses

The Economic Impact of Smoke-free Laws

“Establishing smoke-free workplaces is the simplest and most cost effective way to improve worker and business health.”

The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke, Report of the Surgeon General, 2006

The Good News! Going smoke-free is 100% cost-free and one of the simplest steps you can take to actually reduce business costs, make your customers happier and improve employee health and productivity. All you have to do is remove ashtrays and post a sign designating your business as a smoke-free establishment.

Studies report that after communities implemented smoke-free laws, there was a rapid and sizeable reduction in hospital admissions related to heart attacks. Smoke-free laws can prevent childhood tobacco addiction. By eliminating smoking in workplaces and public places, society has changed the perception of what is “normal” smoking behavior, prompting smokers to quit and contributing to a sharp decrease in smoking rates

Strong, comprehensive smoke-free laws not only protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke, they also prevent youth tobacco addiction and help smokers who want to quit.

Secondhand smoke contains at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic or carcinogenic. Secondhand smoke causes heart disease and lung cancer in nonsmoking adults and sudden infant death syndrome, acute respiratory infections, respiratory symptoms and slowed lung growth in children.

Smoking: The Impact on Your Business

Tobacco Use Hurts Your Bottom Line

Business leaders today are aware that rising healthcare costs are one of the biggest threats to their bottom line. What is not as well known is the significant role of smoking and other tobacco use in driving these costs. In fact, tobacco use is the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States. Business bears the burden of tobacco-caused illness and the resulting healthcare bills among employees, family members and even retirees. Reducing tobacco use and its preventable costs is critical to optimizing profits and improving worker health and productivity.

Impact on Worker Productivity

- Non-smokers are healthier workers
- Healthier workers are more productive workers
- Smoke breaks are disruptive, take time away from work, and may be viewed as unfair by fellow non-smoking workers.

Smoking in the Workplace

Businesses that permit smoking experience higher fire and property insurance costs, as well as higher costs of cleaning and maintenance due to smoke damage.

In addition to the direct harms of smoking, secondhand smoke is a serious health hazard that causes lung cancer, heart disease and other ailments in nonsmokers.

Employees exposed to secondhand smoke may suffer from acute respiratory problems, require more outpatient treatment, and tend to be less productive.

Preparing Your Business for the Smoke-Free Ordinance

On June 18, 2013, the City of Pascagoula passed a comprehensive ordinance stating all restaurants, worksites and public places will be smoke-free. The ordinance ensures that workers and the public can breathe smoke-free air when they eat out, work or shop in our town.

Going smoke-free is 100% cost-free and one of the simplest steps you can take to actually reduce business costs, make your customers happier and improve employee health and productivity. All you have to do is remove ashtrays and post signs designating your business as a smoke-free establishment.

What does the ordinance do?

Effective July 18, 2013, all city restaurants, worksites and public places will be required to be smoke-free to protect employees and the public from secondhand smoke. Smoking will also be prohibited within a buffer zone of 20 feet of all entrances and exits, windows that open, and ventilated intakes.

What is secondhand smoke?

In issuing a report on secondhand smoke in June 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General stated, “The debate is over. The science is clear: Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance, but a serious health hazard and the third leading cause of premature death in the United States.”

What makes secondhand smoke so dangerous?

Secondhand smoke contains more than 7,000 chemicals, including at least 250 chemicals known to be toxic or carcinogenic. It contains Ammonia, Acetone, Arsenic, Benzene, Carbon Monoxide, Cyanide, Formaldehyde, Methane, Nicotine, and Tar, among other hazardous products. There is no safe level of exposure. Even a little bit of exposure can cause a heart attack.

How will going smoke-free affect my business revenues?

Smoke-free air is great for health and great for business. No legitimate economic impact study has shown a negative impact.

Do I need to post signs?

Yes! Signs prohibiting smoking must be conspicuously posted at each entrance, in prominent locations inside your business, and in outdoor nonsmoking buffer zones. Posting signs will help make the transition to smoke-free air smooth for everyone.

How will the new law be enforced?

Compliance with the law is the responsibility of the owner, manager or other person in charge of the business. The ordinance will be enforced by the Pascagoula Police Department.

What are the penalties?

A person who smokes in a prohibited area can be fined up to \$1000.

Am I required to provide a smoking break room for my employees?

No. In fact, the smoke-free ordinance prohibits employers from providing a smoking room. Businesses that currently have a separate room for smoking can no longer allow smoking in these rooms or anywhere else inside. You must simply inform your smoking employees that they must go outside to smoke and that they must do so twenty feet away from an entrance, exit or ventilation intake. Be sure to communicate early and clearly with your employees to ensure they understand how the new smoke-free ordinance applies to both them and your customers.

How do I enforce the “20-Foot Rule”?

The most important thing is to train your staff about the new ordinance BEFORE the effective date of the law. The 20-Foot Rule says that smoking is not allowed within 20 feet of entrances, exits, operable windows and ventilation intakes of your establishment.

Won't installing ventilation systems reduce health risks caused from secondhand smoke exposure? What about separately ventilated and enclosed smoking rooms?

Ventilations systems do not work. The U.S. Surgeon General concluded that no ventilation system has ever been designed that can protect the public from the death and disease caused by exposure to secondhand smoke, and that establishing smoke-free environments is the only proven way to prevent exposure.

Patrons frequent your business for the service; not to smoke.

Reducing Smoking Improves Productivity and Profit

Helping your employees who smoke to quit and protecting all employees from secondhand smoke can increase the health of your workforce and your bottom line.

Implement Model Tobacco-Free Policies

There are several ways you can support tobacco control “inside the walls” of your business. A worksite smoke-free policy may encourage employees to quit smoking altogether.

- **Promote the policy widely.** Distribute information about the health risks association with smoking, the consequences of smoking in prohibited areas and the availability of proven quitting aids and programs. Post signs indicating a smoke-free workplace.
- **Support the policy through your company’s infrastructure.**
Train supervisors and human resource staff on how to implement and enforce this policy.
- **Make sure employees know the consequences of noncompliance.**
Use e-mail, newsletters, payroll inserts and announcements as communication channels to prepare your workforce 60–90 days in advance of your policy implementation date. Send reminder messages with information on programs and services available to help smokers quit.

Provide information about cessation programs

A comprehensive approach includes a workplace smoke-free policy and access to tobacco cessation treatment, such as community programs or telephone quitline services.

The ACT Center at the University of Mississippi Medical Center provides face-to-face treatment services for Mississippians who would like to quit smoking. The program consists of a combination of counseling and medications. The approach of combining counseling and medication has been shown to be one of the most effective options currently available. There are satellite centers throughout the state in addition to the main clinic in Jackson.

The Mississippi Tobacco Quitline. Callers to the Mississippi Tobacco Quitline who want to stop smoking can receive up to eight weeks of the nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) patch or gum at no charge. Callers must complete an intake and agree to participate in cessation counseling in order to receive the products. The approach of combining counseling and medication has been shown to be one of the most effective options currently available. Medical clearance is necessary for the safety of our callers.

The Benefits of Quitting Smoking

20 minutes after the last cigarette: blood pressure decreases, pulse rate drops and body temperature of hands and feet increases.

8 hours after quitting: carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal, and oxygen level in blood increases to normal.

24 hours after quitting: chance of a heart attack decreases.

48 hours after quitting: nerve endings start re-growing and ability to smell and taste is enhanced.

After 2 weeks to 3 months: circulation improves: walking becomes easier, lung function increases.

After 1 to 9 months: coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, shortness of breath decreases.

After 1 year: excess risk of coronary heart disease is decreased to half that of a smoker.

After 5 to 15 years: stroke risk is reduced to that of people who have never smoked.

After 10 years: risk of lung cancer drops to as little as one-half that of continuing smokers; risk of cancer of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney and pancreas decreases; and risk of ulcer decreases.

After 15 years: risk of coronary heart disease is similar to that of people who never smoked; and risk of death returns to nearly the level of people who never smoked.



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