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Florida State University Smoke-Free Policy

Abstract

In an effort to decrease secondhand smoke on campus and improve the overall health of the campus community, Florida State University adopted the Breathe Easy Policy, which prohibited smoking within 50 feet of participating buildings in 2006. While this was a positive step, national and institutional research, as well as recent national and state trends, indicates that further action is needed. Evidence-based research indicates that comprehensive smoke or tobacco-free bans are more effective at preventing exposure and mitigating the health threats posed by secondhand smoke when compared to building by building smoking restrictions. It has therefore been proposed that a new smoking policy be developed and implemented so that 1) optimal protection from the detrimental health effects of secondhand smoke be provided to entire the campus community, 2) mutual respect between smokers and non-smokers be promoted, and 3) the discontinuation of tobacco products be encouraged and comprehensive cessation services offered to everyone. Over 1,129 colleges and universities nationally and 18 in the state of Florida have already made the change. Now is a wonderful opportunity for Florida State University to commit to a smoke-free environment.

The Problem

The health of the entire FSU community is affected by secondhand smoke but has not been given the serious attention it deserves. Secondhand smoke is classified as a Group A carcinogen, which is a designation for substances known to cause cancer to humans, and it is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States. It has been directly linked to conditions such as lung cancer, heart disease, and chronic lung ailments, such as bronchitis and asthma. According to the Surgeon General of the United States of America, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke, and even the lowest detectable levels can produce detectable abnormal genetic activity within humans. Allowing any exposure should be considered unacceptable.

Of those FSU students polled in a recent survey, 88% reported being exposed to secondhand smoke, with 41% being exposed weekly, and 30% every day - thereby highlighting the severity of the problem. Furthermore, 81% of students reported being bothered by exposure to secondhand smoke and 76.5% support a tobacco-free campus. Thus the problem is one that affects a substantial portion of the university community and one that is placing the students, faculty, staff and visitors alike at risk.

Conclusion

The absence of smoke will not only promote healthier and more productive students, faculty, and staff, but it will also eliminate smoking-related litter and help preserve and maintain the beauty of the campus environment. The policy will effectively fill in the gaps that were left by the designated smoking area policy, while meeting the expectations of the three-quarters of students, faculty, and staff who have expressed their support for a Tobacco-Free Campus. Also, policy change, unlike one-time activities and events, provides benefit not only to current students, but to future generations of FSU students in perpetuity. The debate is over, the science is clear... secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance. It is a serious health hazard that can lead to disease and premature death in children and non-smoking adults.

Protecting the health and welfare of all members of the University community – faculty, students, staff, and visitors – is of paramount importance and a crucial responsibility of the university. The burden of evidence collected fully supports a smoke-free policy adoption and is well summarized in the current Smoking Policy Statement, which reads: *Although the decision to smoke or not to smoke rests with the individual, no individual has the right to pursue any habit or pastime that is deleterious to the health and comfort of others.* It is therefore proposed that a self-sustaining policy &/or community standard be established which encourages not only a campus-wide change in behavior, but a change in culture as well.

U.S. Colleges and Universities with Smoke-free and Tobacco-Free Policies

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While it has become relatively common for colleges and universities to have policies requiring that all buildings, including residential housing, be smoke-free indoors, this list only includes those colleges and universities with entirely smoke-free campuses.

+ = 100% Tobacco-Free campus (no forms of tobacco allowed). Otherwise policy is smoke-free only (other forms of tobacco allowed).

There are now at least **1,129** 100% smoke-free campuses with no exemptions. Residential housing facilities are included, where they exist. Of these, **766** have a 100% tobacco-free policy.

Please note, these policies have been enacted but are not necessarily yet in effect. Please contact the school itself to verify the status of its policy.

U.S. States/Territories/Commonwealths Requiring 100% Smokefree College and University Campuses, Indoors and Out (Required 100% Tobacco-Free Campuses Marked +)

Florida

Edison State College +
Edward Waters College
Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University +
Florida Hospital College of Health Sciences +
Florida International University +
Florida State College of Jacksonville (5 campuses) +
Gulf Coast State College +
Miami Dade College (8 campuses) +
Nova Southeastern University +
South Florida Community College +
University of Central Florida
University of Florida +
University of Florida Health Sciences/Shands +
University of Miami Medical Campus
University of South Florida Health +
Valencia College
Warner University +

Georgia

Armstrong Atlantic State University +
Altamaha Technical College +
Athens Technical College +
Chattahoochee Technical College +
College of Coastal Georgia +
Columbus Technical College +
Darton College +
Emory University +
Gainesville College +
Georgia Highlands College +
Georgia Piedmont Technical College (formerly Dekalb) +
Gwinnett Technical College +
Medical College of Georgia +
Mercer University +
Oglethorpe University +
Piedmont College +
Southwest Georgia Technical College +
University of Georgia Health Sciences Campus +

DRAFT

Florida State University

Revisions to the University Tobacco Policy

I. INTRODUCTION

Florida State University is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for its employees, students and visitors. Research findings show that use of tobacco products and exposures to secondhand smoke by non-users constitute a significant health hazard.

II. OBJECTIVE

To prohibit the use of all tobacco products and simulated tobacco products on property owned or managed by Florida State University within the state of Florida beginning August 1, 2013.

III. RATIONALE

- Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable disease and death in the United States.
- Research findings confirm and the U.S. Surgeon General affirms that tobacco use and exposures to secondhand smoke by non-users constitute a significant health hazard.
- Existing university policy prohibits the sale, distribution, sampling and advertising of all tobacco products and tobacco-related merchandise on all university-owned and -managed property and at university-sponsored events.
- Existing university policy prohibits tobacco use inside all campus facilities and within designated Breathe Easy zones (25- to 50-foot no-smoking areas around certain buildings).
- Surveys of the FSU community have determined that a majority of students and employees support a policy change that protects them from exposure to tobacco and secondhand smoke.
- Florida State University has an interest in protecting the health and wellbeing of its employees, students and visitors.
- Through its healthcare services and health education programs and courses, the university already promotes a healthy lifestyle (e.g. a healthy balanced diet, regular exercise, etc.).
- Adoption of a tobacco-free policy has the potential to reduce maintenance costs, improve productivity, reduce initiation of new tobacco users and increase tobacco-cessation rates.

- Through the Florida Clean Indoor Air Act, the state of Florida acknowledges that lighted tobacco products constitute significant health hazards to users and non-users.
- Lighted tobacco products are also a safety concern since they have been identified as contributing factors in numerous accidental fires.
- Currently 766 college campuses in the U.S. have adopted tobacco-free policies.

IV. DEFINITIONS

“Smoking” means inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying or possessing any lighted tobacco product, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, water-pipes, hookahs or any other lighted tobacco products, as well as any product consumed in a similar manner; or the use of an electronic cigarette or any other device intended to simulate lighted tobacco use.

“Tobacco products” means cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, hookah, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, smokeless pouches, dissolvable tobacco products like orbs (dissolvable tobacco pellets), sticks, and strips or any other forms of ignitable or smokeless tobacco.

“University property” includes all property owned or managed by Florida State University in Florida including the interiors and exteriors of all buildings, land, parking facilities, university-owned or -leased vehicles (regardless of location), athletic facilities, and fraternities or sororities. Limited exceptions are outlined below.

V. POLICY STATEMENT

Effective August 1, 2013, tobacco use, including simulated tobacco use, is prohibited on property, interior and exterior, owned or managed by Florida State University within the state of Florida. Limited exceptions to this policy are outlined below.

No tobacco use will be permitted in university facilities, common or private work areas, elevators, hallways, garages, restrooms, dining areas, employee lounges, conference and meeting rooms, and all other enclosed or semi-enclosed areas. Additionally, no tobacco use will be permitted in outdoor areas including parking lots, parking garages, grounds, rooftops, plazas, courtyards, entrance/exit ways, university-owned or -leased vehicles, and any other indoor or outdoor areas owned or managed by the university.

This policy applies to all Florida State University students, employees, consultants, contractors, visitors and external individuals, companies renting university-owned space, and property owned or managed by Florida State University within the state of

Florida.

VI. EXCEPTIONS

This prohibition on tobacco use does not apply to public right-of-ways (sidewalks, streets, etc.) on the perimeter of university-owned or -managed property or adjacent property.

The Florida State University president or designee may allow smoking in specific areas of campus for clinical-treatment purposes, including smoking-cessation programs, or research-related purposes.

The university will establish designated outdoor areas for use of lighted tobacco products at facilities with large numbers of visitors. Such use will be restricted to the days and times that events take place at these facilities including the Fallon Theatre, Ruby Diamond Concert Hall, Ringling Museum, Asolo Theatre, university parking lots during home football games, and areas outside of but adjacent to Doak Campbell Stadium and Dick Howser Stadium. These designated smoking areas will be located at least 25 feet from the entrances, outdoor (fresh) air intakes and operable windows of these facilities.

VII. COMMUNICATION

Persons will be informed of this policy and the availability of smoking-cessation services via a public education and awareness campaign, the Florida State University website (including postings to Admissions, Human Resources, Environmental Health & Safety, University Relations, Athletics and others), signs posted in appropriate areas throughout university property, university and departmental newsletters, e-mail communication to all employees, students and alumni; and employee and student handbooks.

VIII. COMPLIANCE AND SUPPORT

Effective implementation of this voluntary policy depends upon the courtesy and cooperation of all members of the university community, not only to comply with this policy, but also to encourage others to comply with the policy. Visitors, contractors, and other individuals on campus who are in violation of the policy should be informed of the policy and asked to comply by discarding tobacco products. All employees and students violating the policy should be reminded of the policy and asked to comply by discarding tobacco products.

For additional information related to this policy, or for suggestions about how to encourage others to support the policy, the following departments may be contacted:

- Environmental Health and Safety with respect to indoor air quality issues.
- Human Resources with respect to Employee-related issues.
- Housing with respect to residence hall contract-related issues.
- The Dean of Students with respect to student-related issues.
- University Health Services with respect to Smoking Cessation-related services.

The university will provide access for students, faculty and staff interested in smoking-cessation services. Information regarding cessation resources are available at [insert website address or phone number].

IX. FORMS

No forms are associated with this policy and its procedures.