



# Tobacco-free campus: common questions and scenarios to help enforce your campus policy



Tobacco Cessation Clinic Enhancement Program  
Toolkit Series

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS  
**MD Anderson**  
~~Cancer~~ Center  
Making Cancer History®

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## Why are we doing this?

We want [ORGANIZATION] to lead our community in health promotion and staff wellness. As an institution dedicated to improving the health of our patients and community, we must show our commitment and leadership in tangible ways. Tobacco-free campus policies are the standard for many health care institutions and companies. Other organizations that are already 100% tobacco-free include The University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center, UT Southwestern Medical Center, Houston Methodist Hospital, Mayo Clinic and many other businesses, hospitals and health care organizations across the country.

## How will patients, visitors and others learn of the tobacco-free policy?

We will announce the tobacco-free policy through signage inside buildings and around our campus. The leadership will provide information to physicians and other health care providers, asking them to tell patients about our tobacco-free policy. [ORGANIZATION] will inform every patient admitted to this campus about the policy. We ask that managers begin discussing this policy with employees as soon as possible so all of us can prepare for this change.

## How will the policy be enforced?

Our hope is that everyone can work together to enforce this policy through friendly interactions. All employees, clients/patients and visitors seen smoking or using tobacco on the premises after [DATE] will be asked to stop, reminded of the new policy and informed of tools that can ease symptoms while they are at work. If they are ready to quit, we can provide resources to help them. Repeat offenders are subject to disciplinary action.



## What areas of campus will the smoke and tobacco free policy cover?

The new policy applies to all [ORGANIZATION] owned properties including those leased to others as well as properties leased in their entirety to our institution. “Property” for purposes of this paragraph includes buildings, athletic and entertainment facilities (both indoors and outside), sidewalks, roadways, parking lots and grounds. This includes institution owned, rented or leased vehicles and applies to personal vehicles while parked on the institution’s property.

## Is there a designated smoking area(s)?

No. Providing a place to smoke or use tobacco does not support the overall goal to create a healthy, tobacco-free environment. In 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General stated that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. In addition, we are working to eliminate triggers, like smoking areas, that make smoking cessation difficult for people who smoke.

## If I see members or visitors using tobacco on campus, what am I supposed to do?

You may need to educate patients, employees and visitors about the new policy when you see someone smoking or using tobacco on campus. Managers have the primary responsibility for enforcement. This means they will talk with employees or visitors who do not wish to stop smoking or using tobacco after being educated about our policy. We anticipate that most employees, patients and visitors will comply with the policy once they know about it. We understand that conversations about personal behaviors, such as smoking, can be uncomfortable. We hope you will help [ORGANIZATION] create a healthier environment by educating people about the new policy. Gently inform them of the policy and if the member, visitor or staff member continues smoking, walk away.

If you feel comfortable, use the ABC strategy to approach a clinic employee or visitor:

- **A**ssume the person isn’t aware of the policy and briefly explain tobacco use is not permitted on the health campus property.
- **B**e polite and friendly and avoid using a judgmental tone.
- **C**onsider the person’s situation and empathize with them. If possible, provide alternatives for them, such as those offered in the scenarios on the next page.

These sample scenarios provide other ways to prepare for conversations with staff and patients about the tobacco-free policies:

Location	Clinic employee using tobacco response	Patient/visitor using tobacco response	Follow-up
<p><b>Property</b></p>	<p>Hello. I would like to let you know that [ORGANIZATION] does not allow tobacco use on campus. This includes outside property as well.</p> <p>If you are interested, the pharmacy or tobacco treatment team can provide nicotine replacement therapy to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Hello. I want to share that for the health of everyone, [ORGANIZATION] does not allow tobacco use on campus. That includes all property, grounds and parking areas.</p> <p>However, if you are interested, we can provide nicotine replacement therapy at the [LOCATION] to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Report back to [INSERT CONTACT PERSON].</p> <p>Document location of tobacco use being used on property, so leaders are aware of hot spots.</p> <p>Temporary signage could be placed in these locations designating a tobacco-free campus.</p>
<p><b>Vehicle/ parking lot</b></p>	<p>Hello. I want to let you know that this parking lot is part of [ORGANIZATION], which is tobacco-free. Smoking/vaping/dipping is not allowed. More information can be found in our employee handbook. Also, when you are ready let the pharmacy/tobacco treatment team know if you need assistance and they can provide nicotine replacement therapy to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Hello. I want to let you know that this parking lot is part of [ORGANIZATION], which is tobacco-free. Smoking/vaping is not permitted on clinic grounds. Here is an information card that explains our policy and gives you some other options.</p>	<p>Report back to [INSERT CONTACT PERSON]. Consider adding additional tobacco-free campus signage around these locations.</p>

Sample scenarios provide other ways to prepare for conversations with staff and patients about the tobacco-free policies:

Location	Clinic employee using tobacco response	Patient/visitor using tobacco response	Follow-up
<p><b>Near entry</b></p>	<p>Hello. I want to let you know that [ORGANIZATION] does not allow tobacco use on campus. Using tobacco by our entrance can cause secondhand smoke exposure to visitors walking inside. If you are interested, the pharmacy or tobacco treatment team can provide nicotine replacement therapy to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Hello. I want to let you know that [ORGANIZATION] does not allow tobacco use on campus. Using tobacco by the entry way can cause secondhand smoke exposure to visitors walking inside. If you are interested, the pharmacy or tobacco treatment team can provide nicotine replacement therapy to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Report back to [INSERT CONTACT PERSON].</p> <p>Consider adding additional tobacco-free campus signage around these locations.</p>
<p><b>Inside</b></p>	<p>Hello. We are a tobacco-free campus [and that includes vaping and e-cigarette use]. Please refrain from using [insert product] inside and on the property. If you are interested, the pharmacy or tobacco treatment team can provide nicotine replacement therapy to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Hello. We are a tobacco-free campus [and that includes vaping and e-cigarette use]. Please refrain from using [insert product] inside and on the property. If you are interested, the pharmacy or tobacco treatment team can provide nicotine replacement therapy to relieve your cravings.</p>	<p>Report employee violation to HR for use indoors. Report visitor violation to the leadership in that specific area of campus (clinical, administrative, facilities, etc.).</p> <p>Consider adding more signage indoors.</p>