

Why have a tobacco-free campus environment?

Edison State College is committed to providing a healthy working and learning environment and recognizes the increasing weight of scientific evidence that smoking is harmful not only to the active smoker but also to the "passive" smoker who is exposed to others' smoke. The purpose of this policy is to reduce harm from the use of tobacco products and from secondhand smoke, provide an environment that encourages persons to be tobacco-free, establish a campus culture of wellness, and promote a tobacco-free future.

Edison State College is invested not only in academic achievement, but also in developing life skills that will promote individual and civic wellness. Higher education prepares students to cope with the reality of living situations. One emerging reality is that fewer and fewer spaces permit smoking and tobacco use. In growing numbers, worksites, restaurants, public buildings, shopping malls, healthcare and transportation facilities are 100% smoke-free.

Edison State College has a responsibility to its students and employees to provide a safe and healthful environment. Research findings show that tobacco use in general, including smoking and breathing secondhand smoke, constitute a significant health hazard. In addition to causing direct health hazards, smoking contributes to college costs in other ways, including potential fire damage, cleaning and maintenance costs, and costs associated with absenteeism, health care, and medical insurance.

When does the Tobacco Free policy start?

August 24, 2009.

What is the difference between smoke-free and tobacco-free?

Tobacco-free includes the use of any lighted or oral tobacco product as well as smoking products such as cigarettes and cigars.

Whom does this policy affect?

This policy applies to all faculty, staff, students, contractors, vendors, and visitors.

Does the policy apply to the entire Charlotte Campus and Hendry/Glades Center?

Smoking and the use of tobacco products are prohibited in all Charlotte Campus and Hendry/Glades Center buildings and indoor facilities, campus grounds and walkways, and all areas where non-smokers cannot avoid environmental smoke.

The use of mouth or smokeless tobacco (to include dipping, chewing, etc.) is also prohibited under this policy and is subject to the same restrictions.

Where can I smoke?

On the Charlotte Campus, smoking and tobacco use are permitted only in your personal car. Parking lots are included in the tobacco-free policy; however, there will be no effort to enforce the policy in private vehicles located on college property provided users contain smoking materials and smoke inside the vehicle. Smoking and the use of tobacco products is not permitted in your personal vehicle at the Hendry/Glades Center.

Will there be cessation programs available for students, faculty and staff?

Yes. Edison State College is committed to providing assistance to all students, faculty and staff who want to quit using tobacco. Information on smoking and the use of tobacco products and cessation information are listed below.

How will Edison State College address compliance of this policy?

The process of achieving a tobacco-free environment takes time and patience. Edison State College believes that self-enforcement will become part of the norm and the value of compliance will become recognized as it has with seat belt laws. Students, faculty, staff and visitors will come to recognize the value of this policy and will chose to comply.

Compliance with this policy is the shared responsibility and the right of all Edison State College staff, students, and faculty members. The success of this policy depends upon the courtesy, respect, and cooperation of users and non-users of tobacco products. Any member of the Edison State College community may respectfully ask individuals to comply with this policy and/or report non-compliance when appropriate. Anyone who observes a possible violation may inform the individual of the tobacco-free policy and offer an information card. Public Safety is responsible for determining policy applicability and will answer policy related questions. If a student repeatedly violates this policy, the student will be reported to Public Safety. If an employee repeatedly violates the policy, the employee will be reported to the appropriate supervisor.

How will this policy be communicated to students, staff and visitors?

Education regarding Edison State College's tobacco-free policy will be included in formal orientation for all incoming students. Sufficient signage will be posted to inform members of the campus community and its visitors, including contractors and vendors, of the policy. All administrators, deans, directors, department chairs, and supervisors will communicate the policy to everyone within their areas of responsibility.

Isn't smoking a personal, legal right?

There is no "right to smoke" under any federal, state or local law. The college owns its buildings and grounds and has the right and responsibility to enact policies to reduce injury and illness by eliminating hazards and unsafe acts and conditions from its premises. Tobacco-free environments are not about forcing individuals to change their lifestyle or behavior. Rather, they intend to protect the greater campus community and college interests.

Aren't college students adults who can make their own decisions about tobacco use?

Just as college students can make their own decisions about tobacco use, Edison State College has a right to make decisions about tobacco use on campus and has an obligation to provide a safe environment for students, staff and visitors. This includes curtailing the use of known carcinogens such as secondhand smoke.

Why should I comply?

We hope civility and respect for others will guide all of us during the transition toward a tobacco-free campus. We realize that this policy may be taxing for tobacco users, but we hope that smokers will respect the right of their fellow members of the college community to breathe smoke-free air. We also hope that non-smokers who remind violators of the tobacco-free policy will do so with courtesy and civility.

Why not ban other unhealthy substances, like high-fat foods?

In accordance with its mission as an institution of higher education, Edison State College is continually seeking ways to create a healthier environment. In recent years, for example, we've added healthier food choices in our cafeterias vending machines and sought to create a more sustainable environment through our recycling efforts. However, the health risks and damaging effects of tobacco use – including the harm to others from second-hand smoke – far surpass those of other unhealthy substances.

Do I have to quit using tobacco?

No. The college cannot compel you to quit using tobacco. You are encouraged, however, to use the resources below to learn more about the health risks associated with tobacco use and smoking cessation resources.

Information on Smoking and the Use of Tobacco Products & Smoking Cessation Resources

<http://www.smokefree.gov/guide/>

Cutting-edge, evidence-based tools designed to help specific audiences quit smoking and remain smoke-free. The free 39-page booklet can be viewed online, downloaded in PDF format, or ordered online for a nominal shipping charge.

<http://www.lungusa.org/site/pp.asp?c=dvLUK90OE&b=35422>

American Lung Association fact sheet.

<http://ffsonline.org/>

American Lung Association Freedom from Smoking.

<http://www.lcdc.gov/tobacco>

American Lung Association fact sheet.

<http://thescooponsmoking.org/>

The Scoop on Smoking.

<http://www.cancer.org/>

American Cancer Society guide to tobacco and cancer, including information and resources on quitting.

<http://www.cdc.gov/datastatistics/archive/second-hand-smoke.html>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention data and statistics on secondhand smoke.

<http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention information on smoking and tobacco use and cessation resources.

<http://www.quitnet.com>

Provides comprehensive resources and support to people trying to give up smoking.
