

6.5 Smoke-Free Workplace Policy

Policy Statement

The Government of Nova Scotia is committed to protecting and promoting the health, safety, and well-being of employees. Whereas environmental tobacco smoke is recognized as a carcinogen, a serious and well-documented health hazard, and is a major airborne contaminant, it is the policy of the Government of Nova Scotia to provide a smoke-free work environment wherever possible.

The smoking of tobacco or other products is prohibited in all government workplaces including vehicles.

Definitions

DEPUTY HEAD

The deputy minister of a department or the senior administrative officer of an agency not reporting through a deputy minister.

WORKPLACE

Any work space including an area of four metres (12 feet) surrounding building entrances, opened windows, and air intakes and any vehicle or mobile equipment used in the course of employment when occupied by two or more persons. Where there is a conflict between the distance restriction provided in this policy and a municipal by-law, the more restrictive distance applies.

Policy Objectives

The objectives of this policy are to

- provide a healthy and safe workplace environment for employees and persons in government workplaces
- promote and support healthy lifestyles of government employees.

Policy Application

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations, all bargaining unit staff who are employed by the Government of Nova Scotia, and all persons in government workplaces.

Application for an exemption may be made in situations where the policy is deemed unreasonable or impractical or contravenes the *Smoke-free Places Act*.

The correctional facilities may permit burning/smoking during the observances of special cultural and religious ceremonies that are conducted in accordance with institutional operating procedures.

Policy Directives

- All employees and persons in government workplaces must be informed of the Smoke-Free Workplace Policy.
- All government workplaces, including government-owned vehicles, must prominently display no smoking signage for the benefit of employees and persons in government workplaces in accordance with the signage requirements established in Appendix 17-A. Both building and vehicle signage are available from the Stationery Stockroom.
- Employees who violate this policy may be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with provisions of the *Civil Service Act*, collective agreements, and Management Manual 500.
- Concerns or complaints that the policy is not being adhered to or not being enforced should be made to the appropriate supervisor/manager. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response, the complaint may then be forwarded to the applicable departmental joint occupational health and safety (JOH&S) committee in the particular workplace. The departmental JOH&S committee will investigate and make recommendations in writing to the appropriate management. Concerns and complaints not effectively resolved may be forwarded by the local JOH&S committee to the JOH&S Master Committee at the Public Service Commission.
- All new workplace lease/rental agreements must meet the requirements of this policy. All landlords must be notified in writing of the coming into effect of this policy and of the changes in leasing/rental requirements.
- To seek an exemption under the policy, an application must be made in writing to the Commissioner of the Public Service Commission. The written application must be approved by the applicable deputy head and submitted with a copy of the local JOH&S committee review along with a recommendation(s) and procedure that

outlines the steps being taken to restrict exposure to second-hand smoke for employees and other persons in the workplace. All applications will be reviewed by the JOH&S Master Committee and recommendations made to the Commissioner of the Public Service Commission. An exemption is effective for a two-year period, and a renewal must be sought prior to the expiry date.

- Where an exemption is granted in accordance with the *Smoke-free Places Act* or in circumstances where government employees work in environments over which the employer has no control, the employing department(s) must inform new and existing employees accordingly and develop and implement work practices that minimize the employees' exposure to second-hand smoke.
- Government institutions that permit burning/smoking as part of a cultural or religious ceremony must develop and implement operating procedures that detail how such special occasions are considered, approved, and conducted.
- Employees are to contact their Human Resource Division/Corporate Services Unit of the department and/or their Occupational Health and Safety Consultant/Coordinator for information on smoking cessation programs as outlined in Appendix 17-B and any other support the department may be able to provide employees who wish to stop smoking.

Accountabilities

DEPUTY HEAD

The Deputy Head is responsible for ensuring the consistent application of this policy.

MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS

Managers/Supervisors are responsible for adhering to and ensuring compliance with the policy.

EMPLOYEES

Employees are responsible for adhering to the policy and following any safe work practice devised to protect health and limit exposure to second-hand smoke.

PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

The Public Service Commission is responsible for developing and maintaining this policy and for providing advice and assistance to departments in order to implement the policy effectively.

JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY MASTER COMMITTEE

The Joint Occupational Health and Safety Master Committee is responsible for reviewing any complaints received from departmental JOH&S committees and for making recommendations to the department and to the Commissioner of the Public Service Commission. It will review all exemptions and requests for exemptions and will make recommendations to the Commissioner of the Public Service Commission.

DEPARTMENTAL JOINT OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE

The departmental joint occupational health and safety committee is responsible for investigating complaints regarding compliance with the policy and making recommendations in writing to the appropriate management.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Department of Transportation and Public Works will ensure that all new workplace lease/rental agreements reflect the smoke-free environment requirements for government workplaces and that leased/rental facilities are in compliance.

BUILDING OPERATORS

Building operators are responsible for the installation and maintenance of proper signage as per Appendix 17-A.

Monitoring

The Deputy Head of each department, agency, board, or commission is responsible for the consistent implementation and monitoring of the policy.

The Public Service Commission will consult with government departments, agencies, boards, and commissions and with the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Master Committee on a yearly basis to receive feedback regarding the relevancy, usefulness, and effectiveness of the policy.

References

Government of Nova Scotia Occupational Health and Safety Policy

Occupational Health and Safety Act, S.N.S. 1996, c.7

American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRE) Standard 62-1989, "Ventilation for Acceptable Indoor Air Quality"

Decision OHS 96-19 Between the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union and the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of the Solicitor General and Correctional Services – Sault Ste. Marie Jail

Second-Hand Smoke and Indoor Air Quality, Ontario Medical Association, November 1996

Smoke-free Places Act, S.N.S. 2002, c.12

Enquiries

Occupational Health and Safety Consultant
Public Service Commission
Province of Nova Scotia
PO Box 943
Halifax, NS B3J 2V9
Telephone: (902) 424-8037
Fax: (902) 424-0631

Appendices

Appendix I7-A: Signage
Appendix I7-B: Smoking Cessation Information

Approval date: January 23, 2003

Manual release date: February 4, 2003

Approved by: Executive Council

Most recent review:

Appendix 6-C

Signage

Building Signage

The following graphic symbol must be used to indicate that smoking is prohibited. The symbol consists of a white background with the circle and the interdictory stroke in red through a white cigarette with black ash and plume. The graphic symbol must include the text “Smoke Free” and the Province of Nova Scotia logo. Where there is no signage, signs are to be posted at each entrance to a workplace and must be clearly visible to those entering the building. Signs must not be obstructed from view.



Vehicle Signage

For vehicle signage the graphic symbol must also be used to indicate that smoking is prohibited. The symbol consists of a white background with the circle and interdictory stroke in red through a white cigarette with black ash and plume. The graphic symbol must include the text “Smoke Free” and the Province of Nova Scotia logo. Signs are to be posted in all vehicles that are owned or leased by government. Signs are to be placed on the vehicle dash and must be clearly visible to all occupants.



Appendix 6-D

Smoking Cessation Information

The following organizations can be contacted for smoking cessation programming and resources:

CANADIAN CANCER SOCIETY, NOVA SCOTIA DIVISION

5826 South Street, Ste 1

Halifax, NS

B3H 1S6

Tel: (902) 423-6183 or 1-800-639-0222

Fax: (902) 429-6563

- self-help quitting resources

CANCER INFORMATION SERVICES

Tel: 1-888-939-3333

- self-help quitting resource; telephone counselling
- information on group-based cessation programs for women

THE LUNG ASSOCIATION OF NOVA SCOTIA

17 Alma Crescent

Halifax, NS

B3N 3E6

Tel: (902) 443-0912 or 1-800-465-LUNG

Fax: (902) 445-2573

- self-help resources
- group-based programs for mixed groups

REGIONAL PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICES

Contact local offices

- self-help resources

REGIONAL ADDICTION SERVICES

Contact local offices

- resources and programs vary by region

FAMILY PHYSICIANS

- individual counselling
- nicotine replacement therapy (patch, gum)
- Zyban (oral tablet)

