

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why did USC adopt this policy?

This policy was developed because the university is concerned about the health of our students, employees and visitors on campus and we have an overall desire and responsibility to create a safe and healthy environment. Tobacco is the leading preventable cause of death in this country, responsible for one in every five deaths. The [American Cancer Society](#) reports that tobacco (including smokeless tobacco) causes 30% of all cancer deaths. A recent report from the [Center for Disease Control](#) (April 2002) reported that smoking related illness costs the United States more than \$157 billion annually. Of all smokers, one in three will die prematurely from tobacco use.

The recent [Surgeon General's Report](#) confirms that exposure to secondhand smoke poses a significant risk to nonsmokers, which, at USC, includes students, administrators, teachers and guests alike. According to the American Lung Association, secondhand smoke has been classified by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) as a Group A carcinogen (cause of cancer). The [American Lung Association](#) reports that secondhand smoke causes approximately 3,000 lung cancer deaths and 35,00-62,000 heart disease deaths in adult nonsmokers in the United States each year.

Implementing campus smoking policies has been found to significantly lower people's exposure to nicotine and the other dangerous substances in secondhand smoke. These policies also help reduce the initiation of tobacco use among college students and make it easier for smokers to quit. It has also been shown that smokers are absent 50% more often than nonsmokers therefore lowering work productivity and increasing the costs of paying temporary replacements.

2. Who was involved in the development of this policy?

The development of the Tobacco Free USC policy was a collaborative effort among many groups of individuals on campus including: Residential Hall Association; Student Government; Health Services Advisory Committee; the Environmental Advisory Committee; Human Resources; and the President's Cabinet.

3. Where can I view the Tobacco Free USC policy?

The entire policy can be viewed on the [Healthy Carolina website](#).

4. Where can I go to get help to stop smoking?

[Campus Wellness Programs](#) in partnership with Palmetto Health, offers free smoking cessation classes for USC students, faculty and staff. For participants who need them, the program includes medications, including Zyban and the nicotine patch. The program is led by an expert behavioral psychologist who has helped many people escape their

nicotine addiction. The program is confidential and meets only six days over a three-week period. For more information regarding this class call 576-9393.

Faculty and staff who subscribe to the State Health Plan are also able to participate in a program call [Free & Clear](#). This program helps participants stop using cigarettes, cigars, pipes and smokeless tobacco. A Free & Clear tobacco treatment specialist works with each participant to create a personalized “quit plan.” As part of the plan, participants receive a Quit Kit and telephone consultations with a tobacco treatment specialist. The program also provides nicotine-replacement products (patches, gum or lozenges) and unlimited access to a toll-free support line (1-866-QUIT-4-LIFE).

The South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control (SCDHEC) also offers a toll-free ‘quitline’ (1-877-44U-QUIT) for any South Carolina resident who would like to speak to a cessation counselor.

5. Are “No Smoking” signs going to be posted around campus?

Yes, signage consistent with the University guidelines is being developed by Facilities Services.

6. What are we supposed to do when someone violates the policy?

There is no particular individual or group charged with enforcement. As a University policy, it is expected to be followed by all university students and employees. If the violator is a student then the student conduct code and related processes will apply. If the violator is an employee, it should be addressed by their direct supervisor under HR regulations. Dr. Sorensen and others involved in this decision (many faculty, staff and students) are expecting that all members of the university community will remind violators of the policy in a courteous and respectful manner.

7. If there are distinguished guests visiting the University (i.e. guest speakers, performers, etc.) will they be expected to adhere to the policy?

Yes, the policy applies to all visitors and guests.

8. Are the ashtrays that are currently located outside buildings going to be relocated?

A group of USC faculty and staff are currently assessing the University campus for ashtrays that are within 25 feet of buildings. These ashtrays will be moved or removed to meet the standards of the USC Tobacco Free policy.

9. Does this policy apply to Williams-Brice Stadium, Sarge Frye Field and other open-air facilities?

Yes, the policy covers all USC –owned or –leased buildings as well as outdoor areas where there is fixed seating. Many of these facilities have had a no smoking policy for many years.

10. What other areas, besides buildings, does this policy cover?

Smoking and the use of all tobacco products is prohibited in:

- All university vehicles
- Entrances, balconies, decks, patios and outside stairways to buildings and outdoor passageways to entrances, decks, patios and stairways
- Courtyards or other areas where air circulation may be impeded by architectural, landscaping or other barriers
- Outdoor entry or services lines, such as for ticket purchases, event admissions, bus stops, ATMs, etc.
- Outdoor seating areas provided by dining services on campus

11. Why is smoking prohibited around the 25 foot perimeter of the building?

The 25-foot perimeter was designated to protect people walking into and out of buildings as well as students and employees inside buildings that have open windows and/or heating/air conditioning window units. The 25-foot perimeter is also a requirement of the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification which is a goal of all new university building projects.

12. Is the university going to provide designated smoking areas?

At this point, there are no plans to develop designated smoking areas. There will be an increased offering of smoking cessation programs for those who are interested. For information regarding these smoking cessation programs please call Campus Wellness Program at 576-9393 or check the [Healthy Carolina website](#) for additional information.

13. What percentage of USC students smoke?

According the National College Health Assessment conducted on USC’s campus in February 2006, 23% of USC students have smoked in the past 30 days.

14. What percentage of USC students use smokeless tobacco?

According the National College Health Assessment conducted on USC’s campus in February 2006, 3.6% of USC students have used smokeless tobacco in the past 30 days.

15. What percentage of USC faculty/staff smoke and/or use smokeless tobacco?

USC does not have information regarding the use of tobacco products by faculty and staff. However, the [American Lung Association](#) reports that 24.5% of South Carolina adults smoke and 2.1% use smokeless tobacco.

16. What diseases are known to be caused by second-hand smoke?

According to the [American Lung Association](#), secondhand smoke, also known as environmental tobacco smoke, is a mixture of the smoke given off by the burning end of a cigarette, pipe or cigar and the smoke exhaled from the lungs of smokers. Secondhand smoke has been classified by the [Environmental Protection Agency](#) (EPA) as a known cause of cancer. The [American Lung Association](#), reports that secondhand smoke causes approximately 3,000 lung cancer deaths and 35,00-62,000 heart disease deaths in adult nonsmokers in the United States each year.

17. How many people in South Carolina die as a result of tobacco products?

Tobacco is the most preventable cause of death in the United States. The [American Lung Association](#), reports that 19% of South Carolina deaths are attributable to smoking.