

ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION University Administration
POLICY NUMBER UNIV 5.00
POLICY TITLE Tobacco Free Campus
SCOPE OF POLICY USC Columbia
DATE OF REVISION June 17, 2025
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER President
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE Office of the President

PURPOSE

The University of South Carolina is deeply committed to the well-being of our students, faculty, staff and visitors. To provide a safe, healthy environment in which our community can flourish, and in accordance with the university's commitment to public health and sustainability, the University of South Carolina Columbia will be a completely tobacco-free campus.

DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

Tobacco and Smoking Products: include all tobacco-derived or containing products, including but not limited to cigarettes (i.e. clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes, electronic smoking devices, e-liquid, vapor products (vape pens), cigars and cigarillos, pipes, water pipes, smokeless tobacco products or substitutions containing nicotine that can be ingested into the body by chewing, smoking, absorbing, dissolving, inhaling or by any means (i.e. spit and spitless, chew, pouches, snuff) or any other device intended to simulate smoked tobacco. This does not apply to nicotine replacement therapy, which is designed to assist tobacco users to quit tobacco.

University Property: encompasses all buildings, facilities, grounds, and spaces leased, owned, or controlled by the University of South Carolina Columbia Campus, whether or not signs are posted. This includes, but is not limited to, buildings on university-owned land, offices, classrooms, laboratories, elevators, stairwells, bridges and walkways, balconies, decks, restrooms, shuttle buses, shuttle bus stops, sidewalks, parking structures/areas/lots, meeting rooms, hallways, outdoor passageways and entrances, lobbies, common areas, and athletic venues, including those with outdoor fixed seating. Furthermore, University Property includes buildings, or portions of buildings, and the outside areas immediately contiguous to these buildings, that have been designated as non-smoking by the governing board of the University of South Carolina.

POLICY STATEMENT

This policy expands the 2006 tobacco-free policy to cover all university property. The intent of this policy is to create an environment that is conducive to quitting tobacco, promoting the prevention of tobacco use and preventing the risks associated with exposure to secondhand smoke. Enforcement for the policy is the responsibility of each member of the Carolina community. Faculty, staff and students are expected to enforce the policy for their facilities and/or sponsored activities.

PROCEDURES

A. Covered Individuals

The provisions of this policy apply 24 hours a day, seven days a week to all students, faculty, staff, visitors, volunteers, contractors and vendors unless otherwise noted.

B. Use of Tobacco Products

1. The use of tobacco products is prohibited on university property. No ashtrays, receptacles or smoking shelters will be permitted.
2. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in university-owned, operated or leased vehicles.
3. The use of tobacco products is prohibited in personal vehicles parked on university property.
4. The university discourages the use of tobacco products by all covered individuals on properties adjacent to the campus.

C. Support of Tobacco Products

1. All tobacco industry promotions and marketing activities are prohibited on university property.
2. The sale of tobacco products and tobacco-related merchandise (including logo items) is prohibited on all university property and at university-sponsored events, regardless of the operating vendor.
3. The distribution or sampling of tobacco and associated products is prohibited on all university property and at university-sponsored events, regardless of the venue.
4. Tobacco industry and related company sponsorship of athletic events is prohibited.
5. The university discourages solicitation or acceptance of any grant or gift from a manufacturer, distributor or retailer whose principal business is tobacco products.

D. Communication of Policy

This policy will be communicated to the campus community as follows:

1. News and information will be posted on the Tobacco-Free USC website at www.sc.edu/tobaccofreeusc.
2. References to this policy will be added to student handbooks, orientation communications and other publications as appropriate.
3. The Visitor Center and appropriate staff will assist in informing all visitors of the policy and asking that they comply while on any university property. All community members are encouraged to assist with the education of visitors and volunteers regarding our policy.
4. A provision will be inserted in all contracts, e.g. dining, construction and/or maintenance, to prohibit the employees of contractor/vendors from using tobacco products on USC property.
5. Communication tips for community members to use in helping to enforce the policy will be available at the Tobacco-Free USC website, www.sc.edu/tobaccofreeusc.
6. “Tobacco-Free Property” signs will be posted throughout the university. Each building will display a “Tobacco-Free Property” decal and additional signs as appropriate.

E. Tobacco Cessation Resources

The university will offer resources and support to assist those tobacco users who desire to quit or abstain from using tobacco. Tobacco cessation resources and programs will be promoted or offered for university students, faculty and staff.

1. Student

Students have access to wellness coaching where tobacco cessation education is available at no cost. Students can schedule a wellness coaching appointment at [MyHealthSpace](#) or call 803-777-8283.

2. Faculty and Staff

The [Employee Assistance Program \(EAP\)](#) has a broad range of support services for employees and their family members.

To access additional resources available through the Employee Well-Being office, please contact 803-777-6518.

F. Enforcement and Compliance

1. Enforcement of the policy is the responsibility of each member of the Carolina community. Faculty, staff, students and volunteers are expected to enforce the policy for their facilities and/or sponsored activities. Each individual should in a consistent and civil way bring any infractions of this policy to the attention of the person or persons observed violating the policy. Faculty, staff and students are also expected to assume leadership roles by adhering to the policy provisions and by reminding others who aren't in compliance of the policy provisions.
2. In the event a community member does not respond to a reminder, USC faculty, staff, students and volunteers will assist in the enforcement of this policy by reporting repeated violations to the appropriate body, as described in the provisions below.
3. Corrective actions will include an educational component and, for those who wish to quit using tobacco, referral to a tobacco cessation program. Referrals may be made to Healthy Carolina at 803-777-8283 (students), 803-777-6518 (faculty/staff) and/or the Employee Assistance Program (faculty/staff) at 1-800-633-3353 or 704-529-1428.
 - a. Students - Complaints regarding students will be directed to and handled by the Office of Student Conduct in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct (STAF 6.26). Further information on the conduct process and potential consequences is available at:
<http://www.housing.sc.edu/osc/pdf/UNIV500ProposedTobaccoSanctions091913.pdf>
 - b. Faculty - Complaints regarding faculty will be directed to the appropriate unit head.
 - c. Staff - Complaints regarding staff will be directed to and handled by the immediate supervisor or director, in accordance with Human Resources practices (HR 1.39) and outlined in "Disciplinary Procedures" at <http://hr.sc.edu/relations/erdscln.html>. Specific HR recommendations for counseling employees who repeatedly violate the tobacco policy will be available at www.sc.edu/tobaccofreusc.
 - d. Volunteers, Visitors and Affiliates - Complaints about volunteers and visitors may be addressed by any university official. Repeated violations may be handled by Law Enforcement and Safety. Complaints about affiliates will be directed to and addressed by their sponsoring departments, in accordance with appropriate policies and practices.

- e. Contractors and Vendors - Complaints regarding contractors and vendors will be addressed by the Office of Business Affairs. Failure by contractors/vendors or their employees to comply with the provisions of this policy could result in the termination of the contract.
4. The university will provide Tobacco-Free Campus Policy resources to facilitate education about and enforcement of the policy at www.sc.edu/tobaccofreeusc.

G. Exceptions

1. Tobacco, tobacco products or simulated tobacco products may be used for research purposes. Smoking of tobacco products for research purposes will be allowed only if smoke is controlled in a manner approved by the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, as is necessary for all research that involves laboratory air contaminants.
2. A special exception may be made for cultural activities by American Indians that are in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act, 42 USC sections 1996 and 1996a, which allow for the use of ceremonial tobacco. All ceremonial use exceptions must be approved in advance by the Provost or designee and, in the case of smoking, by the University Fire Marshall.
3. Tobacco company participation in recruitment activities (i.e. job fairs, on-campus interviews, information sessions, etc.) must be approved by the Career Center or appropriate university official from that area to ensure compliance with university policy to ensure signage, postings and use of company logo is appropriate.

RELATED UNIVERSITY, STATE AND FEDERAL POLICIES

[South Carolina Code of Laws Title 44, Chapter 95 – Clean Indoor Air Act](#)

[South Carolina Code of Laws Title 59, Chapter 103](#)

[HR 1.01 Drug-Free Workplace](#)

[HR 1.39 Disciplinary Action and Termination for Cause](#)

[STAF 6.26 Student Code of Conduct](#)

HISTORY OF REVISIONS

DATE OF REVISION	REASON FOR REVISION
August 1, 2006	New policy approval
December 19, 2014	This revision removes the statement “Tobacco, tobacco products or simulated tobacco products may be used for classroom instruction, educational and artistic purposes. However, smoking of tobacco products is not

	<p>allowed for these purposes.” The inclusion of this language has eliminated our campus from being considered tobacco-free by the national list of tobacco-free campuses. (https://tobaccofreecampus.org/campus-list-progress) This list is used by the National Tobacco-Free Campus Initiative as the reference list for college and university campuses. The current policy passed in October of 2013 and the criteria for inclusion on the national list was updated and disseminated November 2013.</p>
June 17, 2025	<p>Policy updated to standard template, updated definitions and language added for vape and other tobacco use products</p>