

# New York City Smoke-Free Regulations



## A Guide for Health Care Facilities

## WHAT ARE THE SMOKE-FREE REGULATIONS?

### New York City Smoke-Free Air Act/New York State Clean Indoor Air Act

- These laws resulted in all workplaces in New York City becoming smoke-free, including health care facilities.
- In 2009, the New York City Smoke-Free Air Act was expanded to prohibit smoking on or around health care facility grounds, as well as near facility entrances and exits.

### New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services (OASAS) Regulations

- In 2008, New York State became the first state in the nation to require all prevention, treatment and recovery programs to be tobacco-free.
- The regulations prohibit all tobacco products in facilities licensed or funded by OASAS, on grounds and in vehicles owned and operated by the service. Patients, family members and other visitors are also prohibited from bringing tobacco products and tobacco paraphernalia into any facility licensed or funded by OASAS.
- All OASAS facilities are required to incorporate tobacco dependence services into treatment plans, and to offer nicotine replacement therapy to patients, staff, volunteers and others.

## WHAT THIS MEANS FOR YOUR FACILITY

### Indoors

Smoking is prohibited inside all health care facilities, including:

- Hospitals
- Clinics
- Psychiatric facilities
- Health care facilities licensed by New York State, including those funded by OASAS
- Residential health care facilities
- Physical therapy facilities
- Nursing homes

### Outdoors

Smoking is prohibited:

- on the grounds of any health care facility, including general hospitals, diagnostic and treatment centers, and residential health care facilities
- within 15 feet of any entrance or exit to a health care facility
- in vehicles owned or operated by OASAS facilities

## IMPLEMENTING A SMOKE-FREE POLICY

- 1. Review the smoke-free regulations, even if you already maintain a smoke-free environment.**
  - Update your facility's smoke-free policy to reflect the outdoor smoking ban.
- 2. Get staff involved.**
  - Meet with staff to go over the regulations, any policy changes and how to maintain a smoke-free environment.
  - Identify staff responsible for enforcing the smoke-free policy.
  - Offer smoking cessation services to employees who want to quit smoking.
- 3. Prominently post “No Smoking” signs throughout the facility, on the grounds and at all major entrances and exits.** For more information about required signage, call 311 or visit [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health).
- 4. Maintain a smoke-free environment.**
  - Remove ashtrays from all smoke-free areas.
  - If you see someone smoking in a smoke-free area, ask the smoker to stop or to leave the area.
  - If the smoker refuses, have a facility security officer ask the person to leave the area.

## OPPORTUNITIES TO PROMOTE SMOKING CESSATION

### Administrators

- Follow the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' guidelines for treating tobacco use and dependence: [ahrq.gov](http://ahrq.gov)
- Make your campus 100% smoke-free.
- Offer smoking cessation services.
- Include information about the smoke-free regulations on all patient admission forms.
- Include information about the risks of smoking and secondhand smoke on patient discharge forms.
- Incorporate smoke-free policies into vendor contracts and other communications.

## Clinic Directors and Staff

- Ask every patient about smoking status and encourage those who smoke to quit.
- Offer counseling and medication, including nicotine replacement therapy, to help patients become tobacco-free.
- Educate patients about the risks of secondhand smoke.
- Refer to the Health Department's City Health Information: Treating Tobacco Addiction at [nyc.gov/health](http://nyc.gov/health).

## Facilities Managers

- Make sure "No Smoking" signs are clearly posted.
- Remind staff to enforce smoke-free policies.

## Human Resources Managers

- Offer health insurance that covers smoking cessation services.
- Alternatively, direct employees to the New York State Smokers' Quitline at 866-NY-QUITS or [nysmokefree.com](http://nysmokefree.com) for smoking cessation services.
- Include information about smoke-free regulations and smoking cessation benefits in all employee orientations.

## Wellness Committees

- Plan smoking cessation activities and events around the annual Great American Smoke Out (November) and World No Tobacco Day (May).
- Plan smoking cessation support groups for employees.
- Remind visitors about the risks of smoking and secondhand smoke.
- Make sure information about the harmful effects of secondhand smoke is included in external and employee newsletters and posted on bulletin boards.

### MORE INFORMATION

**NYC smoking cessation services:** Call 311 or visit [nyc.gov/health/smokefree](http://nyc.gov/health/smokefree)

**New York State Smokers' Quitline:** 866-NY-QUITS (1-866-697-8487)  
or [nysmokefree.com](http://nysmokefree.com)

**Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:** [cdc.gov/tobacco](http://cdc.gov/tobacco)

**Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights:** 510-841-3032 or [no-smoke.org](http://no-smoke.org)

This brochure is funded by the CDC's Communities Putting Prevention to Work grant.

Photo by Leslie Laurence



Michael R. Bloomberg  
Mayor

Thomas Farley, M.D., M.P.H.  
Commissioner

Dear Colleague:

I am writing about New York City's smoke-free regulations in and around health care facilities. In October 2009, the New York City Smoke-Free Air Act was expanded to prohibit smoking:

- on or around health care facility grounds
- near facility entrances and exits

I congratulate you on your efforts toward improving the health of those who work, visit or receive care at our city's health care facilities, and encourage you to do even more to create a healthier environment for all New Yorkers.

**You can play an important role in promoting healthy behaviors.**

Maintaining a smoke-free environment is particularly important for health care facilities. People suffering from illnesses and chronic diseases are often the most vulnerable to the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. By adopting a 100% smoke-free campus policy that includes smoking cessation services and resources, you can help promote good health and wellness among all New Yorkers.

**Smoke-free work environments save lives.**

A smoke-free work environment protects people from the harms of secondhand smoke. It also helps smokers quit. Between 10% and 20% of smokers quit as a result of legislation prohibiting smoking in the workplace.

This guide provides important information about smoke-free regulations in and around health care facilities. It also includes strategies and resources to help you implement these policies in your facility.

Thank you for your commitment to creating a healthier environment for your patients, visitors and employees.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas Farley".

Thomas Farley, MD, MPH  
Commissioner



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF  
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**  
42-09 28 St, Long Island City,  
New York 11101

FIRST-CLASS MAIL  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
& MENTAL HYGIENE

**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**