

MODEL POLICY FOR A SMOKEFREE CONGREGATION

Congregation Name _____

Faith Leader Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ E Mail _____

Website _____

[YOUR CONGREGATION'S] SMOKEFREE POLICY

Background

Numerous studies have found that tobacco smoke is a major contributor to indoor air pollution, and that breathing secondhand smoke is a cause of disease in healthy nonsmokers, including heart disease, stroke, lung and other cancers, asthma and ear infections in children, and SIDS. Secondhand smoke is the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States, taking roughly 53,000 lives prematurely each year. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

The U.S. Surgeon General has determined that the simple separation of smokers and nonsmokers within the same air space does not eliminate nonsmokers' exposure to secondhand smoke.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has determined that secondhand smoke cannot be reduced to safe levels by high rates of ventilation. Air cleaners, which are capable of filtering the particulate matter and odors in smoke, do not eliminate all the known toxins in secondhand smoke.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has determined that the risk of acute myocardial infarction and coronary heart disease associated with exposure to tobacco smoke is non-linear at low doses, increasing rapidly with relatively small doses such as those received from secondhand smoke or actively smoking one or two cigarettes a day, and has warned that all patients at increased risk of coronary heart disease or with known coronary artery disease should avoid all indoor environments that permit smoking.

[Your congregation] is committed to providing a healthy, comfortable, and productive environment for its members and their families, staff and employees, and visitors of this congregation.

Purpose

To provide a safe and healthy environment free from secondhand smoke exposure for congregation members and their families, staff and employees, and visitors.

To provide leadership in promoting a holistic view of health by supporting smokefree environments.

To support congregation members and their families, staff and employees, and visitors with their cessation efforts in becoming free from tobacco use.

Congregational Policy

[Your congregation] commits to becoming a smokefree facility. The smokefree policy applies to all facilities, owned or leased, regardless of location, by [your congregation]. Smoking shall not be permitted in any congregation owned buildings, facilities, vehicles, and grounds, including lawn areas and vehicles.

[Your congregation] will not accept any tobacco industry money for events and programs, including but not limited to sponsorships, scholarship funds, or building renovations. Tobacco industry funding is counter to our faith community's holistic view on health.

Implementation of Policy

“No smoking” signs will be posted on congregational grounds in highly visible areas inside and outside of the buildings, including the sanctuary, and lawn areas. All ashtrays shall be removed from the premises.

Copies of this policy shall be distributed to all staff and employees and may be included with information given to all staff members. Announcements shall also be printed in congregation newsletters to ensure that everyone understands the policy.

Secondhand smoke education materials and cessation information will be made available to congregation members, staff, and visitors. In addition, on-site cessation programs shall be made available to assist and encourage individuals who wish to quit smoking. Questions and problems regarding this policy should be handled through existing programs and administrative procedures.

The success of this policy will depend on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of smokers and nonsmokers. All congregation members, staff and employees, and visitors share in responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy.

Signature of Congregation Leader

Date