

TOBACCO-FREE FACILITIES

Everyone deserves the right to breathe clean, smoke-free air. This is your chance to create smoke-free policies that make sure everyone actually gets that right!

AGE GROUP: Middle school and above.

NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS: 3 or more.

TIME: 3 months.

RESOURCES: Paper, computer, pens, telephone.

COST: \$30.

Many states have enacted smoke-free laws that include all workplaces, including restaurants and bars. And many government buildings and private businesses in states or cities that have not passed such laws have “no smoking” policies. People who visit and work in these places are protected from secondhand smoke. Shouldn't you be, too?

If you live in a state or city that has not passed a smoke-free law, you can do something about that. Work to ensure that a public facility that you attend adopts a smoke-free policy. To find out if your state or community has a smoke-free law, visit the Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights website at: www.no-smoke.org/goingsmokefree.php?id=519.

This activity will take longer to accomplish than some of the other activities listed in this guide, so be sure to give yourself plenty of time for preparations and use the following timeline as a guide.



10-12 weeks before event:

- Identify a business or other facility in your community that allows smoking. Send a letter to the facility's owner. If the grounds are publicly-owned, like schools or parks, get in touch with the appropriate government office.
- Request in the letter that the facility become smoke-free. Follow the letter with a phone call.
- If the facility does not respond or says no, prepare to get busy.

6-8 weeks before event:

- Draft an open letter to the facility owner, again requesting that the grounds be smoke-free. An open letter is a letter in which the audience includes both the person to whom it is addressed and the public. Send the open letter to your local newspaper and ask them to print it.
- The Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids has fact sheets available that address the dangers of secondhand smoke, as well as specific information about smoke-free workplaces. You can find all of this at www.tobaccofreekids.org/research/factsheets/. You may want to include some of these fact sheets with the letters and other materials that you send to facility owners in your community.
- Create a petition. Collect signatures for your petition from young and old alike, and get as many signatures as you can for a month or more.

2-4 weeks before event:

- Send copies of the petition to both the facility owner and your local media with a letter discussing the results of your efforts.
- Create flyers that ask people to call the facility owner to make the grounds smoke-free.
- Call the facility owner. Request to meet with him/her to discuss possible scenarios in which the facility would be smoke-free at certain times as a start.

Don't be afraid to think big!

You can use these ideas to push for city or statewide smoke-free workplace laws or reach out to other facilities once you've helped one become smoke-free. There are additional things you can do to put pressure on the facility owner such as the following:

- Stage a press conference and reach out to the media. See our media section on page 45 for tips.
- Create flyers and distribute them.
- Write letters to the editor. See page 47 for more info.