

Frequently Asked Questions Tobacco-Free Trinity

Why did Trinity become a Tobacco-Free campus?

- To promote clean air, a healthy environment, and healthy behavior choices
- Extend protection to all workers and visitors
- It results in decreased tobacco use
- Prevents students from initiating tobacco use
- Encourages tobacco users to quit or decrease use
- Supports tobacco users who have quit
- Promotes a clean and green campus
- Prepares students for tobacco-free work environments

Do smoke- and tobacco-free policies really reduce tobacco use and improve health?

Smoke- and tobacco-free campus policies can have a tremendous impact on the health of an entire campus community. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States, and according to the U.S. Surgeon General, there is no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. A 100% smoke-free policy can effectively reduce tobacco use by preventing initiation and making it easier for smokers to quit. Smoke- and tobacco-free college campus policies also specifically decrease smoking rates and positive attitudes toward tobacco use.

Will there be strong resistance from students, faculty, or staff?

Research shows that a strong majority of students, faculty, and staff prefer smoke- or tobacco-free policies. For example, a random sample of 400 Trinity students were surveyed in January 2017 about Fall semester 2016:

- 85% never smoked tobacco.
- 97% never used smokeless tobacco.
- 88% never used e-cigarettes or vaporizers.

Students understand secondhand smoke is a health hazard. That's why most students don't smoke and the majority of those who do have considered or tried to quit in the past year.

Does a smoke- or tobacco-free policy impede on another person's rights?

Everyone has a right to breathe clean air where they live, work, study, and play. Colleges and universities have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for students, staff, and visitors – and a right to regulate any activity on campus that affects the health and safety of the community. A smoke- or tobacco-free policy does not prohibit people from using tobacco products – it simply prohibits their use on campus, where they can affect others' enjoyment of community property.

What's the difference between a smoke- and tobacco-free policy?

A "smoke-free" policy prohibits any tobacco product that emits smoke from being used anywhere on campus at any time (e.g. cigarettes, cigars). A "tobacco-free" policy is more comprehensive and prohibits both non-combustible tobacco products (e.g. smokeless tobacco) and any tobacco product that emits smoke from being used anywhere on campus at any time. Of the colleges and universities that have already implemented a policy, nearly two-thirds have chosen to be tobacco-free, according to the Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights Foundation.

Why not just provide designated smoking areas?

Secondhand smoke has proven to travel outside of designated areas. Designated areas have also been found to encourage tobacco use by creating a social environment for daily and non-daily tobacco users. By increasing the number of individuals smoking in one area, students are more likely to believe that more people smoke than actually do. This misperception affects the norm of smoking on campus and may also contribute to increased tobacco use. Designated areas are often heavily littered and smell of toxic tobacco waste. Unless regularly cleaned and maintained, these areas are unhealthy, smelly, and an eyesore.

Why are e-cigarettes included in this policy?

Electronic cigarettes are not a safe alternative to traditional cigarettes. The FDA has found several safety concerns regarding the use of these products, which are designed to deliver variable amounts of nicotine.

Many health proponents, most notably the World Health Organization, have expressed serious concerns about the adverse health effects of electronic cigarettes. These organizations, including the FDA, cite a serious lack of safety data regarding the inhalation of known hazardous chemicals such as propylene glycol (found in antifreeze) and tobacco specific nitrosamines (which cause cancer) that have been found in e-cigs when tested. We know these chemicals are harmful. The FDA does not regulate e-cigarettes and does not consider them to be a safe nicotine delivery system. E-cigarettes are currently banned for import by the FDA.

Trinity's tobacco-free policy aims to promote a healthy environment, including cleaner, safer air where everyone can live, work and learn. Prohibiting electronic cigarettes is consistent with the aim of the policy.

How much work is involved in going smoke- or tobacco-free?

Adopting a smoke- or tobacco-free policy takes time and planning—but the work is often shared among a taskforce of engaged campus advocates. Depending on the campus, it may take one to two years by the time an official policy is developed, voted on, and/or implemented by campus administration. That's why starting now and using a thoughtful process—including developing a taskforce, drafting an action plan, and conducting outreach and education about the intent and benefits of a new policy—is so important. By agreeing to take the 1Day Stand, our campus will receive a toolkit of creative materials that students and faculty can print and use on campus, and a list of innovative ways to raise awareness on campus and encourage ongoing dialogue. Campuses that decide to join the TFCCI Challenge will also receive technical assistance on the specific steps to going smoke- or tobacco-free.

How is the tobacco-free policy being enforced?

The intent of this policy is to be preventive rather than punitive. For employees and students, violations of this policy will be addressed through educational and corrective measures. Educational measures include referral to tobacco-cessation programs, tobacco treatment and supportive coaching. A tobacco-free task force will also be formed where these trained individuals will be able to approach and politely inform those either unaware, or not abiding by the new policy. In instances where a person refuses to observe the policy, a student will be referred to the Student Conduct Board and an employee will be reported to their supervisor. In addition, members of campus may report policy violations or tobacco pollution anonymously through our website.

What does a smoke- or tobacco-free campus policy entail?

A 100% smoke- or tobacco-free policy prohibits the use of any smoke emitting and/or tobacco products anywhere on campus property at all times. Policies typically include the following information: The definition of smoking and tobacco products (e.g. smokeless products, hookah, e-cigarettes) Where smoking and tobacco use is prohibited (e.g. student housing, parking lots, campus vehicles) Who the policy applies to (e.g. students, faculty, staff, visitors), and often prohibits the promotion of tobacco products on campus and in campus publications.

What about our neighbors?

We are asking our students, faculty and staff help maintain a positive relationship with our neighbors that border the campus. We encourage you to respect other's property by not littering and not congregating in areas to smoke and thus creating a cloud that others must walk through. We will be reaching out to our neighbors and informing them of the upcoming policy and encouraging open communication if a problem arises.