

UConn Smoking Policy Guidelines

UConn recognizes that tobacco use is a leading cause of preventable illness, disease and death in the United States and that exposure to second-hand smoke also contributes significantly to preventable illness, disease and death. As the State's flagship public university, the University of Connecticut is committed to providing a healthy, smoke-free workplace and living environment for its faculty, staff, students and visitors. The University's [Smoking Policy](#) was established to protect the health and safety of our community through the prohibition of smoking (including but not limited to, cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars, pipes and similar products) in all University owned and leased buildings, facilities and vehicles, as well as within 25 feet of all campus buildings and residence halls.

All University employees, students, visitors, and guests are required to comply with this policy. Organizers of public events, such as conferences, meetings, public lectures, social events, and cultural events using campus facilities will be mindful of this Policy and encourage compliance.

The success of the Smoking Policy depends upon the thoughtfulness and cooperation of smokers and non-smokers. All faculty, staff, students, and visitors share the responsibility of complying with and enforcing this important policy through education and compliance.

SUPERVISOR'S ROLE

As a manager and/or supervisor you are a partner in the implementation of the University's Smoking Policy. Your role includes:

- 1) **Understand** the fundamentals of the policy;
- 2) **Communicate** the policy to employees, students and visitors; and
- 3) **Enforce** the policy by holding employees and students accountable.

Understand the Fundamentals: The fundamentals of the Policy that are most critical to be aware of are:

- 1) The Policy applies to the main campus in Storrs and all Regional Campuses.
- 2) For the purposes of the Policy, "smoking" includes all tobacco-derived or containing products, including and not limited to, cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars, pipes, and similar products. This Policy does not apply to tobacco that does not involve smoking, e.g., chewing tobacco.
- 3) "Smoking" is prohibited in all University owned and leased buildings, facilities and vehicles, as well as within 25 feet of all campus buildings and residence halls. (It is important to note that there may be large contiguous areas on campus where no smoking is permitted, due to the close proximity of buildings.)
- 4) Smoking materials must be discarded carefully and properly in appropriate receptacles and it is absolutely critical that they be fully extinguished.
- 5) The Smoking Policy does not impose any expectations or requirements that members of our community quit smoking.

Communicate the Policy: First and foremost, it is critical that individuals in management and supervisory roles communicate the smoking policy to their employees, students, and visitors. Managers and supervisors should discuss the policy during departmental meetings and include information about the policy in departmental newsletters. One strategy is to highlight the key fundamentals of the policy as outlined above.

Enforce the Policy: Hold employees and students accountable for complying with the policy and address policy violations consistently just as you would address a violation of any other university policy.

TALKING TIPS FOR EMPLOYEES

1. If you encounter a faculty or staff member who is smoking in any University building, facility or vehicle, or within 25 feet of a University building or residence hall, respectfully ask whether they are aware of the University's smoking policy.
2. If you encounter a visitor who is smoking in any University building, facility or vehicle, or within 25 feet of a University building or residence hall, you may ask whether they are aware of the University's smoking policy. You may offer to them the closest area where smoking may be permitted and thank them for not smoking in the areas restricted by the policy.
3. Those rare instances where individuals refuse to comply with the policy should be handled in accordance with the status of the individual:
 - a. Students should be referred to the Office of Community Standards for appropriate action.
 - b. Employees should be dealt with by the appropriate supervisor through the application of progressive discipline in accordance with University policies and collective bargaining agreements. The Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations may also be consulted.
 - c. Contractors should be referred to their respective employers, project managers and/or to Procurement for appropriate action.

TALKING TIPS FOR SUPERVISORS

If you encounter an employee violating the Smoking Policy, you may use the following strategies to address the issue:

- 1) Meet in a private place to discuss the potential policy violation.
- 2) Provide the employee with an opportunity to share his/her side of the story.
- 3) Be respectful and cognizant that this policy can be difficult for tobacco users; listen and exhibit empathy for the employee's situation.
- 4) Make a clear statement that the Smoking Policy is important to the University, and it is an expectation that everyone adheres to the policy. If other issues come up such as an employee's right to smoke, you should remind the employee that policies such as the Smoking Policy exist on many campuses and that many campuses are completely smoke-free.

- 5) Help the employee develop an acceptable plan that adheres to the University policy. If the employee wants to quit, you may refer them to UConn Health's [Smoking Cessation Program](#) at the Carole and Ray Neag Comprehensive Cancer Center. If the employee does not want to quit, you may identify areas that smoking is permitted. Regardless, you should reinforce your expectation that they comply with the policy.
- 6) Summarize the meeting and expectations moving forward, preferably in writing via email.
- 7) Set up a future meeting with the employee to discuss progress towards compliance with the policy. If the follow-up meeting demonstrates that the plan is not working you should discuss alternatives. If the employee illustrates repeated and continued violations, notify the employee of the potential consequences of their actions, and continue to manage the situation, with the assistance of the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations, if necessary.

RESPONDING TO REPEATED POLICY VIOLATIONS

If there are continued issues or violations of the policy, progressive disciplinary action may be exercised. Managers should do so in consultation with a representative from the Office of Faculty and Staff Labor Relations.