



Employee Toolkit

Communicating about the Tobacco Free Policy at Western Michigan University

The fourth goal of the University's Strategic Plan is to ensure a diverse, inclusive, and healthy community. A specific strategy of this goal is to enhance the health and wellness of our community. Western Michigan University wants to provide and maintain an optimally healthy and safe working and living environment for students, faculty, staff and visitors. Recognizing the health, safety, and comfort benefits of smoke-free air and tobacco-free spaces, WMU will be a tobacco-free campus as of **September 1, 2014**.

Beginning September 1, 2014, the use of tobacco products is only permitted in enclosed personal vehicles. The use of tobacco products is not permitted indoors or outdoors on any University property. Tobacco products are defined to include the following: cigarettes, electronic-cigarettes, cigars, bidis, snuff, snus, water pipes, pipes, hookahs, chew and any other non-combustible tobacco products.

The objective of this policy is to provide Western Michigan University students, staff, faculty, and visitors with a healthy space in which to learn, live, and discover. It is not intended to punish the members of our community who choose to use tobacco products, and it is important for all of us to communicate with respect and compassion for each other.

The success of this policy relies on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of each individual. All members of the university community share the responsibility of adhering to and enforcing the policy and have the responsibility to respectfully bring it to the attention of visitors. It is the intent of this policy that enforcement will be achieved primarily through education, awareness, and a spirit of cooperation.

As we all become adjusted to the new policy, it may become clear that there are repeated reports of policy violations despite friendly and respectful reminders. If this becomes the case, please bring any complaints to the attention of the appropriate university authority. Violation of this policy will be addressed through existing employee discipline and student conduct processes.

Questions?

For more information about the policy, including Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), please visit wmich.edu/tobaccofree.



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If you encounter someone who is using tobacco products:

Be respectful. Visitors or contractors are more likely to be unaware of the policy so if you are comfortable, you may want to ask whether they know that the use of tobacco products is prohibited on campus grounds and property.

Offer options. You may advise the tobacco user that to help manage cravings while on campus, there are many local pharmacies that offer nicotine replacement therapies such as gum or the patch. If the tobacco user is an employee or student at WMU, he or she can also purchase nicotine replacement therapies at Sindecuse Health Center Pharmacy.

Tobacco users can be directed to the closest area where the Tobacco-Free Campus policy does not apply such as sidewalks that border non-university owned or controlled streets.

Example: *"I wanted to let you know that WMU is a tobacco-free campus. I know that as a tobacco user, this policy must be a challenge for you. If you're interested in resources for tobacco cessation, a variety of online resources are listed at wmich.edu/tobaccofree and there are many nearby pharmacies that offer over-the-counter nicotine replacement therapies."*

Pocket policy cards are available from the Student Recreation Center and Sindecuse Health Center's Health Promotion and Education Office, located on the upper level. These cards include helpful tips about having a conversation about the policy change and may be given to anyone seen using tobacco products on university property as a reminder.

You are not bound by any law or policy to report a tobacco-free policy violation.

If you find a student, faculty or staff member using tobacco products on campus grounds:

Remember to be courteous and respectful, asking whether the tobacco user is aware of our tobacco-free campus policy. If you notice a recurrent violation occurring near a building entrance or adjacent parking area/structure, you may report the violation to the appropriate supervisor or building coordinator. The building coordinator can track recurrent violations and assess the area for adequate signage in consultation with facilities management.

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If a person asks where tobacco products may be used:

Please explain that the use of tobacco products is prohibited on university property including inside buildings and on university grounds. If the tobacco user feels the need to use tobacco products, she or he will need to leave campus property. Non-university property, such as sidewalks that border major streets, is not included in the Tobacco-Free Campus policy.

You may advise the tobacco user that to help manage cravings while on campus, there are many local pharmacies that offer nicotine replacement therapies such as gum or the patch. If they are an employee or student at WMU, you may advise them that they can also purchase nicotine replacement therapies at Sindecuse Health Center Pharmacy.

Our policy allows tobacco use while inside personal vehicles when windows are rolled up and tobacco refuse (cigarette butts, juice/spit) remains in the tobacco user's vehicle.

The Tobacco-Free Campus policy is meant to be a positive, health-related policy. Individuals noticing violations of the policy are expected to be non-confrontational and respectful of all members of our campus community, including tobacco users, when communicating the policy. Additionally, tobacco users are expected to adhere to the policy and likewise be respectful to ex-tobacco users and non-tobacco users. It is the intent of our policy that enforcement will be achieved primarily through education, awareness and a spirit of cooperation.