



Frequently Asked Questions about Tobacco Free Campus

WATC is going Tobacco Free on July 1, 2017

1. Why is WATC wanting to implement a tobacco-free campus?

A big part of the mission of the college is to be a **leader** in workforce training - to prepare our students for real work environment this is a profound step.

Our industry partners have recognized the harmful effects of second hand smoke and more and more are making a change to be tobacco free workplaces.

- *There is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke, any exposure is harmful.*
- *Despite the significant progress made since the first Surgeon General's report in 1964, smoking remains the single largest cause of preventable disease and death in the United States.*
- *Quitting smoking is the most important step you can take to improve your health.*

In 2014, nearly 17 of every 100 U.S. adults aged 18 years or older (16.8%) currently smoked cigarettes.

In Kansas, the percentage of adults who currently smoke cigarettes was 22% in 2011 and the percentage of youths (grades 9-12) who use tobacco was 20.8%. Being a tobacco free campus allows WATC to not have to attempt to enforce illegal underage tobacco use on campus as all use by all students, employees and guests will be prohibited.

2. What does "tobacco-free" mean?

WATC's tobacco-free campus policy will have specific details for this definition. Basically, the use of tobacco products, in any form, will be prohibited on all college owned or leased property to include use inside personal vehicles on the property. This includes, but is not limited to:

cigarettes, electronic smoking device, cigars, hookah smoked products, pipes, and oral tobacco (spit and spitless, smokeless, chew and snuff) and nasal tobacco and smokeless tobacco. It also includes any product intended to mimic tobacco products, contain tobacco

flavoring or deliver nicotine other than for the purpose of cessation, as approved by the FDA (e.g., nicotine patch, nicotine gum).

3. When does this policy change take place?

WATC's tobacco free campus will go into effect on July 1, 2017. Marketing of this initiative, access to informational & education materials and an awareness initiative will begin immediately.

4. Will this policy be phased in?

No. However, the college is committed to creating a smooth transition to a tobacco-free environment, so we will educate our students, employees and guests about the policy change immediately and over the next several months.

5. Isn't smoking a personal, legal right?

Yes, smoking is a personal choice. However, eliminating exposure to second hand smoke is a priority for the college. Tobacco use is not a "protected class" under the law. The college believes in the rights of individuals to make choices, and it does not want to infringe upon what individuals do at home or at other venues. Employers implement policies for the health and safety of the total workforce and the workplace.

6. Am I required to quit using tobacco?

No. Our goal is to create a healthier, tobacco-free environment on campus, not to force people to stop using tobacco products. While support programs and nicotine replacement therapies will provide an excellent opportunity for a student or employee to stop, quitting is not a requirement for policy compliance. However, the campus and all grounds surrounding campus buildings, to include parking lots, will be smoke free sites.

7. If I work at the college, will I be fired if I can't or won't quit using tobacco.

No. We encourage students and employees who use tobacco products to take part in the tobacco cessation programs made available to them. If a student or employee does not want to or cannot quit using tobacco, he or she will not be fired or be unwelcome on campus. However, all students, employee's and guests of the college are required to comply with the new tobacco-free campus policy, while on college owned, leased or rented property.

8. Can I smoke in my car, while on property?

No. Tobacco/Nicotine use is not permitted on college owned, leased or rented property. This includes parking lots and extends to parked vehicles in the parking lot.

9. Can I leave college property on a break to smoke?

No. Breaks are a paid time benefit extended to the employee and as such employees must remain on campus while on break.

10. Will compliance with this policy be a part of my performance review?

Adherence to all college policies is taken into account during performance reviews as it is at all times during employment.

11. What support programs are being offered to assist employees in becoming tobacco free? Is there a cost associated with these programs? Will there be incentives for me to quit?

The college provides opportunity to enroll in and participate in a tobacco cessation programs. WATC pays for this cessation program through its employee wellness fund for employees. Student participation is paid by the college from monies received from a grant through the Kansas Health Foundation.

WATC does provide a reduced premium incentive (Working Well) for benefit eligible employees who carry their health insurance with the college. To participate in this initiative employees do sign an affidavit attesting that they are tobacco free or have successfully completed a smoking cessation program.

12. Does the college expect to lose employees and/or students with the implementation of this policy?

No. WATC offers an excellent student and employment experience and we believe that this policy will only enhance the WATC experience.