

UT Health Science Center: GS5110 - Smoke Free Campus	
Version 1	Publication Date: 06/14/2022

No./Title: GS5110 –SMOKE FREE CAMPUS	Resp. Office: Campus Safety and Emergency Management	Effective Date: 5/31/2022
Category: General Safety	Last Review: 1/1/2018	Next Review: 5/31/2025
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Related Policies: UT System Safety Policy SA0100 UT System Safety Policy SA0700 UT SYSTEM Safety Policy SA0900		
Forms:		

PURPOSE, APPLICABILITY, AND SCOPE:

The University of Tennessee Health Science Center (UTHSC) promotes a healthy, safe, and aesthetically pleasing work, educational, and living environment. The UTHSC community acknowledges that long-term health hazards may accrue to people who use tobacco products or who are subjected to second-hand smoke.

A smoke free UTHSC campus encourages a green and clean environment, prepares our faculty, staff, and students for other smoke-free environments in their future, and can be a source of UT pride in supporting a major wellness initiative.

As a result, effective January 1, 2018, UTHSC is a Smoke-Free Campus and smoking will not be permitted except as specifically permitted under this policy.

Additionally, the advertising, sale, or free sampling of smoking products via University controlled venues, signage, and outlets is prohibited on campus, regardless of the vendor.

This procedure applies to all faculty, staff, students, contractors, and visitors of UTHSC and is in effect 24 hours a day, year round.

ABBREVIATIONS, ACRONYMS AND DEFINITIONS:

Smoke Free Campus: The physical location of a smoke -free campus is defined as facilities, property and grounds used to carry out the mission of the University. This will also extend to sidewalks adjacent to university buildings and grounds in keeping with the city policy of property owners’ responsibility for sidewalks.

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Smoking: For purposes of this procedure, “smoking” means inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying or possessing any lighted product, including cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, and any other lit products, and the use of electronic cigarettes or similar devices.

Use of Smoking Products: The use of smoking products is defined as all nicotine, tobacco-derived or containing products, and plant based products including, but not limited to, cigarettes (e.g., clove, bidis, kreteks), electronic cigarettes, cigars and cigarillos, and hookah-smoked products.

GENERAL PROCEDURES:

General Rules

Along with The American College Health Association (ACHA), and its committees, coalitions, taskforces and volunteers comprised of Federal, public, and private entities: UTHSC also “acknowledges and supports the findings of the Surgeon General that tobacco use in any form, active and/or passive, is a significant health hazard.... further recognizes that environmental tobacco smoke has been classified as a Class-A carcinogen and that there is no safe level of exposure to environmental tobacco smoke, a recognized toxic air contaminant” (Nov. 2011, [ACHA Position Statement](#)).

To protect the health and safety of UTHSC students, employees, and visitors; to promote a healthy and safe work, educational, and living environment; and to comply with the [Tennessee Non-Smoker Protection Act](#) and other applicable state laws, UTHSC prohibits smoking in, and near:

1. In all buildings owned or operated by the University. This prohibition applies to all hallways, classrooms, laboratories, seminar/meeting rooms, offices, restrooms, indoor and open-air athletic facilities, performance halls, parking garages, and all other spaces in University-owned or operated buildings;
2. Entrances to all UTHSC buildings, doorways, windows, and ventilation systems of University buildings to avoid infiltration of smoke into the buildings;
3. All outside property or grounds of the UTHSC campus, including sidewalks, parking lots, recreational areas and partially enclosed areas such as walkways, breezeways, patios, porches, gazebos, tents and bus shelters;
4. All indoor and outdoor athletics venues and facilities;
5. In all motor vehicles owned, leased, or operated by the University. This prohibition applies to motor vehicles rented by the University, *but it does not apply to motor*

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vehicles rented individually by an employee for the purpose of University business travel, except when such vehicles are on University property;

6. Smoking use in *personal vehicles* on University property will not be allowed.
7. Notwithstanding anything in this policy to the contrary, Tennessee law prohibits smoking in all private motor vehicles when being used for the public transportation of children or as part of health care or day care transportation.

Additionally, this policy also prohibits littering on UTHSC property with tobacco products or the remains of any tobacco products.

Designated Smoking Areas

After much consideration from reviewing input from tobacco users, survey results, and benchmarked tobacco-free institutions, there will be NO designated smoking areas.

E-Cigarettes*

Electronic cigarettes will NOT be allowed for the following reasons:

There is a lack of conclusive scientific research on e-cigarettes. Therefore, there is no way of knowing whether e-cigarettes are safe and the potential for harm these consumer products may cause. Given this lack of research, a majority of universities nationwide include e-cigarettes in the definition of tobacco products.

Additionally, e-cigarettes should be removed (as they are often worn around the neck) and securely stored prior to entry into any laboratory where hazardous agents (biological, chemical or radiological) are in use. Failure to do so invites unnecessary exposures to hazardous materials via mucous membranes, ingestion, and/or inhalation, and could result in serious illness. All labs handling hazardous materials should incorporate this guidance into their SOPs.

Permitting e-cigarettes will inevitably lead to confusion and difficulty in enforcement of a ban on cigarettes given the similarity in appearance between traditional cigarettes and e-cigarettes.

E-cigarettes are being used to smoke illegal drugs such as marijuana.

**The use of e-cigarettes will be revisited should they receive FDA approval.*

Exceptions

FDA approved nicotine replacement therapy will be allowed (e.g., patches, gum, inhalers, and lozenges).

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Smoking may be permitted for controlled research, educational, clinical, or religious ceremonial purposes with prior approval of the dean or director responsible for the facility. See Appendix A.

Respect and Responsibility

The success of this policy depends on the thoughtfulness, consideration, and cooperation of smokers and non-smokers. All members of the University community share in the responsibility for adhering to and enforcing this policy. Any complaints should be brought to the attention of the appropriate University authorities and anyone who complains shall be protected against retaliation.

Compliance

It is the responsibility of University faculty, staff, student, visitor or contractor to voluntarily comply with the smoke-free policy. Violation of this policy may be regarded as a willful safety violation.

If someone is non-compliant, the supervisor (or other authority) has a responsibility to speak with person(s) and encourage compliance.

Community-Wide Accountability: Each member of the University community will be responsible for respectfully informing or reminding others of the smoke -free environment if coming upon someone smoking.

Effective approaches for talking with individuals who smoke must be employed with respect.

Please consult with management, student affairs, or Human Resources should you need further assistance in addressing compliance.

Violations

Violators are subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from employment, expulsion from the University, and civil or criminal prosecution, as appropriate. Disciplinary action shall be conducted in accordance with applicable collective bargaining agreements or other appropriate University policies.

Fines and citations will not be part of the basic enforcement of this policy; however, the discipline policies applicable to students, faculty, and staff may be invoked, if necessary, to secure compliance with this policy.

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Violations of this policy will be enforced in the following manner:

- (1) Violations of this policy by faculty and staff should be brought to the attention of the employee's supervisor;
- (2) Violations of this policy by students should be brought to the attention of Student Affairs;
- (3) Violations of this policy by visitors should be brought to the attention of UTHSC Campus Police; and
- (4) Violations of this policy by contractors should be brought to the attention of the department for whom the contractor is working or Facilities Administration, as applicable.

Cessation Resources and Support for Tobacco Users

Understanding the realities of nicotine/tobacco addiction and the concern about personal rights, there is strong empathy for University community members who smoke or use tobacco products. It is also important to note that this initiative does not require that any individual stop using tobacco products completely; such a decision is an individual's choice.

UTHSC is committed to assisting smokers and tobacco users on their journey if they choose to quit completely, as well as cease use while on campus.

Research indicates that it can take multiple attempts to quit and therefore, the University must support these attempts, including cessation programs, support groups, and nicotine replacement therapy.

Students who wish to stop using tobacco are encouraged to contact University Health Services for information about smoking cessation programs.

Faculty and Staff who wish to stop using tobacco are encouraged to contact University Health Services for information about tobacco cessation resources.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Appendix A. Request for Exception

