



SMOKE FREE POLICY

The Council operates a No Smoking policy throughout its buildings.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Warwick District Council is committed to ensuring the health safety and welfare of its employees, customers and visitors and acknowledges that smoking and the inhalation of second-hand tobacco smoke is both a public and work place health hazard. The Council recognises that smoking is the greatest preventable risk to health and is estimated to be responsible for more than 120,000 deaths in Britain each year. It is understood that about 70% of smokers say they want to quit and will smoke less if they don't smoke at work which will therefore help improve the health of our employees.
- 1.2 For a number of years the Council has operated a smoking policy within its premises which designated a number of areas as non smoking, allowed individual offices to be designated as smoke free and created a limited number of designated smoking areas. The policy was reviewed and further restrictions were placed upon where smoking was permissible which effectively stopped smoking in Council premises except in those designated smoking areas.
- 1.3 It is therefore the Council's intention to provide a smoke free environment for all its employees and visitors within all its premises in the interests of health and safety and in compliance with the Workplace (Health, Safety & Welfare) Regulations 1992. In addition this amended policy will ensure compliance with the proposed ban of smoking in all enclosed or substantially enclosed public spaces or workplaces by summer 2007.
- 1.4 The aim of the Council is to provide and promote a safe, healthy workplace and healthy lifestyle as well as providing clarity and consistency for employees and elected members on this issue.

2. POLICY

- 2.1 With effect from July 2007 all premises where service is provided by Warwick District Council employees except as detailed in para 2.2 below will become non-smoking environments. During break times (as in section 4) smoking must take place away from Council premises, buildings and outside the grounds. Smoking must not take place in the entrance to or the exit from any Council building or steps or immediately within the vicinity of any Council building. **From this date no provision will be made for separate smoking areas or smoking breaks.**

- 2.2 In the case of Very Sheltered Housing Schemes, no smoking will be permitted in communal areas and in all other areas as stipulated in para 2.1, although residents will still be permitted to smoke within their own living accommodation. Staff must not smoke in any part of the premises building at any time.
- 2.3 Tobacco products will not be sold on Council premises
- 2.4 This Policy applies to all elected members, Council employees, contractors and all visitors to and users of Council premises stipulated in 2.1
- 2.5 The policy seeks to:
- Promote and achieve a healthy working environment and protect the current and future health of employees, customers and visitors
 - Enforce the right of non-smokers to breathe in air free from tobacco smoke
 - To comply with health & safety legislation and employment law
 - Raise awareness of the dangers associated with exposure to tobacco smoke
 - Take account of the needs of those who smoke and to support those who wish to stop.
- 2.6 The Personnel Department will be responsible for publicising the Policy and ensuring that all job applicants are aware of the policy before offers of appointment are made or accepted.
- 2.7 Managers, through their normal managerial arrangements will be responsible for overseeing the implementation and management of the policy for all areas of their responsibility.
- 2.8 All employees and elected members will be personally and individually responsible for ensuring that they comply with the policy.
- 2.9 Employees receiving visitors to Council premises will explain the smoking policy politely but firmly in order to ensure that visitors comply with the non-smoking policy.

3. CAR TRAVEL/USE OF OFFICIAL VEHICLES

- 3.1 The non-smoking policy will apply at all times to all Council owned vehicles and also to privately owned vehicles when used on council business. Vehicles (both private and Council owned) must not be used as Smoking shelters at any time during the employee's normal working day or whilst on Council owned land.

4. SMOKING BREAKS

- 4.1.1 WDC employees are to refrain from smoking during working hours. Employees wishing to smoke in their own time may do so.

- 4.2 Employees who wish to continue smoking may do so in their own time, during their official unpaid breaks (e.g. lunchtime). Smoking 'breaks' (smoking during paid working time) will cease from 30th June 2007.
- 4.3 Employees who work flexitime will be permitted to use flexitime to take more than 1 unpaid break during their shift. All breaks must be recorded as time away from duties and will be subject to operational requirements and management agreement.

5. OPEN SPACES

- 5.1 Whilst it is recognised by the council that it is difficult to apply a smoking ban in an open space, from an equitable perspective this should be discouraged and indeed a total ban may need to be applied in the future.

6. THIRD PARTY PREMISES – including home visits

- 6.1 Some Council employees are required to visit other premises, both commercial and domestic, as part of their duties. Where practicable employees can request that the occupant refrains from smoking in the same room during their visit.
- 6.2 Such requests should be included in the text of all appointment letters wherever possible. Any request either in writing or in person, must be made in a courteous and respectful manner.
- 6.3 If the person receiving this request does not comply this does not mean that the service will not be provided. For example, it may be possible to make use of an alternative room or arrange an appointment on Council premises.
- 6.4 Where an occupant's behaviour becomes unreasonable towards an employee, the Council will support an employee in removing themselves from the situation.

7. SHARED PREMISES

- 7.1 In buildings shared with other organisations, officers must reach a documented agreement with the other occupier(s) to make the building / premises smoke free. The combined agreement should adopt the principles of this policy.

8. SUPPORT TO SMOKERS

- 8.1 Research shows that 70% of smokers wish to quit. The Council will therefore give counselling, support and assistance to employees who request help to give up smoking.

Some Doctor's surgeries and pharmacies in Warwickshire offer a stop smoking service. This is done on a one to one basis, usually with a practice nurse and consists of support over the first few weeks of quitting, along with a prescription for nicotine replacement therapy or Zyban.

More help is also available from:

Warwickshire Stop Smoking Service 0800 085 2917
NHS Smoking Helpline 0800 169 0 169

This offers friendly help and support. It can also put the smoker in touch with the Stop Smoking Service in their area.

Websites

- www.smokefreewarwickshire.org
- www.gosmokefree.co.uk
- www.nosmokingday.org.uk
- www.ash.org.uk

9. ENFORCEMENT

- 9.1 Whilst it is not the intention of the smoking policy to force employees to give up smoking, but to protect non-smokers from the effects of second-hand smoke, employees who fail to comply with the provisions of this revised policy will be liable to face disciplinary action.
- 9.2 A requirement will be built into all Council contracts requiring contractors to ensure that their employees comply with the Council's smoking policy.