



Model Policy for Head Start Programs



Tobacco-Free Environment

(Name of Head Start Program) recognizes its responsibility to promote the health, welfare and safety of students, staff and other Head Start participants, and to serve as a positive example to other child care and community agencies. In light of scientific evidence that tobacco use and tobacco smoke is hazardous to health, it is the intent of the Head Start Program to establish a tobacco-free environment.

Consequently, tobacco use, distribution or sale by staff or others on Head Start premises, at Head Start sponsored events (on or off premises), in Head Start-owned, rented or leased vehicles or otherwise while on duty on or off Head Start premises is prohibited. Tobacco use is not allowed in personal vehicles of staff or others when transporting persons on authorized Head Start business. In recognition of the importance of modeling healthy behaviors, tobacco use by employees, parents, and volunteers is prohibited in any area (on-site or off-site) that is within sight of Head Start participants.

Program staff, volunteers, and others must avoid bringing clothing that smells of smoke into the classroom, center or onto the playground. Staff will request that parents not smoke during home visits. Parents will be informed of the smoke-free request prior to the home visit.

For the purposes of this policy, "tobacco" is defined to include any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, bidi, clove cigarette, and any other smoking product, spit tobacco, also known as smokeless, dip, chew, snuff, in any form.

Clothing, bags, hats and other personal items used by staff and others to display, promote or advertise tobacco products are prohibited on Head Start premises, at Head Start-sponsored activities or in Head Start vehicles. Tobacco advertising is prohibited in all Head Start-sponsored publications, in all Head Start buildings, and at all Head Start-sponsored events. Acceptance of gifts or funds from the tobacco industry is similarly prohibited. Head Start will not contract with other public or private alternative schools that allow tobacco use on campus.

Violations of this policy by staff, volunteers, or others will be handled through the standard grievance procedure.

Head Start will promote cessation resources to staff, volunteers and parents and offer these as possible alternatives to discipline for violations of tobacco use policies.

As part of Head Start's tobacco use prevention activities, the Health Specialist shall ensure that age-appropriate tobacco prevention messages are incorporated into classroom teaching and during home visits. Staff responsible for coordinating tobacco use prevention will be encouraged to collaborate with agencies and groups that conduct tobacco use prevention education and to participate in ongoing professional development activities that provide basic knowledge about the effects of tobacco use, effective instructional techniques and program-specific activities. Head Start staff will provide pregnant women and other family members, as appropriate, with prenatal education on risks from tobacco use on fetal development.

Head Start Administration will post signage in facilities and vehicles to communicate the no tobacco use policy. Staff will be informed of this policy through such means as the Procedures Manual and orientation and training provided by supervisors. Parents, families and others will be informed through such means as the parent handbook; signs posted on parent bulletin boards; announcements during parent orientation, center committee meetings, and Policy Council training; and explanations of the policy attached to field-trip and home visit notifications.

This policy shall remain in force at all times.

LEGAL AND RELATED REFERENCES:

- Head Start Performance Standards [1304.40\(c\)\(2\)](#) and [1304.53\(a\)\(8\)](#)
- [Establishing a Smoke-Free Environment in Head Start Programs: Program Instruction #ACYF-PI-HS-95-04](#)
- [ORS 433.835 to 433.875, Oregon Indoor Clean Air Act](#)
- [The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General](#). (2006).
- [Oregon School Boards Association Selected Sample Policy: Tobacco-Free Environment](#)



Checklist for "Tobacco-Free Environment" Head Start Model Policy

REQUIRED ELEMENTS FOR OREGON PRE-K PROGRAMS

(Reference: Tobacco Free Environments Policy Letter, Oregon Dept. of Education, October 30, 2008)

▪ General policy elements

- Policy covers all forms of tobacco (all types of smoking and smokeless tobacco products)
- The policy remains in force at all times (even when children are not present and during summer months)

▪ Prohibitions against tobacco use by anyone:

- on Head Start premises at Head Start Program-sponsored events, on or off premises *
- in Head Start vehicles or personal vehicles transporting HS participants

▪ Other prohibited activities:

- Tobacco use by staff, volunteers or family members within sight of participants
- Bringing or wearing clothing that smells of tobacco smoke into the center, indoors
- Wearing clothing that smells of smoke on outdoor premises where children are present
- Sale of tobacco by anyone on HS property or in HS vehicles

▪ Requirements for:

- Incorporating age-appropriate tobacco prevention messages into classroom teaching and home visits
- Promotion of cessation resources

▪ Procedures to communicate the policy: to staff to parents, families and others by posting signage

ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS OF A COMPREHENSIVE POLICY**

- Explanation or rationale for tobacco-free Head Start policy
- Requesting that parents not smoke during home visits
- Consequences or sanctions for tobacco use: by staff by others
- Prohibition of tobacco industry sponsorship, gifts or direct funding
- Prohibition of tobacco advertising: on HS premises at HS sponsored activities in HS publications
- Prohibition of tobacco-related clothing, gear or paraphernalia on premises and at HS sponsored activities

* During off-campus events it may not be possible to prevent all smoking by individuals who are not affiliated with the Head Start. However, steps should be taken such as encouraging community partners to agree on shared tobacco-free policies for community events.

** Prenatal education on tobacco use is required for programs with Early Head Starts by Performance Standards 1304.40(c)(2)