

Maine Tobacco-Free Behavioral Health:

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

PHASE 1

Establish a Policy Committee (1-2 months)

1. Establish a Policy Committee that will guide the tobacco-free transition and that will show broad support/commitment for the establishment of a tobacco-free environment.
 - Include administrators, providers, staff, clients and staff who smoke, nonsmokers, former smokers, and representatives of any officially recognized employee organization.
2. Acknowledge the challenge within your organization.
3. Identify the individual(s) who will be responsible for coordinating the implementation of the tobacco-free environment.
 - Form a workgroup of individuals who will assist in the implementation process.
4. Set a specific date to be tobacco-free.
 - It is recommended to avoid holidays and be mindful of other institutional events.
 - Consider a fair-weather start date if your organization chooses to replace smoke breaks with 'fresh air' breaks or other outdoor activities.

PHASE 2

Develop a Policy (1 month)

1. Develop three or four simple messages to explain the following why the organization is going tobacco-free, this could include how it aligns with the mission or wellness activities.
2. Draft smoke and tobacco-free policy.
 - Define your tobacco-free policy terms:
 - Include all tobacco products
 - Define physical boundaries of campus
 - Prohibit tobacco use in cars for clients, staff, and visitors
 - Revise the tobacco or scent/fragrance policy to include thirdhand smoke
3. Draft an Enforcement Policy.
 - Include actions taken for violation of policy for clients, staff, and visitors.
4. Announce the policy to all employees through a letter from leadership.
5. Announce policy to all campus community and the community at large.
6. Involve Human Resources to release internal and external news.

PHASE 3

Train Staff and Educate Clients (2 months)

1. Develop policy educational material documents and begin distributing to campus community, such as:
 - Company newsletter, all staff emails
 - Signs, displays, leaflets
 - Post flyers/posters in waiting areas
 - Reminders in pay stubs for employees
 - Notices in currently designated smoking areas
 - News releases to local media
2. Conduct training sessions for all employees, including:
 - Training providers to address client tobacco use.
 - Train employees and providers to assess Tobacco Dependence in clients as part of intake process.
 - Implement integration of tobacco treatment into treatment plan.
 - Include tobacco treatment resources in discharge plan.

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3. Consider obtaining insurance coverage for employees of at least one tobacco treatment medication.
4. Have tobacco-free policy approved by Board or appropriate leadership.

PHASE 4

Prepare for Policy Launch (1 month)

1. Begin countdown to launch 3-4 weeks out so campus community members can better adjust and comply with changes. Remind everyone of key dates and events.
2. Prepare a fun kick-off event for employees to celebrate the upcoming policy change.
3. Contact, educate, and assist adjacent community neighbors in becoming part of the tobacco-free area. Consider their concerns in anticipation of the new policy and possible impact on their property.
4. Prepare media releases.

PHASE 5

Implement your Policy (1 month)

1. Make changes to facilitate the tobacco-free environment:
 - Install signage.
 - Remove designated smoking areas and ash receptacles.
 - Replace “smoking breaks” with ‘fresh air’ breaks.
2. Kick-off policy by:
 - Sending out a media release.
 - Hanging signage with positive messages.
 - Making tobacco treatment counseling available.
 - Distributing materials about tobacco treatment resources and benefits.
 - Handing out a token gift to acknowledge those who have quit tobacco or are supporting others to quit.
 - Encouraging all employees to sign in at the launch event and have door prizes.
3. Recognize those who have helped make implementation successful.
4. Begin enforcing tobacco-free policy.

PHASE 6

Maintain Long-Term Success (Ongoing)

1. Have regular announcements reminding people of the tobacco-free policy and tobacco treatment options.
2. Educate new employees on the policy during New Employee Orientation.
3. Be flexible and patient: behavior change takes time.
4. Conduct leadership “Walkabouts” a few times each month at different times and days.

BREATHE EASY

REDUCING SMOKE EXPOSURE IN MAINE

BreatheEasyMaine.org/Behavioral-Health



**MAINE
PREVENTION
SERVICES**

Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services