



**Smoke-free workplace –
part of well-being at work**



Why a smoke-free workplace?

A smoke-free workplace is in everyone's best interest

Smoking is a leading cause of preventable ill health, premature death and disability. It not only threatens employees' health and well-being, but also decreases productivity.

Tobacco products often contain toxic ingredients that cause cellular and genotypic changes, tissue damage and various illnesses. To safeguard health, coping and well-being at work, it is important that non-smoking is encouraged at workplaces and that support is provided for quitting smoking.

Smoking is one of the occupational safety risks to be taken into account in recruitment and job placement in work. The employees must be protected against exposure to substances and methods that are carcinogenic and hazardous to health.

A smoke-free workplace shows that the employer values its employees and is looking to promote their health, well-being and coping at work.

Cost savings

According to a moderate estimate, the average annual cost of a daily smoker to the employer is 1,060–1,300 euros just for smoking breaks. On top of that, there are absences due to illness, medical examination and treatment costs and disability pensions.

Source: THL - Report 15/2015

Absences due to illness are reduced

Smoking increases absences due to illness as smokers are more susceptible to infections than average. Repeated respiratory infections, cardiovascular diseases and cancers are typical illnesses caused by smoking.

Employees' health improves

Quitting smoking contributes to a better quality of life and work ability as well as a reduced risk of illness. Smoking is the cause of about 1,500 deaths of working-age people annually.

Source: THL - Report 15/2015

Working environment becomes cleaner

Indoor air becomes cleaner and no one needs to be exposed to tobacco smoke at work. Cigarette butts lying on the ground are untidy and also a threat to the environment.

Image improves

Being smoke-free demonstrates that the workplace is interested in the health of its employees. It is also a good example for young people.

” Being smoke-free shows that our company keeps up with the times and takes responsibility for environmental cleanliness and employee health.

How to implement a smoke-free workplace?

Criteria for a smoke-free workplace

A workplace is smoke-free when:

- The employer encourages employees to quit using tobacco and nicotine products;
- Occupational health care supports employees in quitting the use of tobacco and nicotine products;
- Tobacco products and electronic cigarettes are not used in indoor and outdoor areas laid down in the Tobacco Act;
- There are no smoking facilities inside the workplace and any outdoor areas designated for smoking are located in a less visible place and so that cigarette smoke is not carried indoors;
- Smoking is prohibited during work hours with the exception of statutory breaks and breaks listed in the collective agreement;
- All workplace events are smoke-free;
- Tobacco products and non-medical nicotine products are not sold on workplace premises and
- The fact that the workplace is smoke-free is clearly indicated at the workplace with, for example, a sticker and also mentioned in job advertisements.





Legislation and a smoke-free workplace

Employers are responsible for looking after the employees' health and safety at the workplace. Non-smoking at workplaces is regulated by the Tobacco Act. (*Tobacco Act 549/2016*)

Smoking is prohibited in indoor areas intended to be used by the public, customers or employees. (*Section 74*)

Smoking is also prohibited in the outdoor areas of day-care centres or institutions providing pre-primary, basic, vocational or upper secondary education. The ban also applies to smokeless tobacco products. (*Section 74*)

A separate smoking area may be built for smoking at the workplace. The construction and use of this area are governed by the same provisions as smoking areas in restaurants. Smoking areas shall not be located in connection with areas that are mainly used by persons under the age of 18. (*Section 76*)

'No smoking' and smoking area signs should be clearly visible. (*Section 80*)



” It makes business sense not to use the working day for smoking.

Support for quitting smoking

Occupational health care plays an important role in the implementation of a smoke-free workplace and in providing support for quitting smoking. The employer should take advantage of the expertise of occupational health care and together agree on forms of support, such as counselling, guidance, training, individual and group counselling and possible medical treatment paid for by the employer.

In addition to occupational health care, support for quitting smoking is provided by, for example, NGOs, municipalities and public health care. Some health centres organise treatment for smoking cessation either on their own or in cooperation with, for example, regional substance abuse organisations. Pharmacies and maternity clinics also provide guidance for a smoke-free lifestyle.

**Communicate that
your workplace is
smoke-free with
a “smoke-free
workplace” sticker!**

**Additional information and
orders: www.savutonsuomi.fi**



Sources:
THL – Report 15/2015
Tobacco Act 549/2016
Layout: Törmä-Ärrälä Oy • 2018