

Smoking Policy

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Smoking Policy Introduction

This policy has been developed to protect all employees, tenants, customers, contractors and visitors from exposure to passive smoking and to assist compliance with the Health Act 2006 and other legislation. The company recognises that health, safety and welfare of employees and anyone else directly affected by the company's operations are of prime importance.

Exposure to passive smoking increases the risk of lung cancer, heart disease and other serious illnesses. Ventilation or separating smokers and non-smokers within the same airspace does not completely stop potentially dangerous exposure.

Definitions

Electronic Cigarette/e cigarette	battery powered products that release a visible vapour that contains liquid nicotine which is inhaled by the user
Vaping	the use of an e-cigarette

General Statement

This policy seeks to guarantee a healthy working and living environment and protect the current and future health of employees, tenants, customers, contractors and visitors. This policy complies with current law and guarantees the right of non-smokers to breathe in air free from tobacco smoke. It also raises awareness of the dangers associated with exposure to tobacco smoke and considers the needs of those who smoke and aims to support those who wish to stop.

Electronic cigarettes

Megaclose acknowledges that some employees, tenants, customers, contractors and visitors may wish to make use of electronic cigarettes, particularly as an aid to giving up smoking. Although they fall outside the scope of smoke-free legislation, Megaclose prohibits the use of e cigarettes in the workplace and properties, owned or managed, for the following reasons:

- Although they do not produce smoke, e-cigarettes produce a vapour that could provide an annoyance or health risk to other employees;
- Some e-cigarettes can, particularly from a distance, look like real cigarettes, making a smoking ban difficult to monitor and creating an impression for other employees, students, customers, contractors and visitors that it is acceptable to smoke on Megaclose premises, managed or owned.

To avoid confusion on interpretation and enforcement of the No -smoking Policy e-cigarettes will be treated as cigarettes under this policy, i.e. prohibited inside or near to building openings.

Restrictions on Smoking

Smoking, vaping or being in possession of lit cigarettes is not permitted in all parts of the company's premises, entrance or grounds, owned or managed, at any time by any person regardless of their status or business with the company. These restrictions apply to all shared areas such as corridors, stairways, rest rooms, kitchens, entrances or reception rooms and bedrooms. This includes areas that are outside but form part of the company's premises.

Visitors

All visitors, contractors and deliverers are required to abide by the no-smoking policy. Staff members are expected to inform tenants, customers, contractors and visitors of the no-smoking policy politely but firmly to ensure that such visitors comply with the smoking ban. No members of staff are expected to enter into any confrontation which may put their personal safety at risk.

Vehicles

Smoking or vaping is not permitted by any person in any company vehicle (including pool vehicles) or any other vehicles being used on company business where the user does not have exclusive, unrestricted use of that vehicle. If an employee uses their own vehicle for company purposes, this vehicle would be exempt from the scope of this policy under the legislation.

Breaks/rest periods

Employees who wish to smoke during the working day may be permitted reasonable breaks, in agreement with their line manager, provided these do not prevent them from satisfactorily carrying out their responsibilities and work duties. Work time lost to breaks unrelated to work activity should be made up as necessary. This applies equally to smokers and non-smokers.

Help to Stop Smoking

The NHS offers a range of free services to help smokers give up. Visit www.gosmokefree.co.uk or call the NHS Smoking Helpline on 0800 169 0 169 for further details.

Disciplinary Action

Any employee, who ignores the smoking ban will be treated in accordance with the company's disciplinary procedure and in the case of repeated offences, may be dismissed from the company's employment. Employees, tenants, customers, contractors and visitors are also reminded that it is a criminal offence to smoke in smoke-free areas, with a fixed penalty of £50 or prosecution and a fine of up to £200.

Maintaining this policy

The company will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and its general compliance within the organisation. This policy will be kept up to date and amend accordingly to reflect any changes in response to revised legislation and applicable standards and guidelines.

This policy is fully supported by the top management of the company. In support of this intent, the policy will be reviewed annually. The company will ensure that the necessary resources are given for the full implementation of this policy.