

Tobacco-Free Grounds

Provide Healthy Facilities

Myths and facts about **TOBACCO-FREE GROUNDS** for
your mental health and substance use disorder program

Myth

“If we are among
the first ones to go
tobacco-free, won’t
staff and clients go
elsewhere?”

Facts



- There is a growing movement within mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment programs to address the whole health of staff and clients by making their facilities tobacco-free.
- Data does not show that staff leave or that census numbers drop when a site goes tobacco-free. In fact, many have used the implementation of a tobacco-free policy as an opportunity to quit smoking themselves.

Myth

“Is there a benefit
to the organization
for us to do this
right now?”

Facts



- Adopting tobacco-free grounds policies for staff and clients increases their chance at quitting tobacco use, increases productivity and saves your organization money.
- Tobacco-free policies help clients integrate into other community tobacco-free spaces like housing, worksites and public gathering venues.

Myth

“What if smoking
helps me cope
with stressful work
situations?”

Facts



- It’s part of our job to model appropriate coping skills in our work environment and using tobacco is not a healthy coping skill.
- Positive coping mechanisms can include a walk break, meditation, talking to a co-worker.
- Mental health improves after quitting smoking and anxiety, depression, and stress significantly decrease in those who stop using tobacco.

Tobacco in this work refers specifically to the use of manufactured, commercial tobacco products, and not to the sacred, medicinal and traditional use of tobacco by American Indians and other groups.

Myth

"If our organization is tobacco-free, won't clients just smoke across the street or other places off campus?"

Facts



- Tobacco is a drug. Many facilities implement tobacco policies that mirror their alcohol and other drug policies.
- Nicotine replacement therapy can help manage cravings while people are on-site.
- There are free resources in Minnesota to connect clients to nicotine replacement therapy.

Myth

"Are tobacco-free grounds policies enforceable?"

Facts



- With adequate time leading up to implementation, staff training around changing social norms, and signage, tobacco-free policies are mostly self-enforcing.
- Many organizations, including those who provide housing, college campuses, and other behavioral health organizations, have found tobacco-free grounds to be easier to enforce than having designated smoking areas.

For a complete list of research and resources, please visit:
<http://bit.ly/ResearchandResources>

**GET
STARTED.**

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