



Frequently Asked Questions Tobacco Use and Sale Campus Initiative and Policy Change

As with any new policy implementation, there will be questions regarding how the policy will impact students, staff and visitors. Below are some key talking points to remember in responding to questions.

What is the new tobacco use policy?

The policy states that as of January 1, 2010, the College will become completely tobacco-free, inside and out. That means students, faculty, staff, visitors and users of the facility/property will be asked to refrain from using tobacco products (i.e. cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chew, and pipes, etc.) on all property owned, operated, and/or leased by RCTC. The current designated smoking areas outside the facilities will be eliminated.

When is the policy implemented?

January 1, 2010

Why was the policy implemented?

This initiative was originally brought forth by the All College Facilities, Safety, and Grounds Sub-Committee in response to requests by the students, faculty, and staff in 2008 to reduce secondhand smoke exposure on campus. Other major employers in the Rochester area have already gone to smoke free campuses..

There are many reasons why RCTC decided to implement a tobacco-free campus. See "[Reasons for a Tobacco-Free Campus](#)". However, the main reason the policy was implemented was to create a healthier environment for everyone who comes to University Center Rochester/Rochester Community and Technical College (UCR/RCTC) to study, work, or visit. There is no safe amount of secondhand smoke. Breathing even a little secondhand smoke can be dangerous regardless if the exposure is indoors or outdoors.

Who does this policy affect?

All students, staff, contract/other employees, contractors, service representatives, visitors, and users of the College owned facilities on all of the 518 acre campus.

Can I smoke in my personal car?

Parking lots owned and operated by UCR/RCTC are included in the ban; however, tobacco use in private vehicles in college parking lots is permitted.

How is this policy communicated to students, staff and visitors?

It is the responsibility of every RCTC employee and student to familiarize themselves with, and adhere to, state, system, and college policies. The Tobacco Use and Sales Policy is published in the Policies Website and in the Student Handbook. In addition, the Tobacco-Free Task Force, a committee made up of faculty, staff and students, is working to educate all staff, students, and visitors at UCR/RCTC about the Tobacco-Free policy through an ongoing comprehensive communication plan.

Does this policy apply to City-owned streets, sidewalks and right-of-ways?

UCR/RCTC has no jurisdiction over the use of City-owned streets, sidewalks and right-of-ways.

Is the Rochester bus shelter UCR/RCTC property?

Yes, there is NO tobacco use permitted in the bus shelter. Not only is the bus shelter UCR/RCTC's property, but the shelter should be used for bus riders only.

If I choose to use tobacco off UCR/RCTC property, are there ash dispensers available for me to dispose of my waste?

No, because the only non-UCR/RCTC property adjacent to the campus is located in the right of way for either East County Road 22 or State Highway 14. Neither right of way would be appropriate for ash dispensers. We request that all individuals who use tobacco to respect the beauty and cleanliness of our campus and ensure all tobacco waste is disposed of properly.

How is the policy enforced?

The goal of the policy is to promote a healthier environment for everyone. With that in mind, the focus is on self-enforcement. Enforcement will depend upon the cooperation of all faculty, staff, and students, not only to comply with the policy, but also to encourage others to comply with this policy in order to promote a healthier environment to work, study and live. Employee bargaining units and student disciplinary procedures already in place will be used; hence those who suspect another in violation of the policy may report it to the appropriate unit for possible disciplinary action.

What should I do if I encounter someone using tobacco on UCR/RCTC property?

Accordingly, tobacco users are expected to voluntarily comply with the policy. Anyone who observes a possible violation may courteously, compassionately, and without confrontation inform the individual of the tobacco-free policy and attempt to offer an information card that states the policy and offers cessation resources.

What should I do if I encounter someone repeatedly using tobacco on UCR/RCTC property or they are uncooperative?

Contact the appropriate person (Student Disciplinary for students and supervisor for faculty/staff) in writing (e-mail or written) of the situation including name of offender, dates, and any additional information about the policy violation. Repeat violations of the policy will be handled through already-established judicial/discipline procedures for both students and staff. See Student Handbook or Employee Bargaining Agreements.

How should managers/supervisors talk to employees about the policy?

It is recommended that managers/supervisors should inform all employees of this policy both in writing and in person.

What should managers/supervisors do if one of their employees violates the policy?

Violations of College policy should be addressed through established procedures and processes.

As a smoker, do I have to quit smoking?

No, the policy just stipulates that you cannot use tobacco products on College property. For those who do choose to quit, information regarding cessation programs and resources are available. Please see the brochure of community resources published by Olmsted County Public Health.