

WESTERN MARYLAND HEALTH SYSTEM

TOBACCO-FREE ENVIRONMENT

PURPOSE

Smoking, chewing tobacco and rubbing snuff are major causes of preventable disease and death in this country. As a health care system, it is our goal to provide our patients, visitors, and staff with an environment as hazard-free as possible. This policy establishes uniform guidelines prohibiting the use of tobacco products on WMHS property in order to reduce the risks to health and safety for users and those around them. These guidelines comply with Maryland law, which prohibits smoking in health care facilities.

POLICY

Smoking and the use of other tobacco products are prohibited in all Western Maryland Health System facilities and properties. Staff are to remain on hospital property during all paid time, including paid breaks, except as required by assigned duties. WMHS wishes to maintain good relationships with its neighbors, so loitering on or littering neighboring property is not permitted.

SCOPE

This policy is applicable to all employees, medical staff, patients, students, volunteers and visitors. "Facilities and properties" include all WMHS work locations, grounds, parking lots, private vehicles on WMHS owned, rented or leased properties, and WMHS vehicles. The policy applies regardless of whether a WMHS facility or property is owned, leased or rented and whether the owner or other tenants follow similar guidelines.

PROCEDURES

In preparation for and support of the policy, the following procedures are adopted:

1. The sale of tobacco materials products is not permitted in or on any WMHS facility or property.
2. Signs will be posted at each facility announcing this policy.
3. The WMHS management team will orient employees to the policy; employment candidates will be informed of the policy during the application and initial orientation process; appropriate community, patient and visitor education will be offered to communicate the policy to external audiences.
4. A variety of tobacco cessation programs and other support will be provided at low or no cost to employees, patients and others to assist them to stop using tobacco products and to address short-term physical and emotional needs.
5. Separate policies and procedures will be published by Human Resources, Nursing and others as necessary to provide additional implementation and enforcement guidelines for employees, patients and visitors.
6. Respectful enforcement of this policy is the responsibility of all employees. Employees, students, volunteers and medical staff are expected to adhere to this policy; and failure to comply will result in disciplinary action as defined in Human Resource and Medical Staff policies. Patients, visitors, and other guests who fail to comply with this policy will be reminded that WMHS is a smoke-free facility and will be advised of resources available to them to assist with compliance while they are on WMHS property. Appropriate follow-up will be conducted with the physician, Risk Management, and/or Safety-Security as

needed. Primary responsibility for resolving the immediate conflict rests with management of the unit to which an offending employee, patient or visitor is assigned.

AUTHORITY

This policy is adopted by and maintained by the Executive Office of WMHS. Questions regarding its implementation or interpretations may be directed to Human Resources or to the Security offices.

APPROVAL – Signatures on file

Director, Safety-Security

Date

Vice President, Human Resources

Date

Senior Vice President, Operations - MHC

Date

Senior Vice President, Operations - SHC

Date