



BELFAST CITY COUNCIL POLICY

DRAFT SMOKING POLICY

DATED NOVEMBER 2018 (DRAFT)

INTRODUCTION

The Belfast City Council Smoking Policy aims:

- to protect the health of staff, visitors and contractors from the potential ill-health effects of passive tobacco smoke whilst in Council buildings and vehicles;
- to ensure compliance with the statutory requirements of The Smoking (NI) Order 2006;
- to formally acknowledge the difference between electronic cigarettes and tobacco smoking
- to demonstrate the commitment of Belfast City Council to creating a cleaner, greener and healthier environment.

SCOPE

This policy will apply to all Belfast City Council staff, elected members, contractors and any other persons who enter Belfast City Council premises or vehicles.

REFERENCES

The Smoking (NI) Order 2006
The Smoke Free (Signs) Regulations 2007

RESPONSIBILITIES

- The Corporate Health and Safety Manager is responsible for the implementation and review of the Smoking Policy and related documentation;
- The Elected Members, Chief Executive and the Corporate Management Team are responsible for the authorisation of the Smoking Policy and related documentation;
- Managers are responsible for the implementation of the Smoking Policy and related documentation within their departments.
- All employees are required to be aware of this Policy and comply with it at all times including ensuring that customers and visitors do not smoke in Council buildings and vehicles.

POLICY STATEMENT

Tobacco smoking is not permitted at any main entrance /exit or inside any part of any building managed, leased or owned by Belfast City Council.

Tobacco smoking and electronic cigarette use is not permitted inside any Belfast City Council vehicle at any time.

SMOKING CONSIDERATIONS

The tobacco smoking ban does not extend beyond the inside of Council buildings and vehicles. Where employees smoke in the open on Council grounds or are provided with designated smoking areas, the following should be considered:

- any health, safety and/or fire related risks i.e. smoking is not permitted in the vicinity of any flammable, highly flammable or explosive stores; where there is any significant combustible material; or anywhere that presents a significant fire risk
- the provision of smoking receptacles
- public image issues such as employees gathering at the front / rear of Council buildings and employees smoking in the vicinity of children, other employees and members of the public
- smoking must not be permitted where passive smoke could reasonably access a building via open windows, ventilation systems etc.
- agreement (as appropriate) on times when smoking is permitted such as during authorised breaks, whilst undertaking specific activities etc.
- any designated smoking area is compliant with the legislation if:
 - i) It has no roof; or
 - ii) It has a roof and the structure has 50% of the surrounding walls open ('roof' includes any fixed or moveable structure or device that can cover all or part of the premises as a roof including canvas awnings)

ELECTRONIC CIGARETTES

Electronic cigarettes are devices that deliver nicotine to the user by heating and vapourising a solution that typically contains nicotine, propylene glycol and/or glycerol, plus flavours. As there is no combustion involved with the operation of electronic cigarettes, there is no smoke and no harmful products of combustion, such as tar and carbon monoxide.

The Council recognises that vaping is different from tobacco smoking and the use of electronic cigarettes may support staff in giving up smoking. In contrast to the conclusive evidence of harm to bystanders from exposure to secondhand smoke, Public Health England advises there is no evidence of harm from exposure to second hand e-cigarette vapour and any risks are likely to be extremely low. For this reason, the use of electronic cigarettes does not fall within the Council's smoking restrictions and is permitted within designated areas of Council buildings. Any electronic cigarette charging units used within Council buildings by staff must be PAT tested and not left unattended.

POLICY ENFORCEMENT

Any employee found to be in breach of this Policy will be liable to formal disciplinary action in accordance with established Council procedures.

The City and Neighbourhood Services Department within the Council have a statutory duty to enforce all tobacco smoking legislation. Any employee smoking in a Council vehicle or premises will be committing a criminal offence and may be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice. Failure to display appropriate signage in council vehicles or premises may result in a Fixed Penalty Notice.

SMOKING SIGNAGE

To ensure compliance with The Smoke-Free (Signs) Regulations (NI) 2007 all Belfast City Council vehicles and entrances to premises must display appropriate 'No Smoking' signage.

SMOKING CESSATION SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES

Smoking tobacco is very harmful to health. The short and long term effects of smoking are well known and smoking remains the single biggest cause of early death in Northern Ireland.

Employees who wish to give up smoking are recommended to consider the use of a stop smoking service. For more information on local stop smoking services and useful tips to stop smoking, visit the Public Health Agency's 'Want 2 Stop' website at www.want2stop.info. As part of the Council's health and wellbeing strategy, consideration will be given to organising workplace based smoking cessation programmes where there is sufficient demand.

RELATED DOCUMENTATION

Belfast City Council Health and Wellbeing Strategy

AMENDMENT HISTORY

Version No.	Changes	Date
1	Third revision	April 07
2	Existing Smoking 'Code of Practice' upgraded to a Smoking 'Policy' in line with best practice and extended to include electronic cigarettes.	November 18

Further Information and Advice

For further information and advice please contact the Corporate Health and Safety Unit

Health and Safety Team: DDI 9027 0400 Ext 3234

E-mail: health&safety@belfastcity.gov.uk