



Smoke-Free Places and Work Areas

From Monday 30th April 2007 Northern Ireland goes smoke-free.

The new smoke-free law requires changes to both work and public places to ensure a smoke-free environment. for everyone, including smokers. It is not intended to stop people smoking but to regulate where they smoke and how it affects others.

This legislation will protect the general public and employees from being exposed to second-hand smoke and the dangerous chemicals contained in cigarette smoke.

It will save lives because there are known health risks associated with passive smoking. It is particularly important to protect children from tobacco smoke because of the known ill health implications such as the increased risk of cot death, glue ear asthma and other lung problems.

The new law will affect enclosed public places such as:

- Community and church halls,
- Hospitals and health centres
- Sports centres,
- Shopping centres,
- Schools.

It will be against the law to smoke in enclosed spaces e.g.

Bars, clubs, cafes and restaurants and all smoke free premises/vehicles will be required to display no-smoking signs.

Whilst public transport has been smoke free for many years now

Translink will apply their smoke-free policy across the entire network including all rail platforms, bus stands and premises.

Unless a work's vehicle is only driven by the same person with out passengers then smoking will not be permitted for any work vehicles, including lorries, vans and taxis.

What if your work place is your home?

Unless you work on your own and do not receive members of the public then you will be required to follow the new legislation.

Within the childcare profession registered childminders working at home already provide a smoke-free facility for the children in their care.

Who will enforce the law?

If you have a complaint about someone ignoring the no-smoking policy you should first direct your complaint to the owner/manager of the premises. If this doesn't resolve the problem you will be able to contact a compliance line that will operate from Monday 30th April 2007 with all complaints being investigated.

The smoke free legislation will be enforced by all district councils in Northern Ireland.

What will happen if you smoke in a smoke-free area?

Legal action may be taken by local council against individuals who smoke in a smoke-free place or vehicle. You may be issued with a fixed penalty notice or be prosecuted.

Where can I get help and advice if choosing to stop smoking?

The Smokers free-phone helpline 0800 85 85 85 gives friendly help and advice including details of local stop smoking support services.

You may choose to talk in person to your GP or local pharmacist.

The Ulster Cancer Foundation also provides information and advice on stopping smoking. Telephone 028 90663281

Your local Sure Start projects would also be able to advise about smoking cessation.

Where can I get more information?

A website for guidance and the source for this fact sheet is www.spacetobreathe.org.uk. This website contains more detailed and up to date information on the smoke free legislation together with useful questions and answers. Further information can be provided by your local Environmental Health Department.

If you would like help with any family issue, please ring Parents Advice Centre for guidance and support on Freephone 0808 8010 722 or email parents@pachelp.org