

# General FAQs

## **Q: What does smoke-free mean?**

A: Baptist Health Care has elected to go smoke-free, effective November 19, 2009. This means smoking is not permitted on any of the Baptist Health Care campuses.

## **Q: Why is Baptist Health Care going smoke-free?**

A: As a major provider of health care in the community, Baptist Health Care strives to create a healthy environment for our patients, visitors, employees, volunteers, and everyone who comes on our campuses. In line with our Mission to improve the quality of life for our patients, Baptist Health Care feels the adoption of a smoke-free campus promotes and supports a healthier community. In addition, non-smoking patients, visitors and staff deserve smoke-free, litter-free areas surrounding BHC's entrances and other public spaces.

## **Q: Will this smoke-free policy be honored at all Baptist Health Care locations, in particular, the outpatient facilities like Baptist Medical Park – Nine Mile?**

A: Yes, all Baptist Health Care facilities will go smoke-free on November 19, 2009, including Baptist Medical Parks Nine Mile and Navarre and Lakeview Center. This policy is not limited to the four Baptist Health Care hospitals. Jay Hospital, Baptist Hospital Behavioral Medicine Center, Baptist Manor and Baptist Home Health Care already are smoke-free.

## **Q: Where on campus does the smoking ban apply? Is smoking allowed inside cars?**

A: Smoking is prohibited on all areas of the campus, inside and outside. This includes inside cars that are parked on Baptist Health Care's property.

## **Q: Why not have designated smoking areas?**

A: Smoking and second-hand smoke are known health hazards. Baptist Health Care strives to serve as a source of health, healing, education and prevention. We are committed not just to healing illness, but also promoting wellness. Allowing smoking on our campus, even in designated areas, is not consistent with this commitment or in line with our Mission. Our smoke-free policy supports the reduction of the disease and promotion of tobacco cessation.

## **Q: Why was smoking chosen rather than other health risks?**

A: Smoking is the leading preventable cause of disease and death in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, one in five deaths are related to smoking. Smoking is linked to several medical conditions including cancer and heart and vascular diseases. In addition, smoking is harmful to those who are near the person engaging in the behavior, through second-hand smoke.



**Q: Isn't smoking a person's legal right?**

A: We are not asking employees, visitors and patients to quit smoking, but to refrain from smoking while visiting or working at any of Baptist Health Care's facilities.

**Q: What kind of support is Baptist Health Care providing for employees who smoke?**

A: To assist smokers, Baptist Health Care is providing resources through our dedicated Web site [www.BHCgoessmokefree.org](http://www.BHCgoessmokefree.org). This Web site will provide information and links to other resources to help smokers quit or develop the skills to satisfy their desire to continue the use of tobacco products while being compliant with Baptist Health Care policy.

**Q: What kind of support is Baptist Health Care providing to inpatients who smoke?**

A: Patients are encouraged to notify admissions or their nurse of their use of tobacco products. This information will be forwarded to their physician who can make arrangements to provide support for these patients. Where appropriate, Baptist Health Care Facilities will make nicotine replacement therapy including; patches, gum and lozenges, available upon request of the patients attending physician.

Tobacco use and smoking cessation documentation are currently included on the "Nursing Admission Assessment/Screening" form. If patients have smoked or used other tobacco products within the last year, they are provided with a program on patient education TV, smoking cessation counseling and/or program referral 469-7400, link to visit [www.nicotineanonymous.org](http://www.nicotineanonymous.org) and number to call: 1-800-quit now or toll free 1-877-869-6422.

**Q: What if the doctor writes an order for a "smoke break" for an inpatient?**

A: Baptist Health Care facilities have been smoke-free for several years so this policy will not change. Smokers should discuss alternative smoking options with their physicians before an extended or inpatient visit.

**Q: I always hear that patient and customer satisfaction are Baptist Health Care's top priority, yet, banning smoking on campus is likely to anger visitors who want to smoke - why do it?**

A: Patient welfare and safety are also Baptist Health Care's top priorities. The majority of our patients, visitors and staff are non-smokers, and they are entitled to smoke-free, litter-free areas surrounding all BHC entrances and other public spaces. Although we recognize implementing a smoke-free policy is challenging, we feel it is the right thing to do for our patient, employees and community. We feel it sets a positive example and is consistent with our Mission of healing.

**Q: What if this policy results in smokers using restrooms and/or stairwells to smoke?**

A: Smoking inside of Baptist Health Care's facilities will be dealt with directly with messages clearly stating that a person can be cited by police for smoking anywhere in the building.



**Q: How will the smoke-free policy be enforced? What if someone refuses to comply, and continues to smoke?**

A: The BHC workforce is empowered and expected to communicate this policy with courtesy and diplomacy to other employees, patients and clients, visitors, vendors and other stakeholders. If the individual persists, management should be contacted for additional assistance.

**Visitors, Vendors and Contractors**

The organization will communicate with all individuals visiting campus facilities through facility signs, written notices (i.e. invoices, payments, etc.) and other communication resources such as community newsletters. All individuals will be asked to respect the organization’s smoke-free policy. Employees observing a policy violation are asked to remind visitors of the organization’s policy and to seek management’s assistance when necessary.

**Patients and Clients**

The organization will communicate the smoke free policy with all patients/clients seeking services at time of registration or admission, through facility signage and through other patient/client communication resources.

Patients/clients will not be permitted to smoke while on the campus. Smoking cessation materials will be provided to those individuals admitted to inpatient services and physicians may be contacted to request smoking cessation products.

If an employee observes a patient/client smoking, the individual will be reminded of the policy and asked to refrain from smoking. If the patient/client persists, management should be contacted for additional assistance.

Should the patient/client leave the campus while admitted, then it is classified as “against medical authorization,” and the manager of the unit must be contacted for appropriate intervention.



# Employee Specific FAQs

## **Q: What is my responsibility as a manager related to the smoke-free policy?**

- A: Baptist Health Care leaders are expected to provide education about this policy and to ensure that the policy is implemented and consistently enforced. Management responsibilities include:
- Understand and follow the policy yourself.
  - Discuss the policy with your employees and encourage their questions to ensure that they understand it. You are required to communicate this policy to staff prior to Nov. 1, 2009. Distribute the FAQ sheet, which will answer a number of their questions.
  - Enforce the policy uniformly and fairly with all employees you encounter, as well as medical staff, patients, clients and visitors.
  - Support your employee's efforts to inform patients, visitors and other employees about the policy, resources and options.
  - Be respectful of employees who smoke, letting them know about the available resources BHC is providing.

## **Q: What should I do if an employee leaves his or her work area for an extended period of time to smoke?**

- A: Employees may not leave the campus or grounds of the facility in which they work while on their work shift to take a smoke break. In addition, employees are expected to be conscientious of scents created by smoking and to be considerate of patients, customers, other visitors and their co-workers by refraining from smoking while on meal breaks taken away from the worksite. Offensive smells created by tobacco smoke will be treated in accordance with the BHC Dress Code Policy. In the event a violation of the policy occurs, employees will be subject to counseling up to and including the organization's progressive disciplinary policy.

## **Q: What do I do if I see an employee violating the policy?**

- A: Politely say, "Baptist Health Care is going "smoke-free" on all of its campuses to support a healthier environment for patients, clients, families and staff. This policy applies to all Baptist Health Care campuses (indoors and outdoors). We ask for your support as we work to make our campuses safer and healthier for you and your family. For information and support on quitting smoking, please visit [www.BHCgoessmokefree.org](http://www.BHCgoessmokefree.org)." Be supportive, respectful and refer to the smoke-free reminder card.

## **Q: How can I support the implementation of the Smoke-Free Environment at Baptist Health Care?**

- A: If you observe a visitor smoking, use the provided script information to inform them of the smoke-free policy.

## **Q: How will employees be notified of this new policy?**

- A: A number of tactics have been developed to communicate the new policy through all of BHC's existing tools, including The Banner, The Daily Line-up, CenterLines, myBaptist, communication boards and departmental meetings. Managers will also present information to staff as appropriate and will be available for one-on-one discussions with employees. To help staff easily identify smoke-free communications, materials will include the daisy graphic.



**Q: Will our smoking policy be explained to job applicants?**

A: Recruiters will inform job applicants and candidates of the policy. This information will also be provided on [eBaptistHealthCare.org](http://eBaptistHealthCare.org).

**Q: Why does it matter if I smoke off campus before my shift?**

A: The smoking policy is to promote a healthier environment for all, including patients with respiratory problems who could be sensitive to smoke on clothing. We also want to support patients and staff who have quit or are trying to quit smoking and the smell of tobacco can trigger the desire to smoke.

**Q: Is my job in jeopardy if I continue to smoke?**

A: Although we encourage all people to stop the use of tobacco products, Baptist Health Care employees are not at risk of losing their jobs because they continue to smoke. The goal of the smoke free policy is to provide a healthier environment on our campuses. By complying with the policies, you can continue to be a smoker and an employee of Baptist Health Care.

**Q: Is support being offered to help me quit smoking or comply with this new policy?**

A: Smoking cessation classes and other resources will be available. Please visit [BHCgoessmokefree.org](http://BHCgoessmokefree.org) for the latest information including; resources, therapies, classes and other helpful information.

**Q: I do not plan to quit smoking, are there any efforts being made to accommodate my needs?**

In recognition of our mission to provide a healthy environment for our patients, employees and visitors, information will be made available to help affected individuals remain abstinent while in Baptist Health Care facilities. Please visit [BHCgoessmokefree.org](http://BHCgoessmokefree.org).

