

Smokefree Event TOOLKIT

Creating safer, healthier and more accessible events



Brought to you by the Urban American Indian Tobacco Prevention & Education Network,
a project of the Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest, INC.

“Surveys at the Klamath Tribes Annual Restoration Celebration Powwow revealed a community desire to reduce secondhand smoke exposure and create a healthier environment for all participants. With help from the Powwow coordinators and the Tribal Council, we limited commercial tobacco use to designated smoking areas away from the arena and other high-traffic areas. The policy was well received and represents a huge step for us on our way to a 100 percent commercial smokefree policy!

We used everything in this toolkit as we planned and executed the event. It has nuggets of gold throughout—from the talking points that helped all coordinators and volunteers speak consistently about the new policy, to the template news release, emcee script and flyers that helped us communicate the policy to all attendees and vendors.

If you are planning a smokefree powwow or event, this toolkit is a great resource. If you want to advocate for an event to go smokefree or are curious about the benefits of smokefree events, there’s something here for you, too.

Thank you for your interest in creating healthier communities!”

Christa Runnels

Tobacco Prevention & Education Program Coordinator
The Klamath Tribes

Dear Smokefree Event Coordinator,

Thank you for your leadership in working to create smokefree spaces, powwows and other events. The work you are doing is profoundly important for the health and vitality of our community.

For many Native people, the use of traditional tobacco is sacred. Smoking cigarettes, on the other hand, is addictive and is the leading cause of preventable death, disease and disability. In addition, exposure to secondhand smoke can cause serious illness and lead to death.

For American Indians and Alaska Natives, smoking is an especially significant problem. In Oregon, we are twice as likely to smoke as non-Native Oregon adults. Nearly half of American Indian/Alaska Native adults are exposed to secondhand smoke in a typical week compared to 39 percent of all Oregon adults.

Perhaps most troubling is that our children are following in our footsteps, creating another generation harmed by commercial tobacco addiction and disease. Seventeen percent of American Indian/Alaska Native 8th graders smoke compared to only 10 percent of overall Oregon 8th graders. As parents/guardians, older brothers and sisters, family members, and community members, we set the standard as role models and the use of commercial tobacco products around youth has a negative effect on their lifestyle choices.

Planning smokefree events is an important step in reducing the negative impacts of commercial tobacco on our community. Smokefree events promote our health and culture, and show our next generation that smoking is not the norm.

There are other reasons why creating smokefree spaces are so important in Indian Country. Historical trauma has resulted in higher rates of substance abuse, addiction and other destructive behavior patterns that have been passed on for generations. Smokefree events can help us break that cycle.

Smokefree events also draw the important distinction between traditional and commercial tobacco, helping to ensure our traditional use of tobacco remains sacred.

Creating a smokefree event will take leadership, collaboration and clear communication. This guide is designed to walk you through the steps, ensuring your event is healthy, safe and successful.

I am proud that there are people like you doing this important work in our community and I express my gratitude for your leadership.

Sincerely,

Amanda L. Wright

Tobacco Prevention & Education Program Coordinator
Native American Rehabilitation Association of the Northwest, INC. (NARA)

THREE

Security





Thank you for your leadership! By planning and executing a smokefree event, you are taking an important step in reducing the negative impact of commercial tobacco on our community.

This section of the toolkit is designed to make the process of enforcing your smokefree event easy, and ensuring that it is healthy, safe, without incident and successful.

Why Plan a Smokefree Event?

The positives of smokefree events are endless. Benefits to our community include:

- Protecting our community members from the deadly effects of **secondhand smoke exposure**.
- Ensuring that events are **more accessible** for all, especially our elders or others who live with or are recovering from asthma, cancer and other chronic diseases that require them to avoid secondhand smoke.
- Supporting people who have made the difficult decision to **quit smoking** by providing the reinforcement they need to succeed.
- Reducing the **toll of commercial tobacco on Indian Country**—American Indian/Alaska Natives are twice as likely to smoke as overall Oregon adults.
- Helping to break the **cycle of addiction and substance abuse** that has been passed on for generations due to historical trauma.
- Drawing the important distinction between **traditional and commercial tobacco**, helping to ensure traditional use of tobacco remains sacred.
- Providing good **role modeling for our youth**, demonstrating that **smoking is not the norm** and helping them avoid peer pressure and the **tobacco industry's marketing**.
 - A key determinant of youth smoking risk is parental use of commercial tobacco.
 - Natural American Spirits, an RJ Reynolds brand of cigarettes, clearly targets American Indians with the image of an American Indian smoking a pipe on the front of the package.

Also, our community wants clean air events. A recent survey at two Oregon powwows found that an overwhelming majority of smokers and nonsmokers support policies that govern the use of commercial tobacco at events.

As the coordinator in charge of the event's security, a smokefree event will **prevent mixed messages**. Instead of trying to manage and control designated smoking areas, a 100 percent smokefree policy is clear, direct and more easily enforced. It will also be **safer and cost less** because it will require less clean-up time and expense, and have less risk of fire and other damage caused by cigarettes. Finally, cigarette butts discarded on the ground can be ingested by young children and create a litter problem.

What's Your Role?

Your role will be to enforce the smokefree policy. That means you will train yourself and all security volunteers on how to ask people to refrain from smoking in a way that's respectful. You should also use the provided talking points to make sure that all volunteers understand the policy and can speak knowledgeably and consistently about it, so that participants are clear about what you are asking them to do and why.

What Does a Smokefree Event Mean?

A smokefree event means that all participants—organizers, volunteers, vendors and attendees—will refrain from smoking cigarettes, cigars and other commercial tobacco products during the entire event and on all event grounds. Commercial tobacco refers to products for recreational and habitual use that large tobacco companies manufacture and sell for a profit.

By contrast, ceremonial tobacco is the original, gifted and sacred tobacco that some Native tribes use strictly for spiritual, cultural and ceremonial use. It ensures the continuance of the Native way of life and is not banned in a smokefree event.

Top Five Ways To Enforce a Smokefree Policy

Planning powwows and other events takes a lot of time and dedication. Adding the smokefree element is doable and can happen in steps. These five tips are listed in order from essential things to start you out, to those that add extra detail and benefit.

1. Signage, signage, signage! Post the flyers that communicate the smokefree policy in high traffic areas such as the lines for the bathrooms and food.
2. Make sure all event coordinators and volunteers are familiar with the talking points so that everyone communicates the policy clearly; recruit volunteers that are former smokers or supportive smokers to help facilitate enforcement and to give testimonials.
3. Post the Frequently Asked Questions and Fact Sheet online and have them available at the event for those who seek additional information about the policy.
4. Find out where people can smoke that is off event grounds and is still in compliance with other laws and ordinances so that you can direct smokers there if need be.
5. Ask people who are in violation of the policy to leave the event.

What is in this section?

This section is for the event planner(s) in charge of the event's security.

In this section you will find:

- 3a. Talking Points:** (same as above)
- 3b. Process for Handling Violations:** Provide these guidelines to all volunteers so that all incidents are handled professionally and in the same manner.
- 3c. Tips for Training Volunteers:** Use these tips as a guideline every time you train volunteers so that everyone has a clear understanding of the smokefree policy, procedures and what is expected of them.
- 3d. Tips on Talking Respectfully to Elders About the Policy:**
The following tips come from elders in the community and can help assist you and other volunteers when discussing and enforcing the smokefree policy with elders at the event.

3a. Talking points

We are dedicated to creating a safe and healthy community. That is why this event is smokefree in addition to being alcohol and drug free. Traditional tobacco use is allowed.

Additional messages

- Commercial tobacco refers to products for recreational and habitual use that large tobacco companies manufacture and sell for a profit.
- Traditional tobacco is the original, gifted and sacred tobacco of some Native tribes that is strictly for spiritual, cultural and ceremonial use. It ensures the continuance of the Native way of life.

Smokefree events protect our community from the deadly effects of secondhand smoke, demonstrate to youth that smoking is not the norm and support those who have chosen to quit.

Additional messages

Smokefree events:

- Are **more accessible** for all, especially our elders or others who live with or are recovering from asthma, cancer and other chronic diseases that require them to avoid secondhand smoke.
- Reduce the **toll of commercial tobacco on Indian Country**—American Indian/Alaska Natives are twice as likely to smoke as overall Oregon adults.
- Help break the **cycle of addiction and substance abuse** that has been passed on for generations due to historical trauma.
- Draw the important distinction between **traditional and commercial tobacco**, helping to ensure traditional use of tobacco remains sacred.

Please help us keep this event smokefree. Together we can reduce the toll of commercial tobacco on our community.

Additional messages

- **For vendors:** Please refrain from smoking and help us enforce this policy by displaying the provided smokefree signage at your vendor booth. Smokefree events not only protect the health of all participants, they ensure that everyone—nonsmokers and smokers alike—can access and enjoy all parts of the event and the venue.
- **For participants:** Please help us make this a successful event by refraining from smoking during the event and on all event grounds.

Security-specific Messages

- This event is smokefree for the health and safety of all participants. Will you please put your cigarette out?
- Here is a fact sheet that explains the rationale behind a smokefree policy as well as other great resources.
- I have an escort who can show you where you can smoke off event grounds.
- If we see you smoking on the event grounds again, we're going to have to ask you to leave.
- We appreciate your support and willingness to comply with this policy.

3b. Process for handling violations

 [template online](#)

Perform the following steps in order, going to the next one only if the smoker will not comply with what you are asking or doing.

1. Use the security-specific messages to ask the person to stop smoking.
2. Have a volunteer escort the person to where he/she can smoke off event grounds.
3. Ask people who will not comply to please leave the event.
4. Escort those who will not comply off the event grounds.
5. Ask those who you see smoking again to leave.

“An addiction is an addiction is an addiction. We don’t let people come into our circle who are drunk or abusing other substances, and smoking should be no different—it’s harming the individual as well as others who have to breathe in the secondhand smoke.”

3c. Tips for training volunteers

1. Discuss with volunteers the benefits and reasoning behind a smokefree policy so that they understand and are supportive of the policy.
2. Print the talking points for each volunteer. Walk through the messages, explaining that they can put the messages in their own words as long as they maintain consistency.
3. Walk volunteers through the protocol, ensuring that everyone follows the same steps. Have volunteers act out scenarios in which a smoker won't comply with the policy.
4. Discuss with volunteers the tips for working with elders.
5. Walk volunteers around the event site before it starts, pointing out where smokers can go if they have to smoke.

3d. Tips on talking respectfully to elders about the policy

While it's important to recruit age-appropriate volunteers to help enforce the policy, especially for situations in which elders are in violation of the law, anyone can ask elders to comply with the smokefree policy. Elders in our community provided the following tips:

1. Try not to be intimidated by elders. Remember that they were once young and are not always perfect.
2. Remember that we are all a community working on greater goals; if you don't feel comfortable talking to an elder directly, then ask another volunteer or elder who is in favor of the policy to talk to the individual who is not in compliance with the policy.
3. Have copies of the fact sheet available to hand out so that the person can see the reasoning behind the policy and the additional resources, including the Oregon Quit Line.
4. Find out where people can smoke that is off event grounds and is still in compliance with other laws and ordinances so that you can direct smokers there if need be. Have escorts available to walk elders to these areas.