



# SMOKE AND ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE-FREE EVENTS

## TOOLKIT

### Ordinance

Per City of Austin Smoking in Public Places Ordinance Chapter 10-6 <sup>i</sup> **smoking tobacco and electronic cigarettes is prohibited within parks.** <sup>ii</sup>

- A.** A person who violates the provisions of this chapter commits a Class C misdemeanor, punishable under Section 1-1-99 (Offenses; General Penalty) by a fine not to exceed \$2,000.
- B.** The city manager may suspend or revoke a permit or license issued to the operator of a public place or workplace where a violation of this chapter occurs.
- C.** Each day an offense occurs is a separate violation.

### Why Smoke & Electronic Cigarette-Free Events?<sup>iii</sup>

Tobacco is the leading cause of preventable death in Travis County. Approximately **800 deaths in Travis County are caused by cigarettes and other tobacco products each year.**

- ▶ There is also no safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. A person sitting within 3-6 ft. of a smoker outdoors can be exposed to levels of secondhand smoke similar to those indoors. **4,300 nonsmokers die each year in Texas from exposure to secondhand smoke.**
- ▶ Cigarette butts are toxic and virtually all tobacco litter ends up in our streams and lakes. Just **one cigarette butt in a liter of water can kill fish** and each butt takes **10 years to decompose.**
- ▶ **The secondhand aerosol, or vapor, from electronic cigarettes is not harmless water vapor.** It can contain the same harmful ingredients that are breathed in when smoking an electronic cigarette.

**SMOKE AND ELECTRONIC CIGARETTE-FREE POLICIES  
ARE CRITICAL TO PROMOTING PUBLIC HEALTH  
AND PRESERVING AUSTIN'S PARKS.**



# Communication

Event organizers should take the following steps to ensure that smoke and electronic cigarette-free event policies are communicated clearly and widely to audiences both before and during events through ample pre-promotion, announcements, and signage:

## PRE-PROMOTION:

- ▶ State that the event is smoke and electronic cigarette-free through all electronic or print promotional materials, including but not limited to: website, ticket purchase page, advertisements (e.g. print, radio, digital, television), press releases, social media, printed ticket reminders, event materials and instructions, event maps, etc.

## STAGE ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- ▶ Events with amplified sound should make announcements that the event is smoke and electronic cigarette-free.
- ▶ Begin making announcements as soon as attendees start arriving, not just when the show is about to start. It is recommended that announcements are made every 20 minutes until the event begins. We also recommend announcements immediately before the event begins and at set breaks.
- ▶ Examples of stage announcements could include:
  - [Insert event name here] is a smoke and electronic cigarette-free event. Please respect your neighbors and keep our parks smoke-free!
  - This park is proudly smoke and electronic cigarette-free. Enjoy the show!
  - A friendly reminder that [insert event name here] is a smoke and electronic cigarette-free event. Enjoy the music and our smoke-free environment!

## SIGNAGE:

Per City of Austin Smoking in Public Places Ordinance Chapter 10-6-8, operators of a public place are required to post “No Smoking” signs: (1) in each public place and workplace where smoking is prohibited by this chapter; and (2) at each entrance to a public place or workplace.<sup>iv</sup>

- ▶ Numerous posters or signs should be posted prominently around the event to inform all attendees of the smoke and electronic cigarette-free policy and non-compliance penalties.
- ▶ Signage should be displayed at eye-level (approximately 5-6 ft.) or above for maximum exposure.
- ▶ For maximum readability, signage font should follow general visibility guidelines, which note that 1 inch of letter height provides 10 feet of readability. For example, 3” tall letters make the best impact within 30'. [See more here.]
- ▶ Prime locations for where signage should be posted include:
  - Each point of entry/exit
  - Stages (flanking or along barricades)
  - Major traffic flow areas (e.g. cross-sections of designated walking paths)
  - Eating/dining areas
  - On every 1-3 Port-a-Potties and/or in restroom corral queues
- ▶ Signage should include the international “No Smoking” symbol and the international “No electronic smoking device” symbol.



A variety of smoke and electronic cigarette-free event signs are available to borrow from Austin Public Health, Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention Program at no charge. Contact Ashley LeMaistre at [ashley.lemastre@austintexas.gov](mailto:ashley.lemastre@austintexas.gov) or (512) 972-6464.



# Enforcement



For questions or further guidance on hosting smoke and electronic cigarette-free events, contact Ashley LeMaistre at **ashley.lemastre@austintexas.gov** or **(512) 972-6464**.

## Event organizers should take the following steps to ensure proper enforcement of smoke and electronic cigarette-free event policies:

- ▶ Schedule an in-person training for all event staff/volunteers (including venue managers) to educate them about the City's smoke and electronic cigarette-free event ordinance and to discuss enforcement procedures. It is important to explain that this policy is in place regardless of personal views and that events held in parks are required by law to be smoke and electronic cigarette-free.
- ▶ Designate a team of staff/volunteers to roam crowds and warn anyone at the event found smoking (including electronic cigarettes) about the policy. (This duty may also fall under the purview of Security.)
- ▶ Enforcement should start with verbal warnings and increase to penalties if warnings and signs are ignored. If the person continues smoking or using electronic cigarettes, he/she should be warned that they are no longer welcome at the event by a member of Security or Police. (This is often incorporated into guidelines for dealing with other inappropriate behavior.)
- ▶ Along with verbal warnings, staff should distribute "Warning" cards to offenders with information about the policy and fines. [\[Download cards here.\]](#) (A supply of cards can also be obtained from Austin Public Health, while supplies last.)
- ▶ Develop a clear process of how staff/volunteers are to handle breaches and communicate this during training. Role playing to help staff prepare for handling breaches and complaints can be useful.
- ▶ Develop a clear complaints process to manage any potential conflict and communicate this during training. Complaints from attendees should be directed to event staff and communicated to those responsible for enforcement (e.g. Security) to address the issue.
- ▶ A person may also report a violation by calling 3-1-1.

<sup>i</sup> City of Austin Code of Ordinances, Chapter 10-6 Smoking in Public Places (updated July 3, 2017), <http://austintexas.gov/department/smoking-public-places>

<sup>ii</sup> "Park" means the outdoor areas of land dedicated and used as parkland, or city-owned land used for a park or recreational purpose that is under the administrative control of the Parks and Recreation Department. The term includes city-owned athletic fields, as defined in Chapter 8-1, Section 8-1-1(1), nature preserves, as defined in Chapter 8-1, Section 8-1-1(1), golf courses and swimming pools.

<sup>iii</sup> "Tobacco Kills." *Live Tobacco Free Austin*. [http://www.livetobaccofreeaustin.org/tobacco\\_kills.php](http://www.livetobaccofreeaustin.org/tobacco_kills.php)

<sup>iv</sup> City of Austin Smoking in Public Places Ordinance Chapter 10-6-8, Signs Required. <http://austintexas.gov/department/smoking-public-places>

### Additional Sources:

San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency, *San Francisco Smoke-Free Outdoor Events Guidelines*, <https://www.sfmta.com/sites/default/files/pdfs/2017/smokefreeccsf0117.pdf>.

ChangeLab Solutions, *Model Tobacco-free or Smokefree Event Policy*, <http://www.changelabsolutions.org/publications/smokefree-events>.

Tasmanian Government Department of Health and Human Services, *Smoke Free Public Events: A Guide for Event Organizers March 2016*, [http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/\\_data/assets/pdffile/0003/117462/Smoke\\_Free\\_Public\\_Events\\_A\\_Guide\\_for\\_Event\\_Organisers\\_final.pdf](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/_data/assets/pdffile/0003/117462/Smoke_Free_Public_Events_A_Guide_for_Event_Organisers_final.pdf).

Cancer Society (Auckland Division), *Smokefree Events: Tips for Implementation*, <https://www.ccc.govt.nz/assets/Documents/Culture-Community/Events-Festivals/CS-Smokefree-Events-Checklist.pdf>.

