



# THE LOUISIANA SMOKE-FREE AIR ACT (ACT 815)



In 2006, Louisiana legislators passed the Louisiana Smoke-Free Air Act. This statewide law prohibits smoking in most workplaces and public places, including primary and secondary schools (pre-K through 12th grade) effective January 1, 2007.

This new law marks a major turning point for our state, placing Louisiana among national leaders in the effort to protect Americans from the dangers of secondhand smoke.

### **WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY SCHOOL?**

Schools in Louisiana with grades pre-K through 12th must prohibit smoking on school property, including buildings, grounds (outdoors and off campus school activities) and buses. In order to adhere to this new law, you should remove ALL ashtrays from the school grounds, including those in the teacher lounges, cafeterias, restrooms and other places where smoking may occur. No Smoking signs should be clearly posted throughout the school.

### **CAN I GET IN TROUBLE IF MY SCHOOL DOES NOT ENFORCE THE LAW?**

Yes, there are fines for both individuals and employers if smoking occurs on school property. For individuals, fines are \$25 for the first offense, \$50 for the second offense and \$100 for third and subsequent offenses. For employers, fines are \$100 for the first offense, \$250 for the second offense and \$500 for the third and subsequent offenses.

It is suggested that each school communicate the no smoking policy and then appoint specific school personnel to monitor and enforce this new law.



## **100% SMOKE-FREE SCHOOL POLICIES ARE GOOD**

In our state, 9,000 children under age 18 become new daily smokers each year, and 107,900 kids now under the age of 18 will die prematurely from smoking (the approximate size of Lafayette, the fourth largest city in Louisiana). According to the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids, 13.8 million packs of cigarettes are bought or smoked by Louisiana youth each year. Considering this number, there is a need for 100% smoke-free schools—here are the benefits:

- They decrease the number of cigarettes smoked and change social and cultural norms
- They provide safe environments for students by reducing exposure to secondhand smoke
- They support prevention messages delivered in classrooms by sending clear, consistent messages regarding tobacco use
- They encourage adult employees and visitors to model positive behavior for students
- They prepare students to participate in smoke-free workplaces and communities

## **WHAT IS THE BEST WAY FOR MY SCHOOL TO ENFORCE THE NEW 100% SMOKE-FREE POLICY REQUIRED BY THE LOUISIANA SMOKE-FREE AIR ACT?**

Communicate the policy positively and emphasize that tobacco-free lifestyles are in the best educational, health and social interests of everyone. Ask all school staff to assist with compliance across the board. Also, designate one person such as the principal, health teacher or school nurse to oversee policy compliance. Finally, develop an enforcement plan that includes:

- Strategies to communicate the plan to students, staff, visitors and parents
- Consequences for violation of the 100% smoke-free school policy
- Designation of individuals who will be responsible for monitoring and enforcement
- Process for the handling of complaints and issues
- List of all areas on the school campus to be monitored

**MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE LOUISIANA SMOKE-FREE AIR ACT CAN BE FOUND AT [WWW.TOBACCOFREELIVING.ORG](http://WWW.TOBACCOFREELIVING.ORG)**

