

Employer Toolkit for Community and Minority Based Tobacco Control Partnerships

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Introduction:

The Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission (TPC) is committed to significantly improving the health of Hoosiers and reducing the disease and economic burden that tobacco use and secondhand smoke exposure places on Hoosiers of all ages. A key step to improving the health of Hoosiers is collaborating with Indiana employers to promote health, wellness and a tobacco-free lifestyle.

TPC strives to provide leadership and resources to help employers improve cessation programming and reduce unnecessary costs that result from tobacco use, including medical care, lost productivity and absenteeism. Helping tobacco users quit not only saves lives—it also saves money. These savings come from lower healthcare costs, increased workplace productivity and prevented premature deaths.

National and Indiana Tobacco Burden:

Tobacco use remains the leading preventable cause of death and disease in the United States, accounting for more deaths annually than alcohol, HIV, car accidents, illegal drugs, and firearm-related incidents combined.^{1,2} Cigarette smoking kills more than 480,000 Americans each year, with more than 41,000 of these deaths from exposure to secondhand smoke. However, nearly 40 million US adults still smoke cigarettes, and about 4.7 million middle and high school students use at least one tobacco product, including e-cigarettes.¹ Furthermore, smoking among employees increases costs for both employers and society, resulting in poorer health, increased healthcare costs, increased absenteeism, and reduced productivity.³ Average annual healthcare costs in the United States due to smoking costs nearly \$170 billion, and over \$156 billion additionally in lost productivity.¹

In Indiana, tobacco use costs Hoosiers:

- \$2.9 billion in annual healthcare costs³
- \$3.1 billion in lost productivity⁴

In Indiana, there are over 1 million adults who smoke cigarettes (21.1 percent) and smoking takes the lives of 11,100 Hoosiers each year. While this is a devastating loss for families and loved ones, it also significantly impacts the economic vitality of our state.

¹U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (USDHHS). The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: USDHHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion (NCCDPHP), Office on Smoking and Health (OSH), 2014.

²Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Health Effects of Cigarette Smoking [Internet]. Atlanta (GA): Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; 2015 Oct 1 [cited 2016 Jul 12]. Available from https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/health_effects/effects_cig_smoking/.

³Berman M, Crane R, Seiber E, Munur M. Estimating the cost of a smoking employee. *Tob Control* 2014; 23: 428-433

⁴Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids. The Toll of Tobacco in Indiana [Internet]. District of Columbia: Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids; 2016 Sep 20 [cited 2016 Oct 6]. Available from https://www.tobaccofreekids.org/facts_issues/toll_us/indiana.

Cost to Employers:

Indiana employers are heavily burdened by their employees' tobacco use. Employees who smoke impose significant excess costs on employers as the annual cost of a smoking employee is estimated to be \$5,800 higher than a non-smoking employee.⁵

This includes:

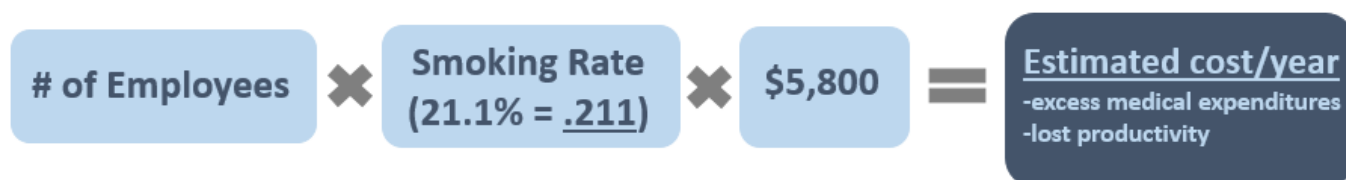
- Over \$2,000 more in healthcare costs
- Over \$3,500 more in lost productivity

Additional costs to employers include:

- Increased Risk of Occupational Health Hazards: Smoking and secondhand smoke exposure may make employees more vulnerable to health hazards from occupational exposure to other substances such as dusts, gases, or fumes.⁶
- Fire and Injury Risk: Smoking at the workplace, including in vehicles, can increase the risk of fires and injuries.⁷ The increased fire and injury risk for worksites where smoking is allowed can increase health and building insurance costs by up to 30%.⁷
- Increased Maintenance Costs: Worksites where smoking is allowed pay about \$728 more per 1,000 square feet in annual maintenance costs than worksites where smoking is not allowed.⁸

An employer can estimate the cost of tobacco use by using a cost calculator:

Annual Cost to Employer



- (500 employees) x (0.211) x (\$5,800) = **\$611,900 per year**
- (50 employees) x (0.211) x (\$5,800) = **\$61,190 per year**
- (10 employees) x (0.211) x (\$5,800) = **\$12,238 per year**

⁵ Berman M, Crane R, Seiber E, Munur M. Estimating the cost of a smoking employee. *Tob Control* 2014; 23: 428-433

⁶ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Current intelligence bulletin 67: promoting health and preventing disease and injury through workplace tobacco policies. Morgantown, WV: USDHHS, CDC, NIOSH, 2015.

⁷ CDC Foundation. Tobacco Use: A Threat to Workplace Health and Productivity. Accessed March 16, 2017 from <http://www.cdcfoundation.org/businesspulse/tobacco-use-infographic>.

What can local TPC partners do to assist their local employers?

Research your current Preferred Employer Network:

When you enroll businesses into the Quit Now Preferred Employer Network, you are giving them an effective tool to help reduce tobacco use in the workplace and improve the health and wellness of their employees. The Preferred Employer Network gives businesses of any size access to the resources needed to begin helping those who are ready to quit tobacco. By completing the [brief enrollment form](#), the business becomes connected to the local tobacco control partner as well as a statewide network of wellness-conscious employers.

Build your Preferred Employer Network:

Identify a list of employers in the community to begin building your employer database or to add to your existing Preferred Employer Network. Identify employers in your county by using the “[Hoosiers by the Numbers – Business Lookup Tool](#)”. Other resources you can explore include contacting your local chamber of commerce, economic development commission or other similar groups in your community.

Set up a meeting with an Employer:

Once you have identified a list of employers in your county, engage the employer to encourage promotion of a healthy workplace and healthy workforce. Contact the employer to schedule an initial interview (refer to TPC’s **Employer Meeting Talking Points** document) or to schedule a meeting with key staff. Key staff could include: CEO, President, Director of Operations, Director of Human Resources, Wellness Director/Coordinator, etc.

Once a meeting is scheduled, use the **Employer PowerPoint** to prepare for the meeting as well as information from the “Actions Employers Can Take” section.

Continue to engage with Employers:

Next steps will be dependent on outcomes from the initial meeting. Some possible next steps include:

- Begin attending employer meetings as they develop a plan to work on “Actions Employers Can Take”
- Assist the employer to develop and implement a 100% tobacco-free workplace grounds policy, including the development of a communications plan about this policy
- Assist the employer with increasing employee awareness about building a healthy workplace and addressing tobacco use
- Encourage the employer to include comprehensive tobacco cessation coverage in their employee benefit package
- Work with the employer to promote the Indiana Tobacco Quitline (and any additional cessation services available locally or through their health insurance)

Actions Employers Can Take:

Ideally, employers should consider four key strategies (including policies, benefits and programs) that will encourage employees to quit using tobacco in the workplace and to quit using tobacco altogether.

- Implement 100% tobacco-free workplace grounds policy, including electronic smoking/tobacco devices
- Provide comprehensive tobacco cessation coverage
- Promote tobacco cessation and connect employees with resources like the Indiana Tobacco Quitline
- Become a Quit Now Indiana Preferred Employer

100% Tobacco-Free Workplace Grounds Policy:

Approximately 20% of the U.S. adult workforce smokes, and an estimated 20% of non-smoking workers continue to be exposed to secondhand smoke at work.⁸ The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke.⁹ Secondhand smoke exposure can have a devastating effect on employees, customers and the health of businesses. Because there is no safe level of secondhand smoke, only a 100% tobacco-free workplace policy will protect employees and help individuals trying to quit tobacco (Reference "[Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke](#)" Fact Sheet for additional information).¹⁰

A **100% tobacco-free [workplace grounds policy](#)** should state that:

- a. possession or use of tobacco products in any form; such as cigar, cigarette, pipe, chewing tobacco, electronic nicotine delivery devices/electronic cigarettes, etc. – is prohibited
- b. the adopted policy is effective 24 hours a day
- c. all buildings are tobacco free
- d. all grounds are tobacco free
- e. employer-owned vehicles are tobacco free
- f. all employees are subject to the policy's regulations
- g. all visitors and patrons are subject to the policy's regulations

⁸ National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). Current intelligence bulletin 67: promoting health and preventing disease and injury through workplace tobacco policies. Morgantown, WV: USDHHS, CDC, NIOSH, 2015.

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.

¹⁰ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Saves Lives, Saves Money: Make Your Business Tobacco-free. Atlanta, Georgia: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, June 2006.

Benefits of a Tobacco-Free Workplace

FOR THE EMPLOYEES

- A tobacco-free environment helps create a safer, healthier workplace.
- Protect employees from harmful effects of secondhand smoke while at work.
- Tobacco users who want to quit may have more of a reason to do so.
- Those who use tobacco may appreciate a clear company policy about tobacco use at work.
- Managers are relieved when there is a clearly defined process for dealing with tobacco in the workplace.

FOR THE EMPLOYER

- A tobacco-free environment helps create a safer, healthier workplace.
- Direct health care costs to the company may be reduced.
- Employees may be less likely to miss work due to tobacco-related illnesses.
- Maintenance costs go down when tobacco, smoke, matches, and cigarette butts are taken out of work facilities.
- It may be possible to get lower rates on health, life, and disability insurance coverage as fewer employees use tobacco

Implementation and Maintenance:

When adopting a 100% tobacco-free grounds policy, employers should gather input from employees. Employers should also educate employees on the need for the policy and clearly communicate their expectations for the policy to achieve a successful implementation. Employers need to develop clear procedures for noncompliance and make sure all employees understand how to respond to complaints and violations. It will also benefit employers to develop a system to disseminate information to all employees and new hires. Ideally, employers should allow three months for notification and transition.

Suggestions for communicating the policy include:

- Announce the new policy at regular meetings.
- Insert policy reminders in business newsletters.
- Post flyers in locations frequented by employees.
- Distribute payroll stuffers to publicize the new policy and cessation resources.
- Declare a new health theme for each month that highlights the health benefits of going tobacco-free.
- Put signs in visible outdoor and indoor places including restrooms, waiting areas, and hallways to inform visitors.
- Share success stories from employees that have quit tobacco.

Comprehensive Tobacco Cessation Coverage:

Employers should offer comprehensive tobacco cessation coverage in their health insurance plans for all employees. Expanding cessation insurance coverage will increase the number of smokers who attempt to quit, who use evidence based cessation treatments, and who successfully quit. When possible, employers should reduce or remove cost and administrative barriers that prevent smokers from accessing cessation counseling and medications.

The U.S. Public Health Service guideline, Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence, can serve as the **model benefit plan** so that employers can [ask for and negotiate with their health plan](#) for comprehensive cessation coverage that includes:

- Four tobacco cessation counseling sessions of at least 30 minutes. This includes proactive telephone counseling, group counseling, and individual counseling.
- All 7 Food and Drug Administration (FDA)-approved [tobacco cessation medications](#).
- Coverage provided for two quit attempts per year.
- Cessation benefits provided with no copayments or coinsurance and not subject to deductibles or annual or life time dollar limits.

How Tobacco Cessation Coverage Saves Employers Money

- Cessation treatment is the single most cost-effective health insurance benefit.^{11,12,13}
- Coverage increases both use of effective treatment and number of successful quit attempts.¹⁴
- Return on investment for tobacco cessation treatments is positive after just one year due to increases in employee productivity alone.¹⁵
- Medical cost savings begin to accrue after two years of providing a cessation benefit to employees.¹⁷

Promotion of Healthy Workplace and Cessation Resources and Coverage

Let employers know they play an important role in protecting the health and safety of their workforce. Most Hoosier adults who smoke (69.6%) want to quit smoking. Furthermore, in 2016 over half (56.0%) of Hoosier adults who smoked tried to quit in the previous year.^{16,17} For Hoosiers interested in quitting cigarettes or any other form of tobacco, the Indiana Tobacco Quitline (1-800-QUIT-NOW) provides free counseling, support, and resources.

¹¹ Cummings SR, Rubin SM, Oster G. The cost-effectiveness of counseling smokers to quit. *Journal of the American Medical Association* 1989;261(1):75-79.

¹² Coffield AB, Maciosek MV, McGinnis JM, et al.. Priorities among recommended clinical preventive services. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2001;21(1):1-9.

¹³ Warner KE. Cost effectiveness of smoking-cessation therapies. Interpretation of the evidence and implications for coverage. *Pharmacoeconomics* 1997;11(6):538-49.

¹⁴ Hopkins DP, Briss PA, Ricard CJ, et al. Task Force on Community Preventive Services. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 2001;20(2 Suppl):16-26.

¹⁵ American Health Plan Insurance. Making the Business Case for Tobacco Cessation. Retrieved from <http://www.businesscaseroi.org>

¹⁶ Indiana Adult Tobacco Survey, 2015.

¹⁷ Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2011-2016.

Motivating Employees to Quit Tobacco

Encourage employers to create a supportive workplace culture and motivate employees to make the decision to quit tobacco. The more motivated employees are to quit, the better their chance of success.

Tips for Promoting Cessation and Increasing Motivation

- Showcase employee testimonials (newsletters, website, break rooms) – Ask employees who have quit tobacco to provide testimonials describing their journey. Hearing about others' success will increase the confidence of employees considering quitting.
- Communicate specifics about what cessation benefits are covered by employees' health insurance and how to access those benefits.
- Encourage friendly competition – Create a competition between departments or groups based on employee pledges to quit smoking.
- Incentivize quitting – Motivate employees with low- or no-cost incentives, such as reduced premiums for non-tobacco use, monthly gift card rewards, annual healthy employee bonus, or special parking place for a month.
- Coordinate efforts with tobacco awareness events – New Year's Resolutions, Great American Smokeout, and other health observances or holidays.
- Provide tips to quit – Include helpful tips on how to effectively quit via employer communication channels.
- Upgrade breaks – Encourage "fresh air" breaks instead of smoking breaks.
- Encourage co-worker support – Ask former or non-tobacco users to "adopt a quitter" to offer encouragement to employees while they quit.

The Indiana Tobacco Quitline

The [Indiana Tobacco Quitline](#) (ITQL) is a telephone-based cessation service designed to help all Hoosier tobacco users. The program also offers [web-based](#) and text-based services. ITQL staff are skilled in working with Hoosiers who use all forms of tobacco products, including smokeless tobacco, pipes, cigars and e-cigarettes.

The ITQL assists:

- Adult tobacco users, in any stage of readiness to quit (4 prearranged calls, anyone 18+ years of age)
- Youth tobacco users, between 13-17 years old (5 prearranged calls)
- Pregnant tobacco users (10 prearranged calls)
- Former smokers who want relapse prevention support
- Friends and relatives of tobacco users who want to offer support
- Other family members as well, even if they are not covered by the employee's health plan

When an employee connects with the Quitline, a trained Quit Coach will provide:

- An assessment of readiness to quit
- A customized quit plan
- Motivation and problem-solving advice
- Medication support - interactions and contraindications, nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) dosages, etc.
- A Quit Kit, including materials in English or Spanish, tailored for your employee's needs
- Referral to cessation services offered by local resources or by health plans, if requested

Ways to Refer Employees to the Indiana Tobacco Quitline

(employees should be ready to make a quit attempt within 30-60 days):

- **Fax Referral Form:** Employers can enroll in the Preferred Employer Network to receive [fax referral forms](#).
- **Online Referral Portal:** A 3-click online [referral portal](#) to simplify the process of connecting employees with the Indiana Tobacco Quitline.
- **Electronic Referral:** Contact TPC staff for inquiries on electronic referral.

When an employee is referred, the Indiana Tobacco Quitline can provide the employer with monthly reports on the number of referred employees and outcomes (ie: accept services, decline services, unreachable, already enrolled). If an employer is a Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliant entity, the Indiana Tobacco Quitline can provide employee outcome reports (ie: enrollment status, program status, medication status, expected quit date).

- *Quitline Services are Effective¹⁸*
- *Quitlines use research-based treatments that are highly effective.¹⁸*
- *Tobacco users receiving quitline counseling are 60% more likely to quit than trying to quit on their own.¹⁹*
- *Quitline users taking cessation medication are 30% more likely to quit compared to those using cessation medications alone.¹⁹*

Quit Now Indiana Preferred Employer Program:

The [Quit Now Indiana Preferred Employer Program](#) gives employers access to a statewide network of tobacco control partners, including resources to reduce tobacco use in the workplace and improve the health and wellness of employees. Enrolling in this program also allows the Quit Now Indiana network to connect with an employer regarding updates on new resources, research, and Indiana Tobacco Quitline promotional materials.

¹⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Best Practices for Comprehensive Tobacco Control Programs — 2014. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

¹⁹ Fiore MC, Jaen CR, Baker TB, et al. Treating Tobacco Use and Dependence: 2008 Update. Clinical Practice Guideline. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Public Health Service, 2008.

Success Story:

Tech Group North America in Frankfort

Tech Group North America, a global supplier of plastics injection molding, understands the high cost of tobacco use. Tobacco costs U.S. businesses nearly \$300 billion in unnecessary health care, absenteeism and lack of productivity.

Tech Group developed a new smoke-free grounds policy and made a commitment to help their employees quit tobacco. Therefore, the company promoted the Indiana Quitline services throughout the workplace. The promotion included free materials and having cessation experts on-site every two weeks for two months.

Healthy Communities of Clinton County worked with the HR department to ensure that all employees, who wanted to quit, had the necessary information and professional support.

The Quit Now Indiana promotion made quitting tobacco a priority for Peter, one of Tech Group's employees. His doctor prescribed Chantix and the quit team was on-site to answer questions and to encourage him. Peter is still tobacco-free and doing great!