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TOBACCO FREE WORKSITE POLICES ARE GOOD FOR EMPLOYEES, BUSINESS

Tobacco free grounds increase chances of employees' quitting which can increase productivity and reduce insurance costs

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Panama City, Fla. – Tobacco free worksite initiatives are quickly becoming a popular tool for better employee health and worksite safety. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, about 70% of current tobacco users want to quit, eliminating tobacco use from the workplace nearly doubles an employee's chances of quitting successfully.

"Tobacco free worksites protect employees from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, can encourage tobacco users to reduce their use, and help those who are trying to quit.", said Sandon S. Speedling, MHS, CPM, CPH, Administrator and Health Officer, Florida Department of Health in Bay County. "It's an opportunity for employers to reduce the negative impact on their employees and their businesses.

In addition to being a positive for employees who are trying to quit, tobacco free policies are also a plus for business profits. Each year, cigarette smoking costs the United States more than \$298 billion in workplace productivity.ⁱ For an employer, providing insurance for a smoker costs about \$2,000 more annually versus their non-smoking employees.ⁱⁱ

Area worksites such as Bay District Schools, Gulf Coast State College, Bay Medical Sacred Heart, Life Management Center, and Gulf Coast Regional Medical Center are 100-percent tobacco free. The Bay County Tobacco Prevention Program and the Bay County Tobacco Free Partnership are proud to provide ongoing support and resources. If your organization or worksite is interested in going tobacco free, please contact Bonnie Steelman at 850-252-9690 or bonnie.steelman@flhealth.gov.

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[i] Potential Costs and Benefits of Smoking Cessation: An Overview of the Approach to State Specific Analysis." Rumberger, J; Hollenbeak, C; Kline, D. Penn State, 2010. <
[\[ii\] Berman M.; Crane, R.; Seiber, E.;Munur, M. "Estimating the Cost of a Smoking Employee." *Tobacco Control*. June 2013. <http://ucanr.edu/sites/tobaccofree/files/175136.pdf>.](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiosN3QxcfTAhVi1oMKHaS TAo0QFggsMAE&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.lung.org%2Fassets%2Fdocuments%2Ftobacco%2Feconomic-benefits.pdf&usq=AFQjCNHAJAMm62_KggQSn0Z-ozNp9bE-UA&sig2=-QAww9jArx-PONcl-8aw>.</p></div><div data-bbox=)