

**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES  
COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES**



**SUBJECT:** SMOKING IN DEPARTMENTAL FACILITIES

**POLICY NO. 381**

**PURPOSE::** To control smoking to the extent that all employees, the public and patients may have an environment in which to work that is unpolluted by tobacco smoke,

**POLICY::** Smoking by employees and the public is prohibited in all indoor areas of all facilities of the Department of Health Services and in County vehicles. This includes all buildings, whether owned or leased, which are occupied by the Department of Health Services. Employees, members of the public or County patients who are able to go outside unassisted by County staff may smoke if at least 20 feet from a door to the facility. No smoking signs shall be posted throughout Departmental buildings and at each entrance. The only exceptions to this policy are described below:

**Exceptions:**

1. Employee breakrooms designated for smoking by the Department, only with prior written approval from the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO). Any such designation shall meet the conditions specified by the CAO, which may include but not be limited to, the following:

- a. The area is not open to the general public.
- b. The smoking breakroom shall be located in a nonwork area where no one, as part of his or her work responsibilities, is required to enter. For purposes of this paragraph, "work responsibilities" does not include any custodial or maintenance work carried out in the breakroom when it is unoccupied.
- c. There are sufficient nonsmoking breakrooms to accommodate nonsmokers.
- d. The air from any such breakroom shall be exhausted directly to the outside by an exhaust fan. Air from the smoking room shall not be recirculated to other parts of the building.

2. Patients hospitalized on long-term care wards operated by the Department shall be allowed to smoke within the organization without a licensed independent practitioner's written authorization only if the criteria below are met. This exception does not apply to patients in short-term care units under 30 days, such as emergency rooms, crisis evaluation units, temporary holding areas, short-term diagnostic wards, short-term acute wards and outpatient clinics. Smoking by patients on long-term wards may occur only in designated locations that are environmentally separate or separate and well-ventilated (such as a designated smoking lounge for authorized patient smoking) from all patient care areas. It is not required that a designated inpatient smoking area be a specific distance from patient care areas.

The hospital shall allow inpatients receiving long-term care to smoke only if the following requirements are met:

- the hospital acts to minimize the smoke to the greatest extent possible by ensuring that air from the smoking area be exhausted directly to the outside by an exhaust fan and not recirculated to other parts of the building;
- the hospital continues its policy to discourage smoking; and
- the hospital provides education and options for smoking cessation activities.

**DEFINITIONS:** "Smoking" includes the smoke of a pipe, cigar, cigarette or any other like substances, lighting such a substance, and/or carrying a burning pipe, cigar, cigarette or like substance of any kind

"Long term care" is defined as 30 days or more, in programs such as intermediate care, skilled nursing facilities, and postacute head trauma social rehabilitation, in compliance with the intent of the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations Standard EC. 5.1.

Nothing in this policy shall be construed to require the County or any individual department of the County to make structural changes or other physical modifications to existing facilities.

**AUTHORITY:** Americans with Disabilities Act, Title 11, Subpart B, Section 35.130.  
County Code, Sections 2.126.010 through 2.126.080.  
Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations.  
Environment of Care Standard - E.C. 5, Smoking.  
Labor Code Section 6404.5.  
Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.  
Los Angeles County Director of Health Services.

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**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Oct 15, 1997

**SUPERCEDES:**

**APPROVED:** Signature on File

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