

AV2000 – SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

Interior Health would like to recognize and acknowledge the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Dākelh Dené, Ktunaxa, Nlaka'pamux, Secwépemc, St'át'imc, syilx, and Tsilhqot'in Nations, where we live, learn, collaborate and work together.

Interior Health recognizes that diversity in the workplace shapes values, attitudes, expectations, perception of self and others and in turn impacts behaviors in the workplace. The dimensions of a diverse workplace includes the protected characteristics under the human rights code of: race, color, ancestry, place of origin, political belief, religion, marital status, family status, physical disability, mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, criminal or summary conviction unrelated to employment.

1.0 PURPOSE

To fulfill a leadership role in promoting health and wellbeing and in preventing illness related to second-hand smoke and vapour.

To protect Interior Health (IH) Clients, Employees, and Visitors from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke.

To value Employees by ensuring healthy, smoke-free work environments.

2.0 DEFINITIONS

TERM	DEFINITION
<i>Client</i>	<i>Any individual receiving/requesting care or services from Interior Health. Includes patients, long-term care residents and any other person receiving care. Note that different terms may be used in different care settings.</i>
<i>Electronic Cigarette</i>	<i>A product or device that contains an electronic or battery-powered heating element that can vaporize or aerosolize a variety of legal and illicit substances for inhalation or release into the air. These devices heat solids or liquids into an aerosol/vapour.</i>
<i>Employee</i>	<i>A person currently employed and/or contracted by IH. Includes Medical Staff, volunteers, students, contractor and other persons working or acting on behalf of IH.</i>
<i>Interior Health Premises</i>	<i>Includes all Interior Health owned, operated, leased or operated contracted facilities, grounds, vehicles, and Clients' homes when care is provided by Interior Health Employees.</i>
<i>Smoking</i>	<i>Inhaling, exhaling, burning, carrying or having possession of a burning or lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, electronic cigarette or other lighted smoking equipment, burning containing tobacco, cannabis or any other substance that is lighted, vaporized burned or heated.</i>

Policy Sponsor: Chief Medical Health Officer	1 of 4
Policy Steward: Manager, Harm Reduction	
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Vaping	<i>The act of inhaling and exhaling an aerosol/vapour produced by an Electronic Cigarette device.</i>
Visitor	<i>A person attending Interior Health Premises to visit Clients for social or essential reasons.</i>

3.0 POLICY

- 3.1 This policy applies to everyone within IH Premises.
- 3.2 Smoking or Vaping is not permitted in or on any IH Premises.
- Exemptions
- 3.2.1 Traditional Indigenous healing practices (e.g., Smudging or Pipe ceremonies) involving the burning of traditional Indigenous healing medicines (e.g., sage, cedar, traditional tobacco, sweetgrass, and diamond willow). [Indigenous Patient Navigators](#) are available to assist with the arrangement of traditional Indigenous healing practices.
- 3.2.2 In alignment with the [AD0100 – Welcome and Acknowledgement of First Nation Traditional Territory Policy](#), traditional tobacco may be presented to an Elder, Knowledge Keeper, leader or guest when appropriate.
- 3.3 All IH Clients, Visitors and Employees must be made aware of the Smoke-Free Environment policy.
- 3.4 To support Client compliance with this Smoke-Free Environment policy, identify and provide Clients who use substances that can be smoked or vaped with appropriate care planning and clinical supports, including withdrawal support, in alignment with a harm reduction approach.
- 3.4.1 For Tobacco and Vaping, refer to the [Smoke & Vapour Free Toolkit](#)
- 3.4.2 For Medical Cannabis, refer to [PHK1000](#)
- 3.4.3 For Non-Medical Cannabis, refer to [AH5500](#)
- 3.4.4 For other substances or prescription medication for non-medical purposes, refer to [AH5000](#)
- 3.5 Employees are not required to assist or accompany Clients off IH Premises to Smoke or Vape.
- 3.6 Compliance and Enforcement
- 3.6.1 IH Site Managers and/or designate leaders are responsible for ensuring the IH Premises remain Smoke- and Vapour-free, as well as address any on-site Smoking complaints issued.
- Refer to the [Smoke and Vapour Free Compliance Handbook](#) for more information.
- 3.6.2 Employees who do not comply with this policy are subject to standard disciplinary practices. Support is available for Employees who wish to reduce or manage nicotine cravings while at work. Refer to the [Smoke](#)

Policy Sponsor: Chief Medical Health Officer	2 of 4
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and [Vapour Free Compliance Handbook](#) and the [Employee Health and Wellness Services](#) for more information.

4.0 PROCEDURES

Roles and Responsibilities

There is a shared responsibility to inform Clients, Visitors and Employees of the Smoke Free Environment Policy. Refer to section 3.6 for compliance and enforcement.

5.0 REFERENCES

1. [AD0100 – Welcome and Acknowledgement of First Nation Traditional Territory Policy](#)
2. [AH5500 – Cannabis for Non-Medical Purposes Policy](#)
3. [AU0200 – Substance Use Disorder Policy](#)
4. [AU0200 – Substance Use Disorder Procedural Guidelines](#)
5. [AH5000 – Harm Reduction – People Who Use Substances Policy](#)
6. [AK0700 – Client Valuables & Personal Effects Policy](#)
7. [PHK0700 – Patient's Own Medication and Natural Health Products in Acute Care Policy](#)
8. [PHK1000 – Cannabis for Medical Purposes Policy](#)
9. Government of British Columbia. (2012 July). *Residents' Bill of Rights*. Retrieved May 15, 2024, from: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/health-safety/home-community-care/accountability/pdf/adultcare_bill_of_rights.pdf
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11. Government of British Columbia. (2025 February). *Tobacco and Vapour Products Control Act*. Retrieved February 21, 2025, from: https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96451_01
12. Government of Canada. (2023 April). *Cannabis Act*. Retrieved May 15, 2024, from: <https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/c-24.5/>
13. Interior Health, Indigenous Partnerships. (2023). [Indigenous Engagement FAQs](#).
14. Interior Health (2007). [Spiritual/Cultural Ceremony Involving a Burning Substance: Special Consideration Guidelines](#)
15. Interior Health. (2023). [Employee Health and Wellness Services](#)
16. Interior Health. (2025). [Smoke and Vapour Free Environment Compliance Handbook](#)
17. Medical Services Commission of British Columbia, Guidelines and Protocols Advisory Committee. Tobacco Use Disorder (TUD). (2024 October). Retrieved

Policy Sponsor: Chief Medical Health Officer	3 of 4
Policy Steward: Manager, Harm Reduction	
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AV2000 – SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENT

February 21, 2025, from: [Tobacco Use Disorder \(TUD\) - Province of British Columbia](#)

18. Ministry of Health, Hospital and Provincial Health Services. (2024 April). *Substance Use and Addictions Management in Hospitals*. Retrieved February 21, 2025, from: <https://healthbc.sharepoint.com/sites/InTheLoopPortalIH/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2FInTheLoopPortalIH%2FShared%20Documents%2FSUBSTANCE%20USE%20AND%20ADDICTIONS%20MANAGEMENT%20IN%20HOSPITALS%5FPOLICY%5FFINAL%2Epdf&parent=%2Fsites%2FInTheLoopPortalIH%2FShared%20Documents>

Policy Sponsor: Chief Medical Health Officer		4 of 4
Policy Steward: Manager, Harm Reduction		
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