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Smoke-Free Laws are Good for Workers!

✓ All Employees Have the Right to Breathe Smoke-Free Air While They Work

- Although 76 percent of white-collar workers are covered by smoke-free policies, just 52 percent of blue-collar workers and [only 43 percent](#) of food service workers benefit from these protections. In other words, the less you earn, the more likely you are to be exposed to secondhand smoke on the job!
- A 2006 study conducted in Scotland shows smoke-free legislation improved pulmonary function in employees just one month after implementation ([JAMA](#)). A more recent study demonstrates improved respiratory health in barmen one year after Ireland's smoke-free law went into effect ([American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine](#), 2007).
- A 2007 [American Journal for Public Health](#) study surveyed non-smoking bar and restaurant employees in both smoking and smoke-free establishments in Oregon. Workers in establishments that allowed smoking absorbed a potent tobacco-specific carcinogen when exposed to second-hand smoke. The study also found that levels of this carcinogen increase by an average of 6 percent after every hour of work.
- A [May 2004 study](#) conducted by the Roswell Park Cancer Institute in Buffalo, NY found that air pollution levels in venues that were required by law to be smoke-free were on average 82 percent lower than in those where smoking was permitted.
- Smokers employed in locations with strong smoke-free workplace ordinances were 38 percent more likely to quit over a 6-month period than those in regions with no such laws. ([American Journal of Public Health](#), 2000).
- A 2004 [study](#) by ventilation technology expert Jim Repace revealed that the air in a smoky bar is two and a half times more polluted than highways.
- A [study conducted by researchers at Roswell Park Cancer Institute](#) showed that before they were smoke-free, hospitality venues in Hoboken, NJ had more than nine times the level of indoor air pollution than similar venues in smoke-free New York City and prompted the [New Jersey Medical Society](#) to advise residents with heart conditions to dine out in New York rather than New Jersey if they couldn't find a smoke-free restaurant.
- Ventilation technology cannot ensure the harmful components of smoke are removed from the air. A [June 2005 report](#) by the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the national and international standard setting body on indoor air quality, concluded, "at present, the only means of effectively eliminating health risks associated with indoor exposure is to ban smoking activity."