



City Policies

SUBJECT: TOBACCO USE SURCHARGE

NO: HR 48.0

EFFECTIVE: 10/1/2023

APPROVED: 
Peter Zanoni, City Manager

DATE: April 25 2023

I. PURPOSE

Tobacco use is one of the leading preventable health risks worldwide. Tobacco use is inconsistent with the culture of wellness. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, men and women who smoke have more lifetime medical expenses and are absent from work more days each year than those who do not smoke.

This policy aims to help prevent disease and promote the health of City employees and their spouses.

II. SCOPE

This policy applies to all City employees and/or their spouses enrolling in any General Employee City medical plan. This policy does not apply where collective bargaining agreements and/or state law apply to Police and Fire uniformed officers. This policy is to supplement the City's Wellness Program.

III. DEFINITION

Tobacco Product means any product that is made from or derived from tobacco, or that contains nicotine, that is intended for human consumption or is likely to be consumed, whether smoked, heated, chewed, absorbed, dissolved, inhaled or ingested by any other means, including, but not limited to, cigarettes, cigars, pipe tobacco, chewing tobacco, snuff, snus, Electronic Nicotine Delivery System (ENDS), e-cigarettes, vaporizers, or vaping devices. This definition does not include FDA-approved Nicotine Replacement Therapies including transdermal nicotine patches, nicotine gum, and nicotine lozenges.

IV. POLICY

Employees must disclose whether they and/or their spouse use tobacco products through New Hire Orientation and Open Enrollment elections. They also must *notify* the Human Resources Benefits Division of any changes in their and/or their spouse's *status as a tobacco user*. *Religious* and ceremonial uses of tobacco may be reviewed for exclusion from *this policy*.

Employees and/or spouses who use tobacco products will be subject to a surcharge on their health insurance premiums.

To avoid the surcharge, tobacco users have the alternative to enroll in and complete the tobacco cessation program through the City's Wellness Program at no additional cost. Tobacco users also have the alternative to complete a tobacco cessation program supervised by a licensed doctor (M.D. or D.O.) at their own expense. Tobacco cessation programs will only apply to the plan year in which the cessation program was completed. Employees and/or spouses are responsible for their own enrollment in a tobacco cessation program.

Once a tobacco cessation program is completed and certification (proof) of program completion is provided to the Wellness Coordinator at Wellness@cctexas.com, the tobacco surcharge will be removed from the employee's insurance premium. The removal will be effective the first pay period after the official documentation is received. A tobacco cessation program administered by the tobacco users treating physician must be certified by the treating physician.

V. DISCIPLINARY STATEMENT

Violations of this policy may be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

VI. QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS POLICY

Questions regarding this policy shall be directed to the Director of Human Resources, or designee, who may be contacted at 361-826-3315.