

UPSTATE

MEDICAL UNIVERSITY

November 2009

The Sidewalk No Smoking Law – Questions and Answers

Intended Audience: All UPSTATE Medical University employees

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Oracle Tracker: N/A

- 1. What is the new local law that prohibits smoking on the streets and sidewalks around Upstate University Hospital?**
On September 1, 2009, the Onondaga County Legislature passed a local law that prohibits smoking in any area open to the public within 100 feet of the perimeter of a general hospital where signs are posted.
- 2. When will this go into effect?**
The law goes into effect on November 1. Upstate University Hospital will post signs and begin enforcing the law on November 19, the Great American Smoke-Out 2009.
- 3. Why is this necessary?**
Smoking on the sidewalks and streets that make up the perimeter of Upstate University Hospital property exposes staff, students, patients and visitors to second-hand smoke, which is proven to have significant health consequences. This will also eliminate the visual cue, which is a trigger that makes smoking cessation difficult for those trying to quit.
- 4. How does this effect smoking outside of Upstate University Hospital?**
The law allows smoking to be prohibited on the street and sidewalks on both sides of East Adams Street and along Irving Avenue in front of the Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital.
- 5. What happens if someone insists on smoking on the sidewalk where signs are posted?**
Any person that violates this local law is subject to a fine of up to \$50.00 for every such violation. University Police will ask violators to extinguish their cigarettes or cigars. If they refuse, they will be issued a violation citation.
- 6. Can I get fined if I smoke on the hospital grounds?**
No. A fine can only be imposed for smoking in the posted areas along Adams Street and Irving Avenue. Employees who smoke on Upstate grounds will continue to be subject to counseling and/or disciplinary action
- 7. Is smoking allowed on Sarah Loguen and Elizabeth Blackwell Streets?**

No. These streets are owned by Upstate and, therefore, smoking is prohibited on these streets and sidewalks under the Smoke-free Campus policy. This includes the Centro bus shelter on Sarah Loguen Street.

8. Is Upstate University Hospital the only hospital that is posting signs to ban smoking on the sidewalks.

Crouse Hospital, Saint Joseph's Hospital and Community General Hospital also supported the passing of this law and will comply with the ordinance.

9. How is this law different from the Smoke-free Campus policy restrictions on smoking?

The Smoke-free Campus Policy, enacted in August 2005, prohibits smoking on all property owned or leased by Upstate Medical University. This includes the Upstate grounds, buildings and vehicles. The new law pertains to the public sidewalks and streets bordering Upstate University Hospital property.

10. Can I smoke in my car in the parking garage?

Smoking is prohibited in the parking garages and open parking areas, even if in a vehicle.

11. Where can patients smoke?

The Smoke-Free Campus Policy states that off-unit passes will not be issued for patients that choose to leave the unit to smoke. At the time of registration or admission, or direct transfer, patients will be informed that Upstate is a smoke free campus-

12. Can the patient's physician give permission for a patient to leave the nursing unit to smoke?

No. It is not appropriate for a physician to grant permission for a patient to leave the grounds to smoke.

13. Can anything be done for the comfort of patients who smoke?

Nicotine replacement therapy (patches, lozenges, gum or inhaler) can be provided to patients at the time of admission to prevent or lessen withdrawal symptoms thereby decreasing the craving to smoke. Respiratory Care may be contacted for instruction on proper use of these medications.

14. What are the roles of employees, faculty, volunteers and students?

All share the responsibility for adhering to and promoting compliance with smoking restrictions on the grounds and the sidewalks, and for bringing it to the attention of Upstate visitors.

15. What can be done for staff and students that want to quit smoking?

The Upstate Smoking Cessation program provides free classes and nicotine replacement therapy to staff, students, and volunteers. Cynthia Cary may be contacted at 464-4426 for more information.