

## Use of Tobacco Products

This policy covers the use of any tobacco product and the use of oral tobacco products or "spit" tobacco, and it applies to all employees of Blount County Government.

No smoking of tobacco products will be allowed within the facilities at any time.

Tobacco products include cigarettes, cigars, chewing or pipe tobacco, e-cigarettes, or any other tobacco products.

The decision to provide or not provide designated smoking areas outside the building will be at the discretion of management or other decision-making body.

All materials used for smoking in this area, including cigarette butts and matches, will be extinguished and disposed of in appropriate containers. Management will ensure periodic cleanup of the designated smoking area. If the designated smoking area is not properly maintained (for example, if cigarette butts are found on the ground), it can be eliminated at the discretion of management or other decision-making body.

## Procedures

1. Employees will be informed of this policy through any of the following forms of communication: signs posted in County facilities, newsletters, the employee handbooks, e-mail, and/or orientation and training.
2. Blount County Government will help employees who want to quit using tobacco by helping them access recommended tobacco cessation programs and materials.
3. Any violations of this policy will be handled through the standard disciplinary procedure.

## Surcharge for Tobacco Users Covered on our Health Plan

In an effort to reduce tobacco use amount our employees, those on the health plan that use tobacco will incur a surcharge on their medical premiums.

If an employee has not used any form of tobacco products three months prior to the annual open enrollment period, and sign the electronic affidavit form, the employee will not incur the surcharge

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This affidavit will be done electronically through the open enrollment process in Kronos.

## Blount County Government – Tobacco Policy

If you are not tobacco free at this time, you can qualify for the discount by completing a free Tobacco Cessation Program approved by the County. The County will also accept recommendations from your physician.

## Tobacco Use Affidavit

Employees will be asked to attest to his/her Tobacco Use Status which will determine if he/she will qualify for the lower medical rate, which is available once per year at annual open enrollment.

The employee will not incur the surcharge if he/she certifies, during the open enrollment period, that he/she has been tobacco-free during the prior 3 months and agree to remain tobacco-free through the remainder of the medical plan year. Employees may decline to participate in the program, in which case the employee will not be eligible for the lower rate. This information will be held confidentially by Human Resources per the Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and used for no purpose other than to administer the Blount County Government's employee wellness program.

The affidavit is a legally binding document, and if an employee knowingly makes a false statement in an attempt to defraud Blount County Government, he/she will no longer qualify for the lower premium rate effective upon the next payroll deduction. His/her behavior may also be subject to discipline, up to and including termination.

If you think you might be unable to complete the qualified tobacco cessation program, you might qualify for an opportunity to avoid the surcharge by different means. Contact Human Resources and we will work with you (and, if you wish, with your doctor) to find a program that is right for you in light of your health status.