

1a Instalec Ltd Smoking Policy

This policy was negotiated by a trade union in the UK and refers to health and safety legislation in the UK.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This policy is intended to establish a smoke free working environment for employees.
- 1.2 The company recognises that smoking is an addictive illness and is anxious to support and assist staff in giving up.

2. Hazards of Smoking

- 2.1 Tobacco smoke is made up of over four thousand different chemicals which are released into the air as particles and gases. These chemicals include about sixty substances known or suspected of being carcinogenic.
- 2.2 Carbon monoxide is a poisonous gas found in relatively high concentration in cigarette smoke. It combines readily with haemoglobin, the oxygen carrying substance in the blood. Carbon monoxide is therefore particularly harmful during pregnancy as it reduces the amount of oxygen being carried to the uterus and foetus.
- 2.3 When cigarette smoke is inhaled it condenses and about seventy per cent of the tar and smoke is deposited in the lungs. Many of the substances in tar are known to cause cancer. Irritants in tar can also cause damage to the lungs, narrowing of the bronchioles, coughing, and increase in mucus and damage to the small hairs which help to protect the lungs from dirt and infection.
- 2.4 Nicotine is a powerful and fast acting drug which can be addictive. The effects on the body are many and complex. In small amounts nicotine generally stimulates nerve impulses in both the central nervous system and the autonomic nervous system, and in large amounts inhibits them.
- 2.5 Every year over one hundred thousand smokers die early because of diseases related to smoking. Most of these deaths are from coronary heart disease, lung cancer, chronic bronchitis and emphysema.
- 2.6 Non-smokers are at risk from passive smoking. Passive smoking can cause lung cancer, irritation to the eyes and chest and can be a particular problem to sufferers from asthma, bronchitis, people with heart problems and contact lens wearers.

3. Employment problems related to smoking

- 3.1 Smokers take about twice as much sick leave as non-smokers - nationally approximately fifty million working days are lost each year as a consequence of smoking.
- 3.2 Fifteen per cent of all fires in industrial premises arise from smoking materials.
- 3.3 Cleaning costs are higher in work places where smoking is allowed because of increased litter, dirtier walls and damage to furnishings.
- 3.4 Ventilation and air conditioning costs are higher in smoking atmospheres.
- 3.5 Insurance costs are greater where smoking is allowed.

4. Employer Responsibilities

4.1 The Workplace Regulations contain a welfare requirement:

"In rest rooms and rest areas appropriate measures must be introduced for the protection of non-smokers against discomfort caused by tobacco smoke."

4.2 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the employer must:

"Provide and maintain a safe working environment which is, so far as is reasonably practical, safe, without risk to health and adequate as regards to facilities and arrangements for welfare at work."

4.3 The employer has a duty in common law to take reasonable care to protect the health of employees. An employer who receives a complaint about the effects of smoking, but ignores it, could be sued for any resultant damage to health. Equally employers may also find themselves liable for damage to an unborn child if a pregnant employee has been exposed to passive smoking.

5. Responsibilities of Employees

5.1 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, employees have duties:

to take reasonable care for the health and safety of themselves and others; and

to co-operate with the employer as far as is necessary to enable the employer to comply with the requirements of the Health and Safety Work Act.

5.2 An employee who refuses to comply with the smoking policy may be in breach of employment law and subject to disciplinary action.

6. Agreement

6.1 This agreement on smoking at the company's workplaces:

- has been agreed after consultation between representatives of management and the company's employment law advisors;
- is intended to contribute to the provision of a safe and healthy working environment;
- provides for no smoking within all buildings, vehicles and customer's premises;
- applies to all employees irrespective of grade;
- has been introduced because of the damage to the health and welfare of non-smokers from exposure to other people's tobacco smoke;
- is dependent for its success upon the co-operation of smokers and non-smokers;
- will be copied to all established employees;
- will be referred to in all advertisements and application forms for employment vacancies;
- will be made available to all new employees during induction;
- will be communicated to all staff, visitors to the company sites and external clients together with a request for voluntary compliance;
- will be reviewed annually by the Management Team;

7. Education

7.1 The company will make available to employees who smoke, upon request, NHS literature advertising smoking cessation courses.

8. Facilities for smokers

Employees are not permitted to smoke immediately outside the Company's premises, in the industrial estate or on the access routes into same.

Employees are not to smoke at our customers premises under circumstances unless indicated on our risk assessment or by special arrangements that will be confirmed at initial site meeting before commencement of works.

9. Responsibility for Implementation

9.1 Responsibility for the implementation of this agreement lies with all line managers together with the most senior member of staff at each workplace.

10. Employee Co-operation

10.1 Employees who fail to adhere to the policy may be subject to disciplinary proceedings.



Paul Jones
Managing Director