

Smoke-Free Indoor Air



Everyone deserves the opportunity to live a healthy, full life — but not everyone in our country has an equal opportunity to achieve this. CityHealth, an initiative of the de Beaumont Foundation and Kaiser Permanente, promotes a package of tried and tested policies that ensure all people in our largest cities have access to healthy choices.

Together, with visionary city leaders, we can make sure that all people have access to a safe place to live, a healthy body and mind, and a thriving environment. Policy solutions like Smoke-Free Indoor Air can help make communities healthier and resolve critical health disparities — now and decades down the road.

We all know the harmful effects that secondhand smoke and vapor can have. Casinos, gaming venues, multi-unit housing, and bars — or any other public space we enjoy with family and friends — should have clean air to protect everyone's health. Cities can put people's health first by ensuring that businesses and other indoor spaces remain free from the smoke and vapor from tobacco (including e-cigarettes and heated tobacco products) and cannabis.

THE SECONDHAND SMOKE CHALLENGE

- Tobacco use is the largest preventable cause of death, disease, and disability in the U.S., taking the lives of more than 480,000 people annually. There is no risk-free level of secondhand smoke exposure; even brief exposure can be harmful to health.
- While many cities have passed smoke-free indoor air policies, common gaps in these policies include e-cigarettes and other heated tobacco products, smoking in casinos and gaming venues and multi-unit housing, and cannabis.
- These gaps put lower-income workers and families at risk. For example, the gaming industry employed approximately 650,000 people in 2020, and these workers' median income was substantially lower than that of all workers. Similarly, approximately 80 million people live in multi-unit housing, with a quarter of these living below the poverty level.

A HEALTHY SOLUTION: SMOKE-FREE INDOOR AIR

- **Protects Millions of Workers** — Smoke-free workplaces protect employees from exposure to carcinogens. While many workplaces are smoke-free, there are many vulnerable workers at risk in hospitality jobs — including bars and casinos/gaming — that often do not require more than a high school education.
- **Doesn't Lead to Negative Economic Consequences** — Having smoke-free indoor air policies does not have an effect on profit for restaurants or bars. In some cases, they improve business — and protect everyone's health.
- **Protects Millions of Low-Income Residents** — A comprehensive ban on smoking in multi-unit housing could protect an estimated 28 million residents from exposure to secondhand smoke in their home or apartment.

Going For Gold

CityHealth annually rates Smoke-Free Indoor Air policies in cities with criteria that set the “gold standard” in each policy area. These criteria were developed with input from national experts, are backed by evidence, and work to reduce or remove systemic barriers to health equity. Medals are awarded to cities that meet the elements necessary for the best quality policy (gold), a good quality policy (silver), and a passable quality policy (bronze). Cities with no policy, or that don’t meet the minimum threshold for a bronze medal, receive no medal.

SMOKE-FREE INDOOR AIR MEDAL CRITERIA



	Bronze	Silver	Gold
1. Smoking is prohibited in non-hospitality workplaces, including child care and long term care facilities; in restaurants and bars; and in public places.	✓	✓	✓
2. Smoking or vaping tobacco, including e-cigarettes and other heated tobacco products, is banned in non-hospitality workplaces, including child care and long-term care facilities; in restaurants and bars; and in public places.	✗	✓	✓
3. Same as silver, and bans in one of the following: casinos and gaming industry venues; multi-unit housing containing more than three units; or marijuana.*	✗	✗	✓

*Marijuana use is regulated in the same manner as tobacco use.

EL PASO LEADS IN CLEAN INDOOR AIR

El Paso passed its first smoke-free ordinance in 2002, applying to bars, restaurants and workplaces. In 2014, the city updated its ordinance to include e-cigarettes and cannabis, and in 2015, the city’s Housing Authority implemented no-smoking policies, protecting hundreds of residents in their homes. From 2002 to 2015, the adult smoking rate in El Paso fell from 24 percent to 13.8 percent, well below the national rate of 17.5 percent.