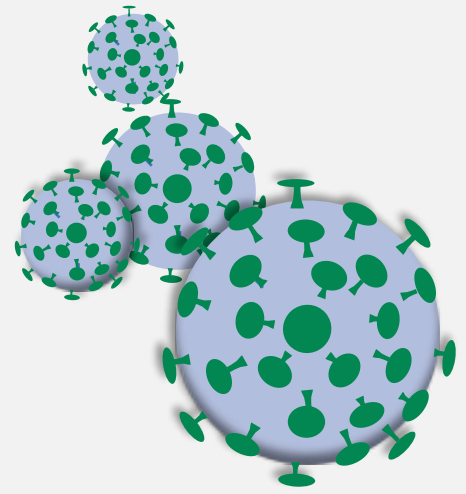


REDUCING EMPLOYEE RISK: COVID-19, TOBACCO USE & SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENTS

A supplement to the [Lung Cancer Prevention & Survivorship
is Good Business Resource Kit](#)



Resources to help reduce tobacco-related employee
COVID-19 complications at Kentucky worksites



UNIFYING Communities and Industry for Better Health

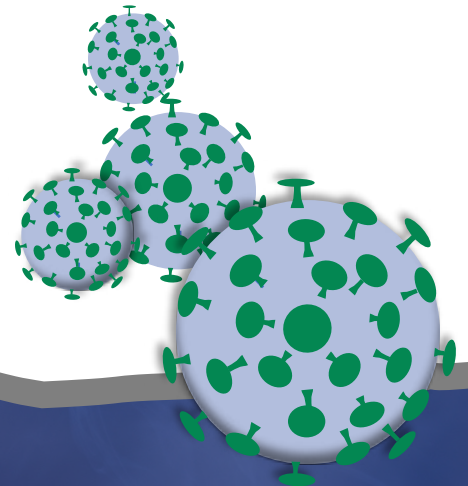
Provided by the Kentucky Cancer Program, Kentucky Cancer Consortium, and the University of Kentucky College of Public Health

BACKGROUND

The SelfMade Health Network, selected the University of Kentucky College of Public Health, Kentucky Cancer Program and the Kentucky Cancer Consortium as a “Kentucky Regional Resource Lead Organization” (RRLO) initially focused on partnering with community businesses and organizations to reduce lung cancer in eight counties in Southern Kentucky (for more information on this process, [click here](#)). In February 2020, the RRLO expanded to a total of eleven counties. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, the KY RRLO has decided to provide statewide support related to reducing employee risk from COVID-19 complications through providing resources on tobacco treatment and smoke-free environments.

PURPOSE

This resource is designed to be a “COVID-19 supplement” to our “[Lung Cancer Prevention and Survivorship is Good Business Resource Kit](#).” This COVID-19 supplement provides information on what we know about the relationship between tobacco use, e-cigarette use, secondhand smoke, aerosol and COVID-19. This supplement also provides resources for worksite leaders to use in order to support their employees’ health, reduce healthcare costs, reduce absenteeism, increase productivity and improve employee quality of life.



WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT COVID-19, TOBACCO USE, SECONDHAND SMOKE AND AEROSOL

- Smoking and vaping/electronic cigarettes make COVID-19 worse if a person gets it.^{1,2,3}
- COVID-19 attacks the lungs. Tobacco smoke and aerosol contain tiny particles and expose a person to chemicals that get trapped in the lungs causing inflammation and hurting a person's ability to fight infection.^{3,4}
- E-cigarettes damage the lungs' ability to fight infection, and those who use e-cigarettes have delays in recovery when they have respiratory infections.^{1,5}
- Early data from the CDC found that 78% of people requiring intensive care for COVID-19 had at least one underlying health condition, which included current or former smoking status.^{6,7}
- Youth and young adults (13-24) who use e-cigarettes or who are dual users of e-cigarettes and cigarettes are at a greater risk of getting COVID-19.⁸
- Young adults (ages 18-25) who smoke are more medically at risk to COVID-19 than non-smoking young adults.⁹
- Secondhand smoke contains more than 7000 chemicals, including many that are toxic and cause cancer.¹⁰
- It's not the smoker, it's the smoke. Secondhand smoke is dangerous for everyone and there is no safe level to breathe.¹¹
- There may be a greater risk of transmission of COVID-19 when people are touching their face and mouth to smoke or vape. Smoking one pack a day results in around 300 hand-mouth contacts.³
- There may be a greater risk of transmission of COVID-19 when there are respiratory droplets in the air that can come from secondhand smoke or aerosol.¹²

WHAT CAN WORKSITE LEADERS DO TO HELP REDUCE HEALTH RISKS FROM COVID-19 FOR THEIR EMPLOYEES?

There are 5 things worksite leaders can do to help reduce health risks from COVID-19 for their employees:

1. Promote frequent hand washing with soap and water
2. Endorse and equip employees with masks of varying sizes
3. Create socially-distanced work environments
4. Implement or strengthen a smoke-free policy at the worksite
5. Help employees quit smoking and vaping

Sources:

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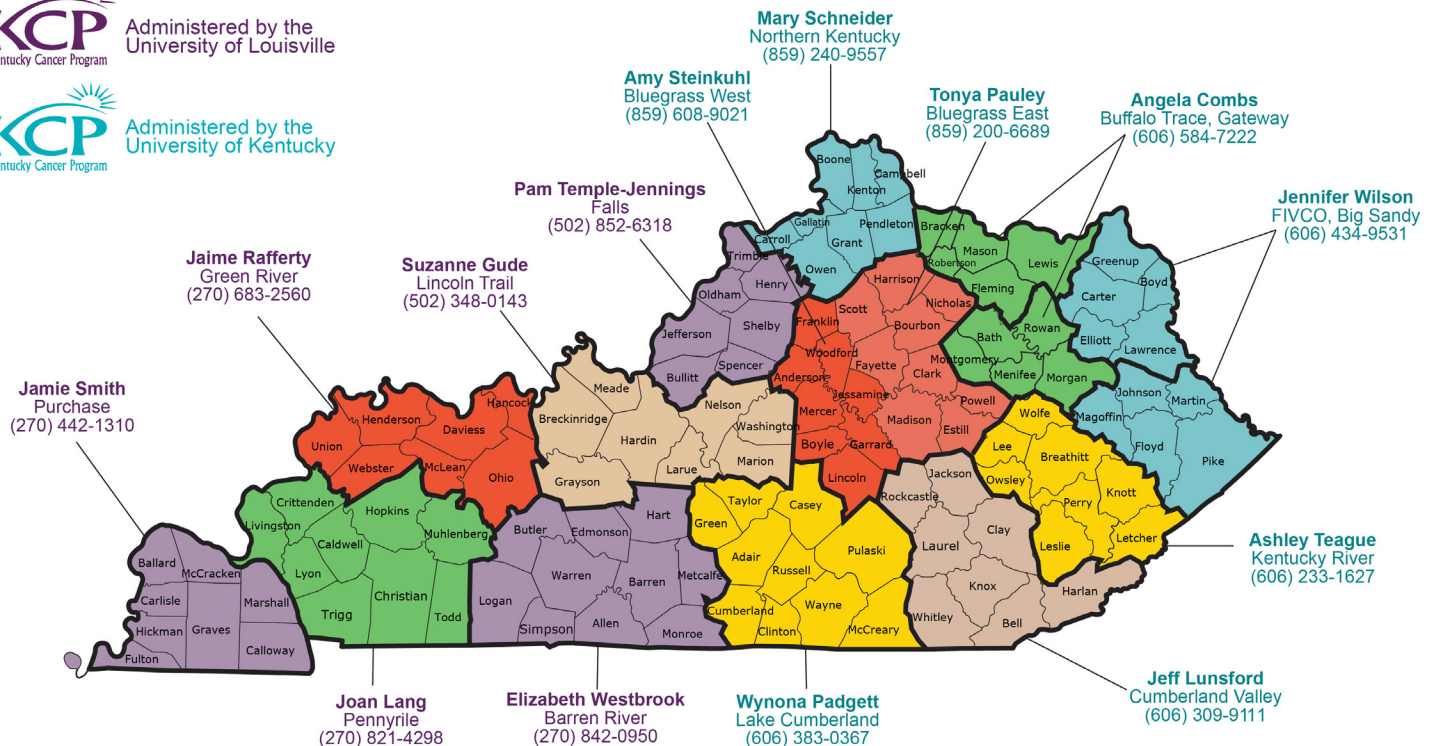
TOBACCO TREATMENT RESOURCES

There are many resources in Kentucky available to help your employees quit smoking. Here are four resources to consider:



Kentucky Cancer Program's Plan to Be Tobacco Free

Connect with a Kentucky Cancer Program Regional Cancer Control Specialist to host a "Plan to Be Tobacco Free" Class with your worksite. This one-time one-hour class (currently virtual) provides information about tobacco treatment products, resources to help employees quit and recommended options based on employee preferences. Click the map below to contact a KCP Regional Cancer Control Specialist that covers your area.



Quit Now Kentucky:

Employees can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW for a personal quitting coach

Employees can enroll in the online version at: <https://www.quitnowkentucky.org/en-US/>

Encourage employees to talk with their doctor, employee health wellness program or employee assistance program about resources to help them quit.

Counseling from a healthcare provider and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved tobacco treatment medications can double the chances of successfully quitting smoking.



Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist Training

If your worksite has onsite or contracted healthcare staff, they can become trained as a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist. The University of Kentucky has the only certified online program in the country. The training costs \$900 and there may be scholarships available. For more information visit: <https://www.uky.edu/breathe/tobacco-treatment/tobacco-treatment-specialist-training>

SMOKE-FREE ENVIRONMENT RESOURCES

If you would like to learn more about how to develop, implement or strengthen a voluntary smoke-free policy at your worksite, here are five resources to consider. Click on each box to visit the links for more information.

**SMOKE-FREE
WORKPLACE
FACTSHEET**

**REOPENING
SMOKE-FREE:
THE NEW
NORMAL**

Contact Amanda Buchar at the **Kentucky Center for Smoke-free policy** to learn about how she and her team can help you with your smoke-free policy.

Email: Amanda.bucher@uky.edu

Phone: (859) 221-9296

**SMOKE-FREE
WORKPLACES
ARE GOOD FOR
HEALTH AND
BUSINESS**

**MODEL POLICY
FOR
VOLUNTARILY
SMOKE-FREE
WORKPLACES**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES



Men's Health



Tobacco Cessation: Lung Cancer and Chronic Pulmonary Disease



Cancer Survivorship

For more information, contact Jennifer Redmond Knight, DrPH, University of Kentucky College of Public Health and Kentucky Cancer Consortium via email at jennifer.knight@uky.edu

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