



# Clallam County Department of Health and Human Services

223 E 4th Street, Suite 14 • Port Angeles, WA 98362-3015 • 360-417-2303 • FAX: 360-417-2583

## Questions & Answers Washington Smoke Free Law (I-901)

**Q: What is the thinking behind this law?**

**A:** Voters have spoken in favor of smoke-free public spaces and workplaces. This law is the final step in expanding our 1985 Clean Indoor Air Act with a goal of offering consistent health protection to all workers and to the public in Washington State. Its passage means that more than 200,000 people now will be protected while at work from known cancer-causing chemicals in secondhand tobacco smoke.

**Q: When will the law go into effect?**

**A:** The law went into effect, **December 8, 2005**, making Washington state the 5th state in the nation to have a 100%-smoke-free law.

**Q: Which businesses or organizations does this law apply to?**

**A:** All “public places” and “places of employment” are included under the law, meaning any portion of any building or vehicle used by and open to the public or workers, whether the building is owned in whole or in part by private persons or entities, and whether or not an entry/membership fee is charged. Tribes are Sovereign Nations, and are exempt from the law.

**Q: What do I have to do to comply with the law?**

**A:** Owners or lessees of all businesses and workplaces are required to post signs prohibiting smoking. Signage must be conspicuous at building entrances and in prominent locations throughout a building. No smoking should be allowed within 25 feet of entrances and exits, including windows that open and ventilation intakes.

**Q: How many signs do I need to post?**

**A:** The law does not specify the number of signs, just that they be prominently displayed both at entrances and inside the business or workplace.

**Q: Who will enforce the law?**

**A:** Local law enforcement agencies are responsible for enforcement of those sections of the law pertaining to individuals who intentionally violate the law by smoking in prohibited areas. When violations are reported, the Clallam County Health and Human Services Department will work to ensure compliance with those sections of the law pertaining to requirements for persons in charge of businesses, workplaces and other public places. The Health and Human Services Department will work with city attorneys and the county prosecutor to gain enforcement.

**Q: How can I request a modification of the 25-foot rule?**

**A:** The law does allow a business owner/operator to seek to rebut the presumption that 25 feet is a reasonable minimum distance from entrances, etc. by making application to the local health department. For more information call Rachel Anderson at 360-565-2608.

**Q: What about hotels and motels?**

**A:** In addition to signage at entrances and inside buildings as mentioned above, no less than 75% of sleeping quarters available for rent to guests will be required to be smoke free in hotels and motels.

**Q: Does this law apply to private, members-only clubs?**

**A:** Yes, because the clubs have employees and the law is designed to protect workers.

**Q: Will employee smoking rooms in our workplace still be allowed after 12/8?**

**A:** No.

**Q: Where can I get more information or help?**

**A:** Web sites you might find helpful include the Washington State Department of Health at [www.doh.wa.gov/tobacco](http://www.doh.wa.gov/tobacco), and [www.secondhandsmokesyou.com](http://www.secondhandsmokesyou.com).

Rachel Anderson, M.Ed.  
Tobacco Prevention and Control Specialist  
Clallam County Health & Human Services  
223 East Fourth Street, Suite 14  
Port Angeles, WA 98362  
phone: 360-565-2608  
fax: 360-417-2583  
email: randerson@co.clallam.wa.us

