

Smokefree outdoor policies in New Zealand: Questions and answers



Q: Will smokefree outdoor hospitality policies harm businesses and jobs?

Answer: No

- Australian cities and states with smokefree outdoor hospitality areas report increased patronage with the change.^{1, 2}
- New Zealand surveys indicate a net gain in patrons with smokefree outdoor areas.^{3, 4}
- Café/restaurant sales increased after the 2004 New Zealand smoking legislation.^{5, 6}
- Support by smokers is likely to sharply increase once they experience the policy.^{5, 7, 8}

Q: Are smokefree outdoor areas just a nanny state idea?

Answer: No

- A majority of the New Zealand public support smokefree building entrances, transport waiting areas, dining areas, and outdoor music or community events and activities.^{9, 10}
- There is no safe level of secondhand smoke.¹¹
- Significant tobacco smoke effects occur at over 10m from groups of smokers,¹² and at least 9m from a burning cigarette in light winds.¹³

Q: Is smoking a choice?

Answer: No

- Young people rapidly become addicted to nicotine when they think they are experimenting with smoking.¹⁴
- The addiction is unlikely to be from a fully informed decision.^{15, 16}

Q: Do smokefree outdoor areas help smokers?

Answer: Yes

- A large majority of smokers across a number of cultures regret starting smoking,¹⁷ and would like to quit.
- The fewer smokers seen in public, the easier it is for smokers to quit and stay quit.¹⁸⁻²⁰
- Smokefree outdoor areas increase quit attempts.^{19, 21}



Q: Can smokefree outdoor areas be enforced?

Answer: Yes

- A review of the Queensland smokefree law in 2007 found high compliance at building entrances, outdoor dining/drinking, beaches and pools.¹
- New Zealand experience with adopting indoor smokefree laws indicates that compliance was very high,^{5, 6} and bar staff found patrons responded well to being asked to go outside.²²

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