Smokefree Outdoor Dining
A guide for cafes, restaurants and licensed venues.

Making outdoor dining Smokefree is a great way to improve customer experience at your establishment and protect customers and staff from exposure to second-hand smoke. Smokefree outdoor dining is common in Australia and has been very successfully implemented there. Smokefree outdoor dining helps cater to the 85% of New Zealanders that don’t smoke, helps protect children from starting, supports people to quit, and helps those who have quit to stay Smokefree.

“We wanted to give all of our customers the ultimate dining experience, we don’t think that having smoke in your face delivers that.”

— Scott Brown, co-owner of Hip Group who run 14 successful establishments across Auckland
Benefits of Smokefree outdoor dining:

Your customers prefer it: Aucklanders want Smokefree outdoor dining - 91% said that they would be more likely or as likely to visit outdoor dining areas if they were Smokefree in a 2013 Auckland-wide survey. Seventy-six percent of Aucklanders said they would prefer all outdoor dining to be Smokefree.

A healthy environment for staff and customers: There is no safe level of exposure to second-hand tobacco smoke. Evidence from NZ and overseas shows that patrons and staff are exposed to harmful levels of second-hand smoke in outdoor dining spaces. People indoors are also exposed to smoke that drifts from outdoor areas.

Provides good role modelling for children: Children copy what they see. The more children see smoking the greater likelihood they will start. Having Smokefree places in our community helps prevent children from starting to smoke.

Helps those that want to quit, and those that have quit: Most people that smoke want to quit. Reducing the places that people can smoke encourages people to smoke less or quit and helps those who have quit to stay Smokefree.

Reduced litter: Staff do not have to deal with ashtrays or cigarette butt litter.

Smokefree success:

The Hip Group, who run 14 establishments across Auckland (including award winning Takapuna Beach Café, Rosie Café, Café on Kohi and Ortolana), implemented Smokefree outdoor dining over 10 years ago. The Group went Smokefree because they wanted to give their customers “the ultimate dining experience.”

Scott Brown, co-owner of the Hip Group says the Smokefree policy has been an overwhelming success and that more customers are happy and coming back to their restaurants because of the policy.

He says the Smokefree policy has been really easy to implement—if any customer starts to light up then a staff member goes and gently tells the customer the establishment is totally Smokefree.

See Scott talk about Smokefree outdoor dining on Cancer Society Auckland’s YouTube page or search “outdoor dining” on our website: www.cancersocietyauckland.org.nz

Tips to make it work:

Write down a formal policy: It’s a good idea to have a formal policy so staff know what is expected. This will help guide your staff on how to go about implementing Smokefree.

Get your staff on-board: It’s important that your staff are all supportive of the policy. They will be instrumental in making the policy work (more detail on following page).

Make sure your customers know: Your customers will need to know about the policy to make it run smoothly. There are many ways to communicate this to your customers (see last page).

“People want to have a pleasant environment for dining. Smoke used to drift into the cafe … lots of people don’t smoke and didn’t like it.”

- Yanna Ho, co-owner of Café Crema, Grafton (pictured above)
Your staff:
The transition to Smokefree outdoor dining is likely to go more smoothly if your staff are involved. It is important that staff are clear about the policy, the reasons for the change and their role in dealing with any situations which may arise. It is best to set aside some time with your staff to go through the policy, their role in upholding the policy and address any questions they may have.

Key points for staff to be aware of:
- The reason you are going Smokefree
- Details of the policy:
  + Where smoking is allowed and not allowed (e.g. 10 metres from outdoor dining areas).
  + What to do if a customer is smoking (e.g. politely inform the customer that the outdoor dining area is Smokefree and ask them to stop).
  + Where a customer may smoke if they wish to do so (a recommended spot off your premises to direct people to, away from pedestrians and outdoor tables if customers wish to continue smoking).
  + Your establishment’s recommended approach if a customer continues smoking in a Smokefree area.

What else can you do?
- Provide support for staff who want to quit smoking.
- Profile and acknowledge staff who are getting behind the policy.
- Profile positive patron responses to staff as the policy gets underway.
- Encourage other establishments in the area to adopt Smokefree outdoor eating areas to provide a consistent approach.

Your customers:
Customer buy-in:
It’s good to alert your regular customers that the policy is coming. Most will be supportive. It’s important for you to highlight why you are doing it and the benefits that results from going Smokefree.

Experience overseas shows that even if a few customers are lost due to such a policy, others will come because of it. When outdoor dining was implemented in Queensland more families started to dine out.

Communication of the policy:
There are a number of ways to let people know about your policy:
- Signage is a great way to inform your customers that your outdoor dining space is Smokefree, especially when the policy is first put in place. Signage can be ordered through Cancer Society Auckland (see examples over page).
- Start to talk to your regular customers about the policy when they come in before it is put in place and during the first few weeks of the policy.
- Remove any ashtrays, matches and lighters.
- Include items in newsletters, social media feeds, on your website and on notice boards at your establishment.
- Decide on a launch date and develop a media release to announce your establishment is going Smokefree.
- A celebration or launch event can be a great way to start the policy off well and let people know it’s happening.
Signage:
There are various options for signage from larger wall signs, to table talkers, to stickers.

**Outdoor dining signage**: this can be ordered from Cancer Society Auckland. Both hard plastic signs and stickers are available.

![Image of a poster that reads 'Please keep our outdoor areas SMOKEFREE'](image)

**Table talkers**: these can be ordered through Cancer Society Auckland and help provide a gentle reminder that smoking is not allowed at the table.

![Image of a table talker with 'NO SMOKING' printed on it](image)

**Traditional ‘no smoking’ symbols**: these can easily communicate to people that smoking is not allowed – especially tourists who can get confused over the wording of ‘Smokefree’. This type of signage is widely available.

![Image of a traditional 'no smoking' symbol](image)

**Design your own signage**: there are many places that have developed their own signage to make the Smokefree message fit in with their brand.

FAQs:

**Won’t making outdoor dining Smokefree be bad for business?**
No! Lots of places have implemented Smokefree outdoor dining in New Zealand and overseas. All the evidence shows that smoking bans don’t have a negative impact on business and often have a positive effect.

Feedback from business owners overseas and in New Zealand shows Smokefree outdoor dining provides a better environment for staff and makes it more enjoyable for patrons.

**What about designated areas?**
They seem like a good idea in theory, but designated areas don’t solve the problem of second-hand smoke as smoke easily drifts to non-smoking areas. Those sitting with people who smoke are also still exposed and staff still have to serve these tables. Furthermore, smoking is still usually visible to children who copy what they see. A completely Smokefree policy is less complicated, easier to enforce and provides the best health benefits.

**Can we legally make our footpath dining areas Smokefree?**
There is no obligation to provide outdoor smoking areas as part of the lease of footpath areas for tables from Auckland Council. In fact, Council have committed to rolling out Smokefree outdoor dining across Auckland in 2018.

“We go out of our way to make sure our food is healthy, and want people to enjoy it in a healthy environment. Most of our customers don’t enjoy being around smoke.”

- Morgan McDonald, owner of Craft Café, Ponsonby

For more information on Smokefree outdoor dining please email Cancer Society Auckland’s Health Promotion team: smokefree@akcansoc.org.nz or find us online: www.cancersocietyauckland.org.nz