

# HCC Smoking and Tobacco-Free Policy

## **Background:**

The health and safety of students, faculty, and staff are vitally important to Howard Community College (HCC). The U.S. Surgeon General classified tobacco smoke as a Class-A carcinogen and warned that no level of environmental tobacco smoke is safe. Smoking is a critical health issue not only for those who smoke, but also for those exposed to it second-hand.

In the 2011 Yearly Evaluation of Student Services (YESS) survey, 78.5% of students said they supported making HCC a smoke-free campus. Likewise, 87.7% of employees favored a non-smoking environment in the QUEST survey. Responding to this overwhelming support, HCC became smoke-free and tobacco-free effective May 31, 2011.

This policy provides definitions and procedures related to a smoke- and tobacco-free campus, including enforcement. Every member of the HCC community shares responsibility for adhering to and respectfully communicating the smoke-free and tobacco-free policy since clean air is important to all of us.

## **Policy**

Howard Community College is a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. Therefore, smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited. The following smoke- and tobacco-free policy applies to all members of the college community including but not limited to students, faculty, staff, parents, visitors, contractors, and vendors. Smoking and the use of tobacco products is prohibited on all college owned, leased, and controlled properties including parking lots and garages, and at all college-sponsored activities. Smoking is prohibited in all vehicles. Faculty, staff, and students are expected to observe smoking and tobacco policies of neighboring organizations, facilities, and adjacent neighborhoods.

## **Definition**

For the purpose of this policy:

- **Smoking** is defined as the lighting, burning, or use of tobacco or any other material in any type of smoking device or equipment.
- **Tobacco** includes but is not limited to smoking tobacco, chew, snuff, snus, and dipping tobacco. This policy also prohibits cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, clove cigarettes, cigars, pipes, hookahs, bidis, blunts, cigarillos, smokeless tobacco or any item that simulates any of the previously mentioned products.

With prior approval, theatre productions may be exempt from this policy when the use of simulated smoke or tobacco products is integral to a production or performance.

## **Procedure**

HCC security will issue a citation in the amount of \$50 for each incident of smoking or tobacco use. In addition to receiving a citation from the college, students and employees may be subject to disciplinary action for code of conduct violations and all persons are subject to additional fines imposed by Howard County. For example, Howard County can impose a fine of up to \$250 for smoking within 15 feet of any doorway and \$25 for smoking in an elevator, among other potential fines. Penalties shall be paid to the college cashier's office during regular business hours. Transcripts will be held if not paid in full. Parents, visitors, contractors, and vendors will be subject to fines and will be asked to leave campus if they refuse to adhere to the policy.

## **Appeals**

Persons who feel they have received a smoking and tobacco use citation unjustly may appeal in writing to the HCC security office.