



Carroll County Department of Fire & EMS

Standard Operating Procedure: 1.12	Effective Date: March 1, 2023
Subject: Tobacco/Nicotine Policy	Section: Human Resources
Authorized: <i>Michael Robinson</i> Director/Chief, Fire & EMS <i>Kurtz Bickel</i> Director, Human Resources	Revision Date: January 1, 2024

I. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish procedures addressing the use of tobacco and nicotine products in order to promote the health of employees and maintain a safe working environment. This includes all forms of tobacco and anything that contains nicotine including smoking cessation products.

Under existing legislation, firefighters, firefighting instructors, rescue squad members and advanced life support unit members are considered “presumptive” as having an occupational disease under the enacted legislation known as “Heart and Lung.” Whereas tobacco/nicotine use has been identified as a risk factor for related occupational diseases it is the intent of Department of Fire and EMS (DFEMS) to minimize risks to employees.

The Maryland Clean Indoor Air Act of 2007 prohibits smoking in indoor places of employment. The Carroll County Code of Ordinances further elaborates a county policy which is applicable to all county properties. As per the November 2022 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the DFEMS and all 14 volunteer fire companies, these standards apply to each volunteer fire station as an indoor place of employment.

II: APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all DFEMS uniformed employees as defined in Chapter 37 of the county code of regulations. This becomes an employment obligation at the time of hire and through employee signature to validate the obligations implied under this policy. A similar prohibition policy is recommended for volunteer personnel but this is at the discretion of each volunteer fire company.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Tobacco/Nicotine Products: This shall include any product that can introduce nicotine into the human body. This includes but is not limited to smoking, vaping, chewing through the use of cigarettes, cigars, pouch tobacco, dip, snuff, chew, vaping products, nicotine products such as gum, patches, smokeless or spit tobacco. If not covered within, any product that contains tobacco or nicotine is prohibited.
- B. Designated Smoking Areas: Shall be those areas designated consistent to the MOU which will be for the use of those volunteer corporation employees not directly employed by DFEMS until 7/1/24.

III. PROCEDURES

- A. Upon accepting an offer of employment, all uniformed personnel (employees) shall sign the DFEMS “Tobacco/nicotine agreement” with a witness present. These shall be validated by the Director/Chief and placed in the official employee HR file.
- B. All tobacco/nicotine use must cease/desist upon acknowledgement of the above agreement.
- C. All employees shall be subject to random testing for tobacco/nicotine at any time following the first 120 days of employment.
- D. Tobacco/nicotine testing shall also occur annually consistent to the NFPA 1582 occupational physical examination.
- E. In concert with the Carroll County Health Department, the DFEMS shall make available non-nicotine smoking cessation resources and employees are encouraged to utilize the same.
- F. Any employee found to have tobacco/nicotine in their system shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination.

IV. REVISION

This Standard Operating Procedure rescinds all directives regarding smoking or similar content previously issued for employees of the Carroll County Fire/EMS Department.