

Smoke/Vape Free Open Spaces Policy 2023

Group responsible: Environmental Health and Licensing / Community Facilities

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Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- encourage the community to be smoke and vape free in Council's open spaces, and at Council supported events
- reduce the uptake of smoking and vaping by focusing awareness at places where children and young people gather
- support the government's goal for a Smoke Free New Zealand by 2025.

Scope

This policy is not a ban on smoking and vaping in Council's open spaces and no enforcement measures will be used against those who breach the policy. This is an educational tool to promote healthy, smoke and vape free lifestyle choices, particularly for our young people.

Council-owned enclosed spaces including Council offices, libraries and vehicles are excluded from this policy as they are covered as workplaces and vehicles under the Smoke-free Environments Act 1990.

Background

The government's goal of a Smoke Free New Zealand is for less than 5% of New Zealanders to be smoking by 2025. This initiative seeks to support the health of communities and decrease the economic burden on our health system. Vaping is considered a tool to help achieve this smoke free goal but there has been a significant uptake of vaping amongst youth in recent years.

The Smokefree Environments and Regulated Products Act 1990 (the Act) aims to make vaping products available for smokers who wish to quit smoking, whilst ensuring these products aren't marketed or sold to young people.

The Act focuses on enclosed public places and vehicles, and this policy seeks to support these community health goals by encouraging Council's open spaces to be smoke and vape free.

Focus areas

Although this policy covers all Council administered open spaces, the focus will be on the following areas in priority order, with signage and awareness initiatives being proportionate to the nature and use of the specific location.

Playgrounds
Skateparks
Sports fields
Council building entrances
Gardens, parks, reserves and cemeteries
Roads, streets and footpaths

Implementation

Awareness initiatives

Council will implement a communications plan to promote smoke/vape free spaces.

Signs

Smoke free and vape free signs will be installed in the focus areas in priority order. It is recognised that signage may not be appropriate in remote and low use locations.

Initially, where feasible, signage in the form of stickers will be adhered to existing signage. When signs are replaced, smoke and vape free signage will be incorporated into the sign.

Events

- events held at Council owned/managed open spaces will be promoted as smoke/vape free
- events supported by Council but not on Council owned/managed land will be encouraged to be smoke/vape free
- event coordinators will be provided with a link to this policy to include in their promotional material.

Leases

All future leases, licenses and agreements relating to Council owned/managed land will contain a clause highlighting the purposes of this policy.

Partnerships

Southland District Council will work in partnership with other agencies operating locally and at a national level.

Review

This policy will be reviewed in 10 years unless a review is required in the interim.

Definitions

Term	Meaning
Council supported event	Any planned public or social occasion which Southland District Council endorses, promotes or provides with funds and/or resources
Park	Has the meaning as per section 138(2) of the Local Government Act (a) means land acquired or used principally for community, recreational, environmental, cultural, or spiritual purposes; but (b) does not include land that is held as a reserve, or part of a reserve, under the Reserves Act 1977
Playground	An area used for outdoor play or recreation, especially by children containing recreational equipment such as slides and swings
Reserve	Any area defined in Section 2 (1) of the Reserves Act 1977 including cemeteries, walking tracks, green spaces, playgrounds and sports fields
Smoking	To smoke, hold, or otherwise have control over an ignited tobacco product and other psychoactive substances
Vaping	To inhale using a vaping device or a heated tobacco product