



NEW HANOVER COUNTY

PUBLIC HEALTH

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Phillip E. Tarte, MHA, Director

TO: Community Organizations/Partners

FROM: Donna Fayko, HHS Director

DATE: January 29, 2021

RE: New Hanover County Smoking/Vaping Rules - <https://health.nhcgov.com/permits-and-rules/>

I am writing to ask you, as a community leader and partner with New Hanover County Public Health, to help educate citizens about the county's new smoking and vaping rule that went into effect **Feb 1, 2021**. The rule prohibits smoking and vaping in these areas: government buildings, grounds, bus stops, and parks and recreation areas, including trails, athletic fields, and playgrounds. In addition, the rule prohibits e-cigarette use in areas already made smoke-free under state law, including restaurants, bars, and the common areas and no-smoking rooms in hotels and inns. New Hanover public health will share some communication tools you can use, such as newsletter articles, social media images and poster art, that can help you with this. It will be found at <https://health.nhcgov.com>.

We need your help to educate members of your organization and community about the rule. I want to share some key points about the rule and your role to help us all realize our goal of protecting public health in our county.

We are counting on you to help educate the people of New Hanover County about the smoke-free/vape-free regulation. Please reach out to your organization, members, partners, students, and clients to help educate them about the rule.

It's important for you to understand – and share with others – **WHY** the New Hanover County Health and Human Services Board developed this rule, which was then affirmed by the New Hanover County Commissioners.

Our Vision:

In our county, too many people are harmed and killed by tobacco product use. On top of that, e-cigarettes and vaping devices containing harmful products and nicotine is increasing among our youth. This rule takes action to address both problems and protect our citizens' health. We know that smoke-free/Vape-free policies are an evidence-based approach to deliver a **triple benefit for public health:**

- 1) People benefit from **reduced exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke** (a strongly documented health threat) and **secondhand e-cigarette emissions** (known to contain harmful chemicals).
- 2) Having fewer places where people can smoke or vape **supports people who are trying to quit** and those who have quit and are trying to remain smoke and vape free by not exposing them to the products they are working to quit using.
- 3) **Our youth** will be much less likely to see people (including their role models) using cigarettes and e-cigarettes in public places, reducing their likelihood of trying it for themselves.

Cessation Support:

A critical part of any smoke-free/vape-free regulation is helping people who are addicted to nicotine to find the help their need to quit for good – especially now that some places where they may typically use nicotine may soon be unavailable to them.

Here are some tobacco treatment options I would love for you to share.

1) QuitlineNC will provide at least one counseling session, printed materials and registration for Web-Coaching and Text-Coaching services for people who want to quit, and much more, based on insurance status. People may access these free services at 1-800-Quit-Now (1-800-784-8669) on Facebook @QuitlineNC, or at www.quitlineNC.com. If you go to the materials section of the site, you will see some promotional materials that you can download and share.

There are special programs, with additional counseling sessions, for those with behavioral health issues and those who are pregnant or planning a pregnancy, and services are available in English, Spanish, and other languages.

2) Smokefree.gov has live chat, online, text and app programs, including programs in Spanish, and programs especially for vaping, women, older adults, teens, and veterans.

3) **BecomeAnEx:** <https://www.becomeanex.org/>

BecomeAnEx strives to help identify your triggers... anytime, place, activity or person can trigger your desire to smoke. Once your triggers are identified, BecomeAnEx.org provides interactive resources to teach you how to deal with these urges without smoking. Information is available in English and Spanish.

Additionally, your local provider may have resources for cessation.

As the New Hanover County Health and Human Services Director, I'm counting on leaders like you to join our team to educate and inform our community to make our county safer and healthier. We know that implementation will be a process and will not occur overnight. Please let us know how we can assist you through this transition.

In partnership,

Donna F. Fayko

HHS Director