

# Smoke-Free Laws are Good for Public Health, Good for Workers, and Good for Business!

## ✓ Good for Public Health

- **Everyone has the right to breathe clean air.** The [Surgeon General's Report](#) on The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke confirmed that secondhand smoke causes cancer, heart disease and serious lung ailments. As former Surgeon General Richard Carmona stated when releasing the report, "The debate is over. The science is clear. Secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance but a serious health hazard."
- A 2010 Report by the Surgeon General found that tobacco smoke contains a deadly mixture of [more than 7,000 chemicals](#) and compounds, of which hundreds are toxic and at least 69 cause cancer.
- According to the [Centers For Disease Control and Prevention](#) (CDC), nearly 50,000 Americans die each year from lung cancer and heart disease attributable to secondhand smoke exposure.

## ✓ Good for Workers

- Smoke-free policies are the only effective way to protect nonsmokers from secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke exposure [decreases substantially](#) among nonsmoking employees of restaurants and bars (and among nonsmoking adults in the general public) after implementing smoke-free laws.
- Hospitality workers are [immediately protected](#) when smoke-free laws take effect. Studies of hospitality workers before and after smoke-free laws show significant reductions in self-reported exposure to secondhand smoke, along with declines in respiratory symptoms.
- Just one month after Minnesota's Freedom to Breathe law went into effect, [exposure to a carcinogen from tobacco](#) in a group of nonsmoking hospitality workers fell by 85 percent, and nicotine exposure by 83 percent.
- Before New York bars and restaurants went smoke free, 88 percent of hospitality workers reported experiencing sensory symptoms (red or irritated eyes, sore or scratchy throat, runny nose, sneezing or nose irritation). One year after the law took effect, complaints of sensory symptoms among the sample of workers dropped by 57 percent. ([Tobacco Control](#), 2005).

## ✓ Good for Business

- The [Surgeon General's 2006 Report](#) examined numerous economic impact studies from states and local communities across the country. The report concluded that, "Evidence from peer-reviewed studies shows that smoke-free policies and regulations do not have an adverse economic impact on the hospitality industry."
- A [2009 review](#) of the extensive literature on the economic impact of smoke-free workplace laws concluded that smoke-free policies do not have a negative impact on the business activity of restaurants, bars, or establishments catering to tourists (with many studies finding a small positive effect).
- The 2008 [Zagat Survey: America's Top Restaurants](#) of 132,000 Americans noted that, "The verdict on smoking is overwhelming with 77% of diners saying they'd eat out less if smoking were permitted in local restaurants, and only 2% saying they'd dine out more."
- An in-depth analysis of more than ten years of [tax revenue data in California](#) found that the 1995 state smoke-free restaurant law was associated with an increase in restaurant revenues, while the 1998 state smoke-free bar law was associated with an increase in bar revenues.
- Data published in 2010 from [ten Minnesota cities](#) found that local smoke-free laws had no negative impact on bar and restaurant revenue. This was true for total taxable sales as well as revenue from alcohol sales.