

News Tribune

Governor Signs Law Banning Tobacco on Campuses

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CHICAGO — Governor Pat Quinn on Sunday morning signed legislation to prohibit smoking on the campuses of all state-supported colleges and universities. The smoking ban takes effect July 1, 2015 and applies to both indoor and outdoor spaces on campuses. The Governor also signed a law to restrict the display of e-cigarettes. Today's action is part of Governor Quinn's agenda to protect and improve the health and well-being of all people in every community across Illinois.

"Illinois' college students shouldn't be subject to unwanted cigarette smoke on the campuses they call home," Governor Quinn said. "We want all schools to be healthy, clean and productive places of learning for Illinois' bright young minds. This new law will improve the health of our students and encourage healthier lifestyles after college graduation."

Senate Bill 2202, sponsored by State Senator Terry Link (D-Waukegan) and State Representative Ann Williams (D-Chicago), creates the Smoke Free Campus Act that prohibits all smoking on state-supported college and university campuses in Illinois beginning July 1, 2015.

"Smoke free policies have been proven to result in lower smoking prevalence rates. That's one of the many reasons the American Lung Association is proud to have worked alongside state legislators on the Smoke Free Campus Act," American Lung Association of the Upper Midwest CEO Lew Bartfield said. "In addition, the new law will provide a healthy learning environment that promotes health and wellness for students, faculty, staff and visitors at all public colleges and universities in Illinois. The law not only minimizes toxic secondhand smoke exposure but also improves the campus environment by reducing smoking related litter. We applaud the Illinois State Legislature and Governor Pat Quinn for passing and signing the Illinois Smoke Free Campus Act."

"Smoking remains the leading preventable cause of death," Illinois Department of Public Health Director Dr. LaMar Hasbrouck said. "Smoke-free campuses make it more difficult for students and staff to smoke, thereby decreasing the number of people who smoke, and reducing the number of people who start."

Exceptions to the law are made for smoking inside privately owned vehicles traveling through campus and certain activities allowed under the Federal American Indian Religious Freedom Act. A companion bill signed today by Governor Quinn, House Bill 3961, allows smoking on campus inside parked, non-state-owned vehicles. The Smoke Free Campus Act requires each institution to establish a community task force by

December 31, 2014 to coordinate the implementation of the act.

Currently in Illinois, the following universities and colleges are smoke-free: Aurora University, Blessing-Rieman College of Nursing, City Colleges of Chicago (7 colleges), College of DuPage, Danville Area Community College, Greenville College, Hannibal LaGrange University, McHenry County College, Olivet Nazarene University, Rush University, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, University of Illinois at Chicago, Waubensee Community College and Wheaton College.

Additionally, there are current efforts to establish smoke-free/tobacco-free campuses at Southern Illinois University and Illinois State University. The other state-supported higher education institutions that would be mandated to become smoke-free include: Chicago State University, Eastern Illinois University, Governors State University, Western Illinois University, Northern Illinois University, Northeastern Illinois University and any community college subject to the Public Community College Act. Other states with colleges and universities that have 100 percent smoke-free policies include: California, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Wisconsin.

“A college education can put people ahead in life, but smoking can do just the opposite,” Senator Link said. “This new law will clear the air on campuses statewide and help produce healthier graduates.”

"This is a continuation of the efforts of Smoke Free Illinois to protect Illinoisans from the very significant danger of secondhand smoke," Representative Williams said . "This initiative will extend important public health protections to those studying, working and living at our public college and university campuses."

Governor Quinn today also signed House Bill 5868, sponsored by State Representative Kathleen Willis (D-Northlake) and State Senator John G. Mulroe (D-Chicago), which requires that alternative nicotine products such as e-cigarettes be displayed under the same restrictions as cigarettes. The products must be sold from behind a counter, in an age-restricted area or in a sealed case, and may not be dispensed from a self-service display. A previously passed law prohibits the sale of alternative nicotine items to those under 18 years of age. House Bill 5868 is effective Jan. 1, 2015.

“While many residents may use e-cigarettes to kick bad habits, these products have no place within arm’s reach along the aisles of our pharmacies and grocery stores,” Governor Quinn said. “This new law will ensure e-cigarettes are safely displayed behind the counter, where they belong.”

Governor Quinn has long supported public health improvement measures in Illinois. Shortly after taking office in 2009 the Governor signed Senate Bill 2757, which strengthens enforcement of the Smoke Free Illinois Act by providing additional guidelines for writing citations.

In 2012, Governor Quinn signed into law a \$1 per pack increase in the price of cigarettes, providing \$350 million in revenue and dollar-for-dollar federal matching funds of \$350 million for Medicaid. The American Cancer Society estimated the increase would prevent some 77,000 young people from smoking and prompt an additional 60,000 adults to quit. In 2013, Governor Quinn signed a law that bans the sale of electronic cigarettes to minors.

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