

U. prohibits smoking within 25 feet of public areas

The University has updated the “Smoking” section of “Rights, Rules, Responsibilities” in the past week to prohibit smoking within 25 feet of all workplaces and buildings of public access.

Section 1.5.3 had [previously](#) only prohibited smoking within workplaces and buildings of public access. The prohibition continues to extend to e-cigarettes.

Greg Cantrell, associate director for Workplace Safety in the Office of Environmental Health and Safety, said that New Jersey law does not go as far as the University’s new policy.

“One of the challenges of New Jersey law is that it does not define a distance outside of a building in which smoking is permitted,” Cantrell said. “It has some vague language about prohibiting smoking in areas where smoke might be pulled back into a building.”

The Daily Princetonian [reported](#) on Nov. 24 that the University was considering updating its policy.

Cantrell said the Advisory Board to Healthier Princeton had initiated the idea for revising the University’s smoking policy.

Other students, faculty and staff affiliated with the board were not immediately available for comment or did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The board ultimately recommended adding a distance specification to the University’s policy, Cantrell added.

“There aren’t very many complaints, but those complaints that we do receive are frequently caused by smoking that takes place very near a building, particularly near an air intake or the main doors going in and out of the building,” Cantrell explained. “This should go a long way toward eliminating situations where smoke is pulled back into a building.”

The new policy also includes language about partially enclosed areas such as archways, Cantrell noted. The working group on the board found that smoke in these areas can be pulled back into buildings and is similar in effect to smoke that lingers indoors, he explained.

“One of the complaints that we heard very loudly from the undergraduates was that there were concerns about going through these archways ... where other students were smoking,” Cantrell said.

While some campuses around the country have adopted complete smoke-free policies, Cantrell said EHS was made the primary office for administering the policy because the University is focused on preventing exposure to harmful substances and responding to violations and complaints with technical support rather than providing a punitive response.

The University also had to take into consideration how diverse the population using the campus is, he added.

“There are a number of institutions that have handled this in a variety of ways,” Cantrell said. “We felt the approach that we took ... was an appropriate policy and response for Princeton University.”

The board’s working group also expressed concern about where community members were supposed to direct questions, concerns and complaints about smoking on campus, so the University created a [website](#) with contact information, he added.

<http://dailyprincetonian.com/news/2015/07/u-prohibits-smoking-within-25-feet-of-public-areas/>

