

# Beaufort County News Release

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH AREA | COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY DEPARTMENT

**Contact:**

Joshua Gruber  
Deputy County Administrator  
843-255-2059

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 3, 2017



## Beaufort County Goes Smoke-Free, Offers Programs to Help Employees Kick the Habit

November 17 is the national date set to celebrate the Great American Smokeout, a day that smokers across the nation vow to quit smoking. Beaufort County is taking steps to help its employees get healthier, and going smoke-free much sooner in 2017.

Effective March 1, smoking will be prohibited at all County-owned or operated facilities and campuses. County Council voted this past November to approve the [updated Beaufort County Smoking Ordinance](#).

“We are one of the top employers in the County and we feel it is our duty to create a healthier environment for our employees and residents,” said Beaufort County Administrator Gary Kubic. “This is only one piece of our overall plan to become a healthier Beaufort County.”

The County is offering healthy lifestyle resources to its employees, including granting access to the workout facilities at [Buckwalter and Burton Wells Recreation Centers](#) at no cost to all Beaufort County employees.

For employees who plan to quit smoking, the County is offering the Freedom From Smoking program, an eight-week smoking cessation course that will address different aspects of the quitting process each week and includes stress management techniques, education on craving and weight control while quitting. The program, designed by the American Lung Association, is provided at no cost by Beaufort Memorial Hospital and Beaufort County Alcohol and Drug Abuse Department.

Participants will have access to the LifeFit Wellness Center for the duration of the eight-week program. Details on how to sign up will be released to Beaufort County employees later this month.

“We understand that quitting smoking is not an easy feat,” said Deputy County Administrator Josh Gruber. “We’re committed to doing all that we can to assist our employees in this journey. Our hope is that the resources we provide will allow individuals to replace a negative habit with a positive one.”

The County’s Communications and Accountability Department will kick off a multi-media [#SmokeFreeBC](#) campaign that will help to encourage employees and residents who want to quit smoking through video clips, inspirational photos, graphics and testimonials.

Signage and stickers will be placed throughout Beaufort County campuses to remind employees and the public that all Beaufort County campuses are 100% smoke-free.

An FAQ is [included below](#) and will be displayed on the County’s website.

# Beaufort County News Release

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH AREA | COMMUNICATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITY DEPARTMENT

## Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is Beaufort County banning tobacco smoke from its facilities?

A: At Beaufort County, our goal is to provide a safe and healthy environment and to decrease health risks for our employees and visitors.

Q: What assistance and/or cessation services will Beaufort County provide?

A: Beaufort County staff can take advantage of the Freedom From Smoking program provided by Beaufort County and Beaufort Memorial Hospital. The eight-week program will be offered at no cost to staff. During the eight-week program, participants will have access to LifeFit Wellness Center at Beaufort Memorial Hospital. All staff can participate in exercise and recreational activities at any County Parks and Leisure Services (PALS) facility at no cost.

Q: What does a smoke-free campus policy entail?

A: A smoke-free policy prohibits the use of any smoke-emitting tobacco products on all Beaufort County property. Please read the [full policy here](#).

Q: Is this policy only for Beaufort County employees? What about residents?

A: All individuals, including employees, volunteers, residents, visitors and contractors who work in or visit Beaufort County buildings, parking lots, parks and grounds.

Q: Is smoking allowed in cars?

A: No. Smoking is prohibited on all areas of Beaufort County property, including inside cars parked or while driving in parking lots.

Q: When will the smoking ordinance go into effect?

A: Effective March 1, 2017, all Beaufort County campuses will be 100% smoke-free.

Q: Why don't you create designated smoking areas?

A: Secondhand smoke poses high-level health risks to adults and children. We do not want our residents to be exposed to secondhand smoke.

Q: What about e-cigarettes?

A: E-cigarettes are prohibited. The ordinance bans "smoking", which is defined by inhaling, exhaling, burning, lighting or carrying a lighted cigarette, e-cigarette, cigar, pipe, device or any other lighted inhalable product.

Q: Why was smoking selected as the health risk to address at this time?

A: Cigarette smoking has been identified as the number one source of preventable disease and illness.

Q: How will the policy be enforced?

A: The policy's success will depend heavily on the cooperation of employees and residents. Beaufort County reserves the right to initiate disciplinary procedures against employees found to be in violation of the policy. Any person in violation of the policy can be fined. A detailed outline of penalties can be found on p. 3 of [the ordinance](#).