

Report on Tobacco Policies

Colleges, Universities & Technical Institutions

January 2014

About public health policy reports:

Public Health - Seattle & King County monitors the local policy environment to identify what policies are in place, how they may vary across jurisdictions and institutions, and identify opportunities for further policy development or research. This report is part of an occasional series. See our website for additional reports and interactive policy maps.

Background:

Limiting tobacco use, sales, advertising and sponsorship at technical institutions, colleges and universities is an effective means of eliminating second-hand smoke exposure, supporting students' quit attempts, and modeling healthy behavior. Given that 95% of smokers start smoking before the age of 25, de-normalizing smoking on campus where young adults are present can go a long way to preventing future tobacco-related death and disease. All Washington technical institutions, colleges and universities must abide by the Clean Indoor Air Act (Chapter 70.160 of the Revised Code of Washington), which prohibits smoking inside of or within 25 feet of public places and places of employment and makes other stipulations regarding signage.

Over 40 college, university and technical campuses exist in King County, hosting over 100,000 students. Some of these institutions

limit tobacco use and exposure in different ways beyond what state law requires.

Reviewing a selection of these campuses in King County, this report and the King County LawAtlas online interactive tool identify which institutions have tobacco- or smoke-free policies, provide details of these policies,

including whether staff, faculty and visitors are covered, how e-cigarettes and smokeless tobacco are addressed and whether exemptions exist based on circumstance or type of campus facility.¹



Findings:

Tobacco Policies for Post-Secondary Institutions on the Rise: Seventeen colleges, universities and technical institutions (out of 31 in our sample) had tobacco-related policies in 2013 (up from 12 in 2005).

Specific campuses that have policies that address smoking, tobacco and/or nicotine use are: Antioch University,* the Art Institute of Seattle,* Bellevue College, Cascadia Community College, Cornish College of the Arts, Green River Community College, Highline Community College, Northwest University,* Seattle Community College (all 3 campuses), Renton Technical College, Seattle Pacific University,* Seattle University, Shoreline Community College and the University of Washington (Seattle & Bothell campuses). (*100% Smoke free).

Of those with policies requiring their campus to be 100% smoke free, only Northwest University and Seattle Pacific University have residential facilities (dormitories) on campus. (By comparison, nine of the institutions in our sample are identified as offering on-campus residence halls, where policies could address smoking in non-public areas of campus living spaces.)²

Smoking Areas Still Prevalent: Of the additional 12 institutions that have policies allowing smoking only in specified areas, circumstances and/or facilities, the University of Washington policy (Seattle and Bothell campuses) prohibits smoking in on-campus residence halls but allows smoking in a “limited

portion of designated university student housing” if special smoking regulations are adopted, though none were found in 2013.

Seven other institutions allow smoking only in designated smoking areas. No institutions limited their policy coverage by explicitly exempting specific areas, such as allowing use in stadiums, parking lots or other specific facilities.

100% SMOKE-FREE COLLEGES,
UNIVERSITIES & TECHNICAL
INSTITUTIONS,
KING COUNTY, WA 2013



Antioch University
The Art Institute of Seattle
Northwest University
Seattle Pacific University
[= 6% of all King Co students
attending institutions included
in policy surveillance study]

Findings (Continued from Page 2)

Visitors, Faculty & Staff Covered by Tobacco Policies at Few Institutions: Four institutions with policies restricting tobacco use explicitly address staff and faculty along with students. Some colleges have separate employee policies codified in faculty and staff handbooks. Because student-focused policies were of chief interest in this project, staff policies' treatment of tobacco use are not included in this report, although existence of multiple policies across campus populations is noted in the research codebook.



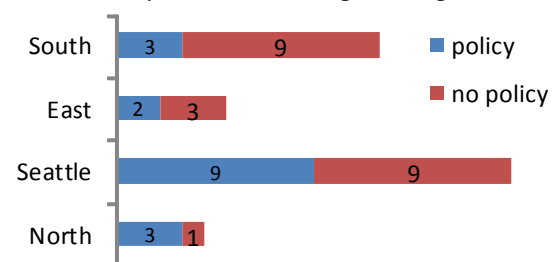
Smokeless Tobacco & E-Cigarettes Mostly Not Addressed: Two policies of 17 restrict smokeless tobacco (Green River Community College and Seattle Pacific University) and one institution of 17 explicitly bans use of e-cigarettes (Green River Community College).³

Conclusions

In general, we found wide variation in local colleges, universities and technical institution policies as they addressed tobacco use, with varying prohibitions, ranging from full prohibition of smoking on campus to no prohibitions/policies at all. The vast majority of post-secondary students in King County are covered by some type of policy while on campus. Based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics, total enrollment in 2013 at these campuses is 123,965 out of a total of 134,466 students, or approximately 92% coverage of some type of tobacco-related policies across King County post-secondary institutions.⁴ Twenty-nine percent of institutions in South King County had tobacco/smoking

restrictive policies, in comparison with 75% of institutions in North, 17% in East and 46% in Seattle. This is particularly significant because the highest rates of tobacco use among adults and school-aged youth are in South King County.⁵

Comparison of post-secondary institutions with and without policies restricting smoking/tobacco



Conclusions (Continued from Page 3)

However, very few campuses are 100% smoke-free and significant exceptions exist where smoking may legally occur on many campuses, including potentially in private portions of residential spaces, suggesting some degree of tobacco exposure on most campuses. 100% smoking free policies cover 8,600 students, or approximately 6% of all students.

Nearly half of institutions reviewed have no tobacco-related policies. Of those without policies, these technical institutions, colleges and universities may not have enacted policies due to their interpretation of the Clean Indoor Air Act as applicable to most areas of campus, particularly when they have limited physical grounds or lack facilities potentially

exempt from coverage by the Clean Indoor Air Act (such as private residence halls).

Many policies are not specific about what type of tobacco use (smoking v. smokeless) is prohibited and provide few details about implementation and enforcement. A number include smoking in an itemized list of general

prohibited behaviors at the college/university, without offering specifics as to types of regulated products or behaviors.

4-year institutions were more likely to restrict tobacco use than 2-year institutions or technical campuses



Most policies do not require signage on campus, though institutions may decide to install signage without

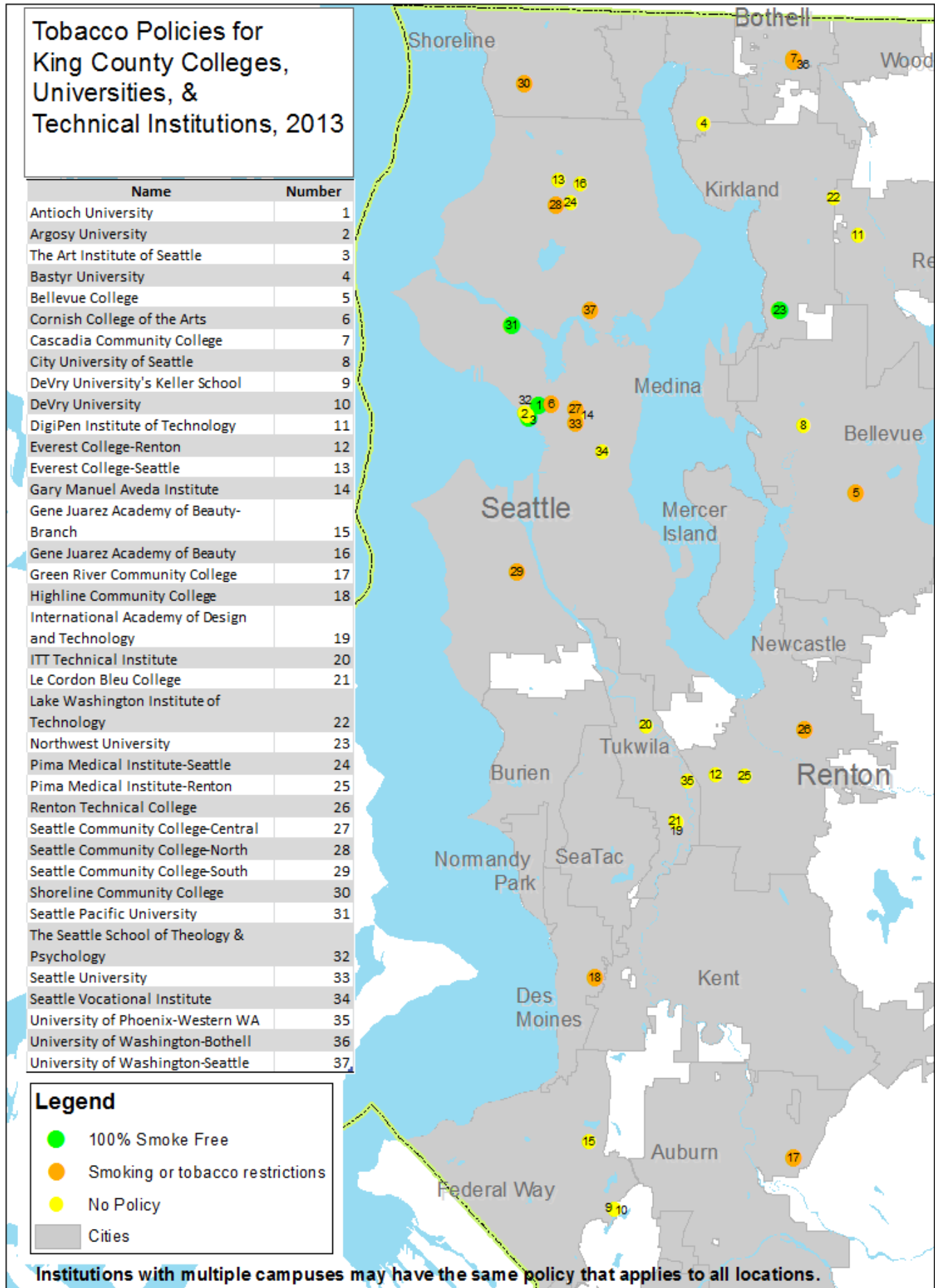
policy language. It is unclear whether this lack of specificity complicates enforcement, or what implications it may have for de-normalizing the use of tobacco. Tobacco sales,

marketing, and contracts with or gifts from tobacco companies are largely not regulated by these policies.

Of colleges with policies that restrict tobacco use, ten were private non-profit (32%), eleven were private for-profit (35%) and ten were public (32%). Four of 31 (13%) were religiously affiliated. Of all with tobacco/smoking restrictive policies, twelve were 2-year institutions (39%), 14 were 4 year (45%),

and four were less than 2-year programs (13%). One offered graduate degrees exclusively. Four of the five 100% smoke free institutions are in large cities or suburbs and one is situated in a small city.





Methods:

The universe of colleges, universities and technical institutions was identified through National Center for Education Statistics data. Only those with 2012 enrollments of 250 students or more were included for coding (31 of 40), unless they were located in South King County, an area known for health disparities, where all were included in the dataset. To determine which variables to include, review was conducted of model policy language for colleges/universities developed by Americans for Non-Smokers Rights (ANR). Based on the ANR's provisions, and in consultation with experts on tobacco policy, we developed a set of 59 questions. We collected policies for each of the 31 colleges and universities either by using pre-set search terms for each institution's website (for private institutions) or reviewing the relevant Washington Administrative Code chapter for public schools. When we were unable to find policies online, we confirmed that none exists by contacting institution officials. We test-

coded a small sample of policies to confirm that question language was appropriate, made necessary revisions, and proceeded to code the remainder of the policies. Inter-rater reliability testing was conducted, with a resulting score of 94% agreement. Divergences were discussed and addressed by again revising questions for clarity, and the agreed-upon codes were entered into the LawAtlasSM system.

The resulting LawAtlasSM webpage displays a subset of the 59 questions, chosen based on perceived level of stakeholder interest, and allows a user to manipulate a map of King County using a set of queries. A "slider bar" permits the user to adjust the year to show change over time in the number, scope and complexity of institution policies. This system will also allow future updates, creating an ongoing policy surveillance system, if feasible. Policies are current through August of 2013. The entire dataset, codebook and protocol is available at www.kingcounty.gov/health/PolicyTracker.

Acknowledgements

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For more information and updates, contact data.request@kingcounty.gov and visit www.kingcounty.gov/healthservices/health/data, where you can subscribe to e-alerts to receive future policy and other reports and announcements and to utilize the online King County LawAtlasSM PolicyTracker system.

End Notes

1. Most policies do not differentiate between types of tobacco products (smoked, smokeless or electronic nicotine delivery devices). For the purposes of this report, the terms "tobacco" and "smoking" are used interchangeably to indicate policies that at least restrict smoking. The visual mapping display soon to be available online allows a user to query existence of policy restrictions on specific tobacco products or e-cigarettes.
2. Bastyr University, Cornish College of the Arts, DigiPen Institute of Technology, Northwest University, Seattle Pacific University, Seattle University, The Art Institute of Seattle, University of Washington-Bothell & Seattle Campuses.
3. E-cigarettes may not be used in any area where smoking is prohibited by law, according to the King County Board of Health Regulations (BOH Regulation #10-04).
4. Note that Antioch University does not specify that students are covered by its policy.
5. 13% of all Seattle residents are current cigarette smokers, while the corresponding percentage is between 14% and 20% of residents in South King County communities.
6. The Washington State Clean Indoor Air Act was passed by voters in 2005 and took effect in January of 2006. We used 1/2006 as the default year for colleges and universities that did not set their own tobacco use policy, or for those schools that did not have documentation as to when their policy was enacted.