

3. Fragrance Free Environment (Sample)

Policy: **Fragrance Free Environment**

Policy #:

Approved by:

Effective:

Revised:

PREAMBLE: Some people have become very sensitive to certain chemicals as a result of past exposures. They can suffer a wide range of health effects such as rashes, severe headaches, nausea, dizziness and fatigue, whenever they are exposed to very low levels of chemicals in scented products.

Most people on a daily basis use soap, shampoo, deodorant, laundry products, hair spray, lotions, cosmetics and fragrances. The potential impact of chemicals in scented products on human health is magnified because people spend much of their time indoors. Many products such as flowers, air deodorizer and latex balloons may be brought into the workplace.

Section 25 (2) (h) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act imposes an employer requirement to take every precaution reasonable in the circumstances for the protection of the worker. This requires the employer to limit the exposure of workers to chemical substances.

Several scented products are respiratory irritants and are known triggers for asthma, allergies and migraines. Even people that do not have pre-existing health problems can have an irritation to their upper airways, eye symptoms and general malaise. For people who report *multiple chemical sensitivity or environmental illnesses*, their ability to function depends on having air free of chemicals. Even low levels of the stimuli may trigger reactions in people reporting these conditions.

A worker who experiences these adverse health effects when exposed to scented products has a legal right to refuse to work in a situation that is likely to endanger himself or herself. This right is outlined in Section 43 (3) (b) of the Occupational Health and Safety Act. Therefore, (company name) must take action to limit these exposures.

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POLICY: (company name) supports the creation of a fragrance free environment so that chemical barriers will not prevent access to [insert workplace name] for people having chemical sensitivities.

SCOPE: All staff and visitors are asked to refrain from using, wearing, and bringing scented products and materials into (company name) properties and buildings.

PROCEDURE:

A. To limit exposure staff are encouraged to:

1. Use non-scented body products (e.g. perfume, cologne, lotions, scented hair products, etc...)
2. Refrain from the use of optional items that give off scents (i.e. any type of air fresheners, potpourri and flowers).
3. Air-out recently dry-cleaned clothing before wearing to work.
4. Use the least toxic cleaning products, disinfectants and paints that are commercially available and store these products in tightly closed, ventilated areas away from staff and visitors.

B. Notifications

1. Ensure that signage informing staff and visitors of these guidelines are posted at the entrance to the building and in common congregation areas, such as waiting rooms and washrooms.

The signage shall state – *Scented products can cause allergic reactions and respiratory distress. Staff and visitors are encouraged not to wear or use any scented products while working at (company name).*

2. Where appropriate, include the following statement on flyers advertising events to be held at (company name) "*Scented products can cause allergic reactions and respiratory distress. Staff and visitors are encouraged not to wear or use any scented products while at (company name)*

- 3 In reaction to an exposure, staff are requested to:
 - Remove yourself from the exposure and,
 - Report to your immediate supervisor as soon as possible

Adapted from an existing Fragrance Free Policy – July 2001

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Additional Scent-Free Policies

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety

http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/hsprograms/scent_free.html

Policy for Developing a Scent-free Workplace – The Lung Association

http://www.lung.ca/_resources/DevelopingaScentfreePolicyforaWorkplace.pdf

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