



Administrative Policy # 2023-01

“Share the Air” Scent Free Policy

Background

Scented products have been blamed for adversely affecting a person's health with some or all of the following symptoms being reported:

- Headaches
- dizziness, lightheadedness
- nausea
- fatigue
- weakness
- insomnia
- malaise
- confusion
- loss of appetite
- depression
- anxiety
- numbness
- upper respiratory symptoms
- shortness of breath
- difficulty with concentration
- skin irritation

In addition allergic and Asthmatic patients, as well as those with other conditions, report that certain odours, even in the smallest amounts, can trigger an attack.

While the severity of these symptoms can vary some people report mild irritation while others are incapacitated and/or must give up many 'normal' activities in order to avoid exposure.

This policy was developed to ensure a safe scent free workplace environment for Town of Digby employees and visitors.

As a general guideline the Town of Digby asks that any scent should not be detectable at more than an arm's length from the individual.

Policy

The Town of Digby is a Scent-free environment. Please do not use scented products while at work. Due to the health concerns arising from exposure to scented products, the Town of Digby has instituted this policy to provide a scent-free environment for all Employees, Council Members, Contract Workers and Visitors.

Scope

This policy applies to Town of Digby employees, Council Members, Contract workers and Visitors working at or visiting Town workplaces.

Definitions

- **“Scents”** in this policy means the smells or odours from cosmetics such as perfumes, make-ups, shampoos, deodorants, colognes etc., or from other products such as air fresheners, cleaners, detergents etc.
- **“Fragrance Free or Unscented”** means that there have been no fragrances added to the cosmetic product, or that a masking agent has been added in order to hide the scents from the other ingredients in the cosmetic.
- **“Share the Air”** is the tag line that refers to the Town of Digby Scent-Free Policy
- **“Workplace”** in this policy means all equipment, vehicles, offices, break rooms, common areas of any buildings occupied by Town of Digby staff.

Sample products

Scents are included in a very large range of products that includes:

- Shampoo and conditioners
- Hairsprays
- Deodorants
- Colognes & aftershaves
- Fragrances & perfumes
- Lotions & creams
- Potpourri
- Industrial and household chemicals and cleaners
- Soaps
- Cosmetics
- Air fresheners & deodorizers
- Oils
- Candles
- Diapers
- Some types of garbage bags
- Nail polish and polish remover
- High scented markers

Procedure

The Town of Digby will take the following steps to implement the “Share the Air” scent free policy:

- All Town of Digby employees, Council Members, Contract Workers and Visitors will be informed of this policy through “Share the Air” signs (Appendix “A”) posted in workplaces and will receive orientation about this policy.
- The policy will be incorporated into the Human Resource and Administrative Policy Manuals.
- The policy statement that “The Town of Digby promotes a Scent-Free Workplace” will appear on all promotional materials, email signatures, stationery, room booking notices, employment postings, etc.
- The use of scented products will not be allowed within the workplace at any time. In addition, all materials used for cleaning will be scent-free.
- Notices that “Waxing, Shampooing, Painting, or Spraying will be conducted” will be posted one week beforehand so that affected personnel can make arrangements or have their duties modified during that time.

Responsibilities

Employee:

- Reduce the use of highly scented products in the work environment while still keeping in mind the importance of proper personal hygiene;
- Be aware of the fact that there are fellow employees who suffer from scented products.
- If you are an employee who suffers from reaction to scented products and there is a scent in your surroundings causing you to have a reaction, you should do the following:
 - If the scent is being worn by someone in your office and you know this person well, approach them directly. Explain what the problem is, what you think you are reacting to and explain the kind of reaction triggered by the fragrance;
 - If you feel that direct contact would worsen your reaction or if you do not feel comfortable approaching this person wearing the scent, speak to your supervisor/department head and ask them if they would address this issue.
- If you have sensitivities toward scents and start in a new department, or you have recently developed reactions to scents:
 - It is important that you take reasonable precautions to self-manage your condition;
 - Inform you department head, supervisors and coworkers
 - Explain what causes your reaction and what kind of reaction you experience.
- If you are an employee who is wearing a scented product(s) and you are approached by another employee or supervisor:
 - Do not take the request to refrain from using scented products as a personal offense;
 - Work with others to find out what product(s) are causing the reaction;
 - Become part of the solution and switch to unscented products or scent reduced products.

Employer:

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- will attempt to maintain good indoor quality ensuring adequate air supply and ensuring scents are not being recycled throughout the building;
- Put signage out to inform employees and the general public of the scent reduced zone;
- Work toward using scent-free/ reduced scent cleaning chemicals.

Supervisor:

- If you are a supervisor/department head and you have an employee who suffers from health problems that are triggered by scents:
 - Be proactive – talk to the employee so he or she knows that you are approachable about the subject. Discuss how the scents affect their health and if there are specific triggers they are aware of.
 - Talk to all employees in the department to make them aware of scent reduction policy and explain the health concerns.
 - If an employee reports an issue respond to it in a timely manner.
- If the employee reports an issue to you:
 - Remove the employee from the area that is causing the problem;
 - Discreetly approach the individual who is wearing the scent in a nonthreatening way. Point out that the Town of Digby encourages employees to reduce or refrain from wearing scented products as a courtesy to those affected;
 - Attempt to find a solution to the problem. This could involve temporarily or permanently moving one of the employees to a different area, or directing the employee who is using the scented product causing the problem to reduce or refrain from using the product.

Other

This policy will be reviewed from time to time and can be changed because of experience or new knowledge but shall be reviewed no later than five (5) year from the date of adoption.

Repeal

This policy replaces and repeals Scent Free Policy #2004-01

Clerk's Annotation for Official Policy Book

Date of Notice: _January 16, 2023

Date of adoption: _February 6, 2023

Policy effective date: _February 7, 2023

I certify that this "**Share the Air**" Scent Free Policy was adopted by Council as indicated above.



February 7, 2023

Clerk

Date

Appendix “A”

