

# SMOKE-FREE MELBOURNE

A POLICY TO PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY  
FROM THE HARMS OF SMOKING



CITY OF MELBOURNE

## **Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

The City of Melbourne respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land, the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung and Bunurong Boon Wurrung peoples of the Eastern Kulin and pays respect to their Elders past, present and emerging. We are committed to our reconciliation journey, because at its heart, reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, for the benefit of all Victorians.

## Council Plan 2021-25

The Council Plan 2021-25 sets out our strategic direction and commitment to the community for the next four years. Based on six strategic objectives for our city, this is our detailed plan for our city's revitalisation and considers the needs of all people who access and experience the City of Melbourne municipality. The Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25, which is incorporated into Council Plan, will shape how we work to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of individuals and the community we serve. For more information visit [melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan](https://melbourne.vic.gov.au/council-plan)



### Safety and wellbeing

Ensuring the city is safe, and that people feel safe when they come into the city is our priority. We will plan and design for the safety and health and wellbeing of all people in Melbourne, and we are committed to strengthening community social connections.

Brought to you by the City of Melbourne in collaboration with the Partnership for Healthy Cities, a global network supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies in partnership with the World Health Organization and Vital Strategies.

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# FOREWORD FROM THE LORD MAYOR OF MELBOURNE AND COUNCILLOR



Melbourne is a city for people, and we are proud to be the first Australian city to have a formal framework to protect our community from the harms of smoking.

The City of Melbourne is a leader in public health promotion and has a bold vision to become a smoke-free city.

In the eight years since 2013, we have implemented 13 smoke-free areas across the municipality to create a healthier environment for Melburnians.

However, our Smoke-free Melbourne Policy involves more than simply creating smoke-free areas. It is about implementing a plan to reduce smoking by supporting people to quit, and sharing information to help everyone live healthier lives.

This policy has been developed in consultation and partnership with local and international public health and tobacco control experts. Through engagement with 1222 community members, including city businesses, we have developed an evidence-based approach to suit our city and its people.

It is encouraging that, of those surveyed, 77 per cent support our vision to become a smoke-free city, with 27 per cent of those being smokers themselves.

Societal and behavioural change is only possible when we work together over time.

The City of Melbourne is honoured to be a member of the Partnerships for Healthy Cities, a global network of cities, supported by Bloomberg Philanthropies with the World Health Organization and Vital Strategies.

We will continue to partner with external stakeholders, local health promotion organisations, and with the Victorian Government to ensure Melbourne is a leader in policies and initiatives that enhance the wellbeing of all those who live, work or play in our city.

As we work together to build a city of possibility, we look forward to protecting, improving and promoting public health in the municipality through policies such as this.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sally Capp".

Sally Capp  
**Lord Mayor**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Olivia Ball".

Councillor Dr Olivia Ball  
**Portfolio lead for Health,  
Wellbeing and Belonging**

# PURPOSE

The aim of this policy is to outline our vision to reduce the harmful effects of smoking in our community and how this will be achieved. This policy will guide the creation of more smoke-free areas in the central City of Melbourne, ways to reduce and de-normalise smoking as well as supporting people to quit.

For the purpose of this policy and City of Melbourne smoke-free areas, e-cigarette use or vaping is included in the definition of smoking.

The terms 'smoke-free Melbourne' and 'smoke-free city' in this policy do not imply that smoking will be banned everywhere.



# INTRODUCTION

The City of Melbourne is committed to improving the health and wellbeing of our community through reducing the harmful effects of smoking, second-hand tobacco smoke and e-cigarette aerosols. Smoking is the biggest preventable cause of cancer, accounting for 13 per cent of cancer cases per year in Australia. There is no safe level of exposure to tobacco smoke including second-hand smoke.<sup>1</sup>

City of Melbourne has implemented 13 smoke-free areas since the successful pilot of an open-air smoking ban in The Causeway laneway in Melbourne's central city in 2013.

Smoke-free areas help both smokers and non-smokers. Smoke-free areas protect non-smokers from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke and can be helpful for smokers wanting to quit or to reduce their smoking. They also create fewer opportunities to smoke and contribute to the de-normalisation of smoking and vaping.

While smoke-free areas are important, evidence from around the world suggests that a comprehensive and holistic approach to tobacco and smoking control is needed to reduce harm caused by tobacco and e-cigarette products in the community, including a combination of smoking bans and community education.

Cities are spaces where people live, work and travel in close proximity. Smoking in areas of high population density exposes more people to the harms of tobacco smoke. Therefore, we have identified the central city of Melbourne as the focus of our policy due to the increased impact of second-hand smoke on people using the area.

Having the aim of a smoke-free city sets an ambitious target to help cities work holistically and with different levels of government and non-government organisations

to address both the health and environmental impacts of smoking, as well as the underlying causes of smoking rates in our community.

Through extensive research and consultation with health and tobacco control experts, community and business, we have developed a vision and policy framework for a smoke-free Melbourne. The approach and actions outlined in this policy will ensure that efforts and resources are directed where they are needed and will have the most impact.

## COVID-19 and smoking or vaping

While it's not clear if people who smoke are more likely to get SARS-CoV-2 (the virus that causes COVID-19), emerging evidence suggests that current smokers and vapers are more likely to develop serious illness if they do become infected with COVID-19.<sup>2</sup> Smokers have a higher risk of developing lung and chest infections in general, as well as other conditions like cardiovascular disease and cancer. Vaping has also been shown to increase inflammation in the lungs and thereby increase coughing and wheezing.<sup>3</sup>

In addition, the hand-to-mouth action of smoking and vaping means that smokers frequently bring their hands into close contact with their face, making them more vulnerable to the virus. Sharing cigarettes, water pipes or e-cigarettes also increases the risk of the virus spreading.





# CITY OF MELBOURNE'S ROLE

The City of Melbourne's role in reducing smoking and e-cigarette use is defined as follows:

| PROVIDER                                                                                                                                                                                                            | PARTNER                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | FACILITATOR                                                                                                                                                                                                       | ADVOCATOR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>The City of Melbourne leads the delivery of work.</b>                                                                                                                                                            | <b>We partner with other strategic stakeholders and / or community groups to deliver the work.</b>                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>We assist others to lead the delivery by bringing interested parties together.</b>                                                                                                                             | <b>We actively lobby and promote the community's interests to other responsible decision makers and delivery agents.</b>                                                                                                                     |
| <b>For example, we can:</b><br><br>Create and enforce smoke-free areas under our <i>Activities Local Law 2019</i> (Local Law). <sup>4</sup><br><br>Adapt infrastructure, including signage and cigarette butt bins. | <b>For example, we can:</b><br><br>Partner with health promotion and behaviour change experts.<br><br>Work with internal and external stakeholders to research and investigate local health and wellbeing issues, including smoking rates and barriers to quitting smoking. | <b>For example, we can:</b><br><br>Support key stakeholders in tobacco control, business and non-government organisations to address smoking.<br><br>Share our knowledge with other cities and local governments. | <b>For example, we can:</b><br><br>Advocate for more extensive State and Federal Government tobacco and e-cigarette regulations.<br><br>Show leadership to other councils and governments through our policy development and implementation. |



# THE WAY WE WORK

The City of Melbourne's Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Plan 2021-25 outlines how we as an organisation will work to achieve good outcomes for our community and our city. In order to address smoking in our community, we will:

- Work within the City of Melbourne's determinants of health model – taking into consideration the strong influence of societal trends, social inequities, living conditions and individual factors on people's health and wellbeing.
- Use integrated planning, strong engagement, partnerships and collaboration including within the City of Melbourne, with a broad range of stakeholders and the community.
- Uphold our commitment to health and social equity by developing initiatives that are inclusive and sensitive to the needs of more disadvantaged populations.
- Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our city to ensure initiatives consider the importance of self-determination and cultural safety.



# VISION

A smoke-free city where our community is protected from the harms of smoking.



# MODEL FOR CHANGE

The City of Melbourne recognises that in order to achieve a smoke-free city and reduce the harms of tobacco on the community, we will need to work with and alongside our partners as well as other key stakeholders in government, health, business and community. In order to achieve our vision, we have developed ambitions and possible actions under each of the four domains; protect, educate, communicate and regulate.

Figure 1: Model for Change





## Domain 1: Protect

We will protect our community from second-hand smoke and aerosol, and discourage and de-normalise smoking by creating more smoke-free areas and events.

### Our ambition is to:

Increase the number of smoke-free areas in the central city where there is high pedestrian activity.

“Smoking should be strongly discouraged anywhere that non-smokers may be affected. Non-smokers should not have to walk through a cloud of smoke when going about their business in the city.”

- Participant in Smoke-free Melbourne community engagement

### Actions could include:

- The inclusion of smoke-free areas at:
  - City of Melbourne premier and permitted events.
  - Entry points to major transport hubs.
  - High density retail or tourist areas.
  - Public thoroughfares and pedestrianised spaces.
- Include smoking restrictions in major developments and upgrades.
- Develop a framework to assist entities to ban smoking on private land.





## Domain 2: Educate

**We will educate and raise awareness of the harms of smoking, promote behaviour change and the benefits of quitting.**

### **Our ambition is to:**

- Support and promote existing behaviour change messaging to support people to quit or reduce smoking.
- Support groups with higher smoking rates such as Aboriginal communities, young people, international students, those working in the construction industry and people experiencing homelessness.
- Develop and maintain partnerships with key health promotion organisations to ensure coordinated and evidence-based messaging.

### **Actions could include:**

- Work with Victorian State Government bodies to ensure signage from Tobacco Act 1987 legislation is adequate at transport stops, playgrounds, education centres etc.
- Implement clear, adequate and effective signage in new smoke-free areas.
- Develop targeted campaigns to support population groups with higher smoking rates, e.g. partner with universities to address smoking rates in young people.
- Partner with key health promotion organisations such as Quit Victoria, Heart Foundation, VicHealth and Tobacco Free Portfolios to deliver behaviour change campaigns.

**“Educate the wider community about the effects of smoking and vaping on the smoker and others who experience second-hand smoke.”**

- Participant in Smoke-free Melbourne community engagement





## Domain 3: Communicate

We will communicate, promote and increase awareness of our policy with a focus on people who smoke, those from diverse backgrounds or with additional needs.

### Our ambition is to:

- Run a communications campaign to promote our smoke-free policy in the community.
- Build awareness of current smoking and tobacco laws and regulations.

### Actions could include:

- Develop targeted communications campaigns in partnership with health organisations for population groups with higher smoking rates or those more adversely affected by smoke-free areas, such as Aboriginal communities and those experiencing homelessness.
- Ensure signage and communications are translated into different languages to ensure policies and laws are understood by culturally and linguistically diverse communities, such as international students.

“Educate the public about the link between tobacco use and non-communicable diseases.”

- Quit Victoria comment in response to Smoke-free Melbourne community engagement





## Domain 4: Regulate

### Regulate smoking activities including the advertising and sale of tobacco and e-cigarette products.

#### Our ambition is to:

- Reduce access to tobacco or vaping products.
- Enforce smoke-free areas under the Melbourne City Council's Activities Local Law 2019 (Local Law).
- Enforce smoking regulations under the Victorian Government Tobacco Act 1987.
- Support Australian Federal Government smoking controls.

#### Actions could include:

- Deliver a 'sales to minor' program to monitor underage sales of tobacco and e-cigarette products.
- Identify all tobacco and e-cigarette retailers in the municipality to enable better enforcement to prevent the sale of tobacco to minors.
- Develop an agreed process with key stakeholders for communicating and enforcing smoke-free areas for vulnerable population groups, e.g. people experiencing homelessness.
- Advocate to the Victorian State Government for further tobacco control policy change, e.g. tobacco retail licensing.
- Include a ban on tobacco and e-cigarette product sales in City of Melbourne owned or managed sites.

**“Consistency of enforcement over all smoke-free areas. Without it, concern is it will be ignored and not taken seriously.”**

- City of Melbourne resident involved in Smoke-free Melbourne community engagement







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# IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION

An implementation plan will be developed which outlines initiatives, timelines, resources required and responsibilities for delivery. Regular evaluation will assist in measuring the impact of actions from the policy. This will include monitoring of both Victorian Population Health data and City of Melbourne smoking data. Progress and outcomes of the policy will be reported back to the Council and community at regular intervals.







# GLOSSARY

**Smoke-free city:** The term ‘smoke-free city’ in this policy does not imply that smoking will be banned everywhere. This would require intervention from both the Victorian and Australian Governments.

**Smoking:** For the purpose of this policy and City of Melbourne smoke-free areas, e-cigarette use or vaping is included in the definition of smoking.

**Smoke:** As per definition in Melbourne City Council’s *Activities Local Law 2019* (Local Law) “smoke” means to:

- Smoke, hold or otherwise have control over an ignited tobacco product;
- Light a tobacco product; or
- Use an e-cigarette to generate or release an aerosol or vapour.<sup>5</sup>

**Smoke-free:** Smoke-free as used in this document encompasses the use of both tobacco and e-cigarette products and protection from their emissions.

**Smoke-free area:** A smoke-free area is an outdoor public space where smoking is banned within defined boundaries. Under the Melbourne City Council’s *Activities Local Law 2019* (Local Law), the City of Melbourne can prescribe new smoke-free areas.

**E-cigarettes and vaping:** Electronic cigarettes, or e-cigarettes, are battery operated devices that heat a liquid (called “e-liquid”) to produce a vapour that users inhale. They are designed to deliver nicotine and/or other chemicals via vapour directly to the users lungs (also referred to as vape or e-liquid nicotine).

# REFERENCES

<sup>1</sup> *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General. Atlanta, GA, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Centre for Health Promotion, National Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.*

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.quit.org.au/articles/faqs-coronavirus-covid-19-and-smoking/>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cancer.org.au/cancer-information/causes-and-prevention/smoking/e-cigarettes>.

<sup>4</sup> Under the *Activities Local Law 2019* (Local Law), the City of Melbourne can prescribe new smoke-free areas. Once prescribed it is illegal to smoke in a smoke-free area.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/activities-environment-greening-vaping-misc-local-law-2020.pdf>.

## How to contact us

### Online:

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### In person:

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### Interpreter services

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03 9280 0726 हिंदी  
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