



State Recognized Tribal Administration Enforces Tobacco Policy

The Lumbee Tribal Administration created a tobacco free policy in 2008. This policy was adopted and passed by the Tribal Council. This policy includes all tribally sponsored events and all tribally owned properties including buildings, land and vehicles. Although this policy has been in place for six years, employee turn overs and changes of tribal leadership have caused many employees to neglect the policy due to lack of enforcement. However, tribal leaders found a solution to two problems with one rule.

Challenge

Since the tribal territory is so large and tribal employees and property is spread throughout four counties, tribal employees ignored the policy. With well over 120 employees, the tribe has at least 50% of them working away from the main office. These employees include maintenance workers, Boys and Girls Club staff, tribal apartment managers, health and human service staff, etc. So, direct contact with tribal administration doesn't take place with these employees on a daily basis. In addition, changes in tribal leadership and staff turn overs, contribute too many employees being unaware of the policy.

For those employees who are smokers and who are very knowledgeable about the policy, many who result to smoking in their vehicles when they needed a smoke break. However, those vehicles are parked on tribal property. So, they were still were not adhering to the policy.

Solution

After some time of deliberation on how to solve and enforce the issue, a plan was designed to not only address the problem, but also assist in raising funds for the tribal Boys and Girls Clubs.

The Tribal Administrator secretly selected employees that would in essence act as monitors at each of the worksite locations, including the main tribal office. These monitors would periodically scan the parking lot looking for employees who were breaking the policy. If caught, the employee's first offense would warrant a written warning. If a second offense occurred, the employee would be deducted \$50.00 from their paycheck to be donated to the Boys and Girls Club. The final offense however would be suspension and/or termination. To explain the new policy, a mandatory staff meeting was conducted.

Future Directions

Enforcement of the policy seems to be effective for the tribal employees. However, tribal members continue to use tobacco products on tribal property. Future efforts are needed to address the public using tobacco products, especially at community buildings during weekend events.

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