

BLOG

Yes, You Still Have Smokers in Your Workplace

04/10/2019 Megan Jacobs | Product Manager



Now that smoking is no longer the employee health issue it once was, companies can turn their attention to other wellness program strategies, right?

Unfortunately not.

Because smoking in the workplace today isn't always obvious, that's led some employers to believe this type of addiction isn't a big issue anymore. Out of sight, out of mind, out of HR planning.

That misperception can be very costly on multiple levels—from direct productivity losses to higher healthcare expenditures. Even worse, it means those who do smoke won't get the help they need.

Who Still Smokes?

While it's true there have been some decreases in smoking rates in certain geographic areas, the fight is far from over. And with the epidemic rise of e-cigarette use among youth, even those areas could potentially slide back toward higher prevalence.

One [study found](#) that in the U.S., as many 1 in 4 adults were current cigarette smokers (West Virginia); 1 in 10 adults currently used smokeless tobacco products (Wyoming); and 1 in 15 adults currently used e-cigarettes (Oklahoma).

Here's a deeper look at who's still smoking in the workforce.

Enter your email to receive updates on the EX Program blog.

Email*

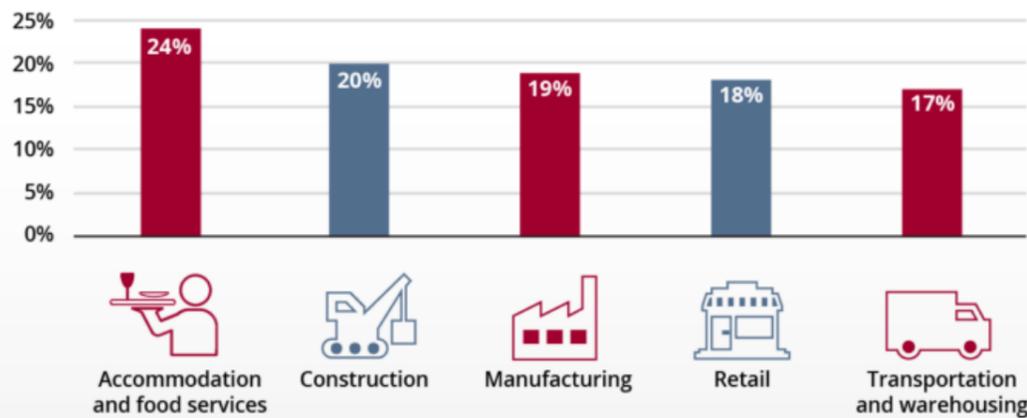
SUBSCRIBE

Work in HR or health plans?
Message an EX Coach.

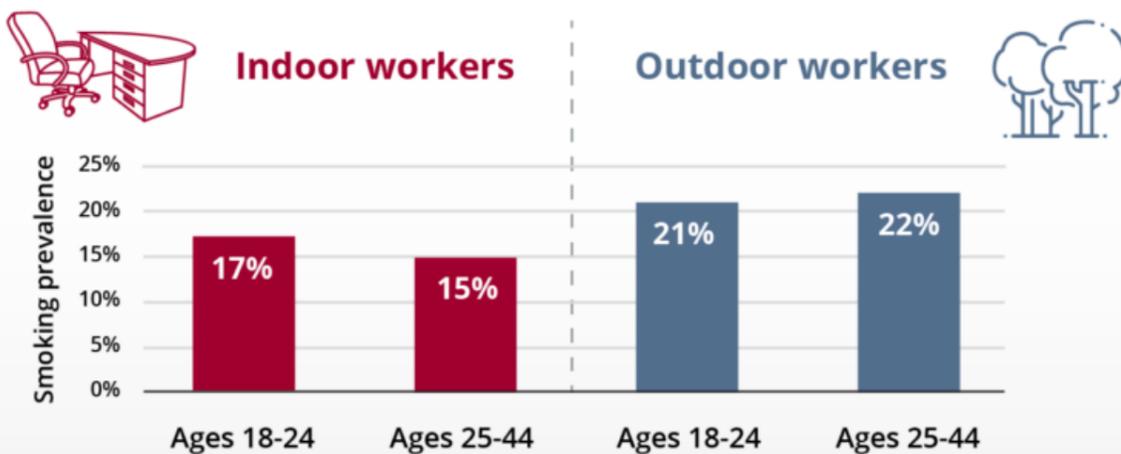
Who Still Smokes?

In these industries, you have higher smoking rates.

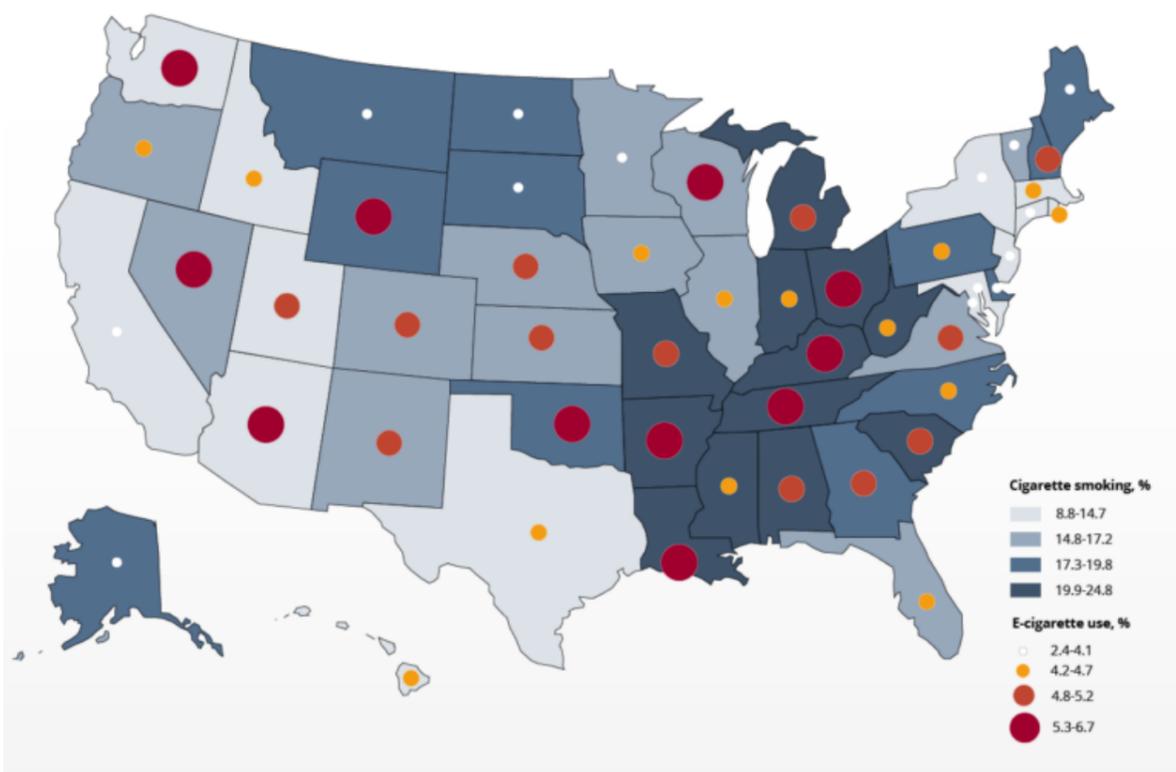
Smoking prevalence



Have outdoor workers? You have more smokers.



Dark blue states have higher smoking rates.
Bigger dots = higher e-cigarette use.



Workers with less education and lower income smoke more.

Education



Workers with high school education or GED: **22%-24%** smoking rate

High school+: **11%-16%** smoking rate



Income



Less than \$35K: **21%-25%** smoking rate

\$35K- \$75K: **15% to 21%** smoking rate



Sources:

Syamlal, Girija et al. "Workplace Smoke-Free Policies and Cessation Programs Among U.S. Working Adults," American Journal of Preventive Medicine, Feb. 14, 2019. [https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797\(18\)32386-9/fulltext](https://www.ajpmonline.org/article/S0749-3797(18)32386-9/fulltext)

"State-specific Patterns of Cigarette Smoking, Smokeless Tobacco Use, and E-cigarette Use Among Adults – United States, 2016," Feb. 7, 2019, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2019/18_0362.htm

The Truth about Smoking in the Workplace

Look around your workplace. Can you tell which employees use tobacco products and which don't? While some take smoke breaks, others might use e-cigarettes that don't require ducking outside to light up if your indoor smoking policy doesn't include vaping. Even those who do smoke cigarettes could go off-site to light up.

Simply put, you likely don't know the extent of the issue at your company. But one thing is certain: You can make a significant difference when it comes to changing the numbers.

Building Awareness, Reducing Prevalence

According to the Centers for Disease Control, tobacco use is still the single most preventable cause of disease, disability, and death in the United States—more than being sedentary, more than obesity, more than poor nutrition.

Becoming aware of the continuing use of tobacco is the first big step toward change. The next is to focus on reducing that usage.

For that, you need an evidence-based cessation program that works for every tobacco user in your organization and helps them quit in the way they prefer. For example, more of today's tobacco users would rather use text, email, and online chat than traditional phone coaching.

A meaningful tobacco cessation program is one that people actually use. When they can get support and resources anytime through digital interventions, it increases their likelihood of quitting for good.

Even if you don't know all of the smokers or other tobacco users in your organization, you can help every one of them. [Visit our program page](#) to learn more about an innovative, effective quitting experience for tobacco users of all types—from smokers to e-cigarette users to chewing tobacco users.

Ready to see a demo? [Contact us to see a demo today.](#)

MEGAN JACOBS, MPH

Product Manager

Megan is responsible for the design, delivery, and evaluation of the EX Program. Megan's expertise in mHealth interventions and public health campaigns



was formed with her work at the University of Michigan Health Service, DC Department of Health, and National Vaccine Program Office.

Share this:



[< Return to All Resources](#)

[PROGRAM](#) [COST OF SMOKING](#) [PRICING](#) [RESOURCES](#) [PARTNERS](#) [ABOUT US](#)

[TERMS OF USE](#) [SUBSCRIPTION TERMS](#) [PRIVACY POLICY](#) [DMCA NOTICE](#)

©2019 Truth Initiative