Smoke-Free Public Areas and Entryways Policy Record Evaluation Report (2-E-4)

**Fresno Economic Opportunities Commission**

**Rural Tobacco Education Program**

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# Smoke-Free Public Areas and Entryways:

**Record Evaluation Review (2-E-4)**

# *AIM AND OUTCOME*

The Fresno County Economic Opportunities Commission, Rural Tobacco Education Program (RTEP), sought to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke (SHS) in public areas and within 50 feet or more of all public or private businesses worksite entryways. The program set the following objective to accomplish this goal:

*By June 30, 2025, two cities in rural Fresno County (Kingsburg and Huron) will adopt a policy restricting smoking in public areas (e.g., farmers markets, public events) and/or prohibit smoking within 50 feet or more of all entryways of public or private business or worksites.*

To date, only one city in rural Fresno County has adopted a smoke-free policy restricting smoking at public events. In addition, none of the targeted jurisdictions have adopted a policy prohibiting smoking within 50 feet or more of all public or private business or worksite entryways.

***BACKGROUND***

Smoking is the single greatest avoidable cause of disease and death in the United States. Furthermore, SHS exposure has been shown to cause illness and premature death in children and adults who do not smoke. Exposure of adults to SHS can have immediate adverse effects and cause coronary heart disease and lung cancer. The U.S. Surgeon General has concluded that there is no risk-free level of exposure to SHS.1

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)2 estimates that one in four nonsmokers is exposed (SHS). Exposure to SHS is higher in certain groups of nonsmokers. Data estimates that 41% of children (3-11 years) and 34% of youth (12-19 years) are exposed to SHS. An estimated 47% of Blacks and 24% of Mexican Americans have experienced SHS exposure. Also, 43% of people living below the poverty level are exposed to SHS compared to 21% at the poverty level.

California adults continue to report exposure to SHS. Latinos have the highest rate of SHS exposure in the workplace at 19.5%. Furthermore, workplace exposure rates for specific settings were highest in-store or in warehouses (14.2%), followed by plants or factories (11.5%), restaurants or bars (7.1%), and other indoor settings (14.0%). Similarly, 19.1% of low-income residents reported SHS exposure and other indoor environments (14.0%). Furthermore, 60.5% of persons living below the poverty level in the United States were exposed to SHS.

Fresno County, the largest agricultural producer in the nation, advertises a large labor force and a low cost of living. However, the county is among the poorest counties in California. An estimated 26.9% of Fresno County's overall population lives in poverty, and 38.7% of its children living below the federal poverty level.4

Hispanic/Latinos represent an estimated 50.3% of Fresno County's population.5  Many of the county's Hispanic/Latino populations reside in rural communities, with 42.9% in Kingsburg and 94.1% in Huron. The estimated median income in these communities falls below the poverty level, with an estimated income of $57,723 in Kingsburg and $25,060 in Huron. Many rural Fresno county residents are employed in the agricultural industry warehouses, small businesses, and private businesses. There are an estimated 59,569 companies in Fresno County. Of these, 32.6% are Hispanic-owned firms.

***EVALUATION METHODS AND DESIGN***

This process evaluation activity was designed to guide the program's policy adoption efforts in rural Fresno County*.* The RTEP targeted Kingsburg and Huron's cities to adopt and implement a smoke-free outdoor area and business/worksite entryway policy. The policy record review was used to understand the level of support among city council members and address concerns that have been previously expressed. Also, the process evaluation activity was used to identify a potential champion for the issue and the challenges or barriers to the adoption process.

The policy record review used current city council agendas and minutes posted on the Cities of Kingsburg and Huron websites. The time interval for this evaluation activity was January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024.6-7  Comments and votes of the City Council members were analyzed to tailor the intervention and examine the intervention's activities. Content analysis was conducted to identify the reasons for the adoption of the policy passing or not passing.

A "Policy Review Form" was used to identify the specific information on tobacco control policies recorded in the Cities of Kingsburg and Huron City Council agendas and minutes. A copy of the "Policy Review Form" instrument is available in Appendix A. The agendas and city council minutes were reviewed to collect information from each record. Data were collected on the council meeting date, council members present, agenda items related to tobacco control issues raised during the discussion of the tobacco control item (support/opposition), and other agenda items or discussions relevant to the project's work.

**Limitations**

Policy records review of city council agendas and minutes was used to identify relevant issues supporting and opposing the objective. While this approach provides insights into the process of policy adoption, public records are not prepared for evaluative purposes. As a result, there are limitations in the completeness and timely posting of City Council minutes.

***RESULTS***

The policy record reviewed used City Council agendas and minutes for January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024, in Kingsburg and Huron's Cities. These records did not reveal any issues or discussions that involved support for or opposition to the smoke-free public areas or business/worksite entryways. Also, policy records for the Cities of Kingsburg did reveal discussion and action on a policy-related issue.

***CONCLUSIONS***

The RTEP Program's goal is to pass a policy to restrict smoking in public areas and prohibit smoking within 50 feet or more of business/worksites entryways. Despite previous efforts, rural Fresno County communities have been reluctant to adopt tobacco-related policies perceived as anti-business or negatively impact local businesses. However, there remains continued interest in addressing economic and living conditions in these communities.

The Kingsburg and Huron City Council agendas and minutes were reviewed from January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2024. Policy records did not reveal any action or discussions on the initiative issues that could determine policymakers' viewpoints.

Based on these findings, RTEP will advocate for a smoke-free public areas policy in the targeted rural Fresno County communities. These results will be disseminated to community partners, policymakers, and the Fresno County LLA Tobacco Coalition.

***References***

1U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *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, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Coordinating Center for Health Promotion, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office of Smoking and Health, 2006.

2Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Secondhand Smoke: An Unequal Danger. *Vitalsigns*, February 2015. https://www.cdc.gov/vitalsigns/pdf/2015-02-vitalsigns.pdf

3California Adult Tobacco Survey. (2007). Prepared by: California Department of Public Health, California Tobacco Control Program, March 2008.

5U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 – 2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF

6 City of Kingsburg, City Council Agendas and Minutes, http://www.cityofkingsburg-ca.gov/AgendaCenter

7City of Huron, City Council Minutes, http://cityofhuron.com/meeting-agenda-and-minutes/

**Appendix A**

Policy Review Instrument

**Policy Review Form**

**City Council Meeting Records**

1. City: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. Month/Year: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

3. City council members present: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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4. What item on the agenda related to tobacco control: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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5. Issues raised during the discussion of the tobacco control item:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Issues Raised in Support**  **[Individuals(s) raising issue]** | **Issues Raised in Opposition**  **[Individuals(s) raising issue]** |
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6. Other agenda items/discussions relevant to the work of the project: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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