

# BLANK HOSPITAL/MEDICAL CENTER TEMPLATE

## GENERAL MANUAL – POLICY/PROCEDURE/SOP

**Issued By:** < FILL IN DEPARTMENT/AUTHORITY NAME >

**Approved by:** < FILL IN DEPARTMENT/AUTHORITY NAME >

**Reviewed by:** < FILL IN DEPARTMENT/AUTHORITY NAME >

**Title:** SCENTED PRODUCTS AND FRAGRANCES

**Policy Number:** XX-XX-001

**Standard Operating Procedure:** 01-001

**Key Words:** Scents, Scented Products, Fragrances, Perfumes, Colognes, Parfum, Masking Fragrance

### **Stakeholders:**

For the environmental health and wellbeing of all members of the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Community including; Employees, Physicians, Researchers, Students, Volunteers, Contractors, Patients, Visitors, and members of the public.

### **Policy Statement:**

<INSTITUTIONAL NAME> is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all and will strive to eliminate the use of all products with scents and fragrances to prevent any adverse reactions in patients, staff and other people working and/or visiting the hospital premises. In such cases, where any member of the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Community requires assistance regarding a scent-sensitivity, <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> will take all steps to accommodate that employee or patient as it applies to health and safety (as per the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> ADA [Accommodation Policy](#)).

### **Personal Scented Products Use:**

<INSTITUTIONAL NAME> will make all efforts to inform all members of the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> community that they are expected to refrain from using, wearing and/or applying scented personal care products in all spaces owned, rented or leased by <INSTITUTIONAL NAME>. All members are expected to refrain from using, wearing and/or applying scented personal care products in all spaces owned, rented or leased by <INSTITUTIONAL NAME>.

### **Hospital Products Purchasing and Use**

Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety will review all existing products within the MSDS/SDS Database on an annual basis to determine if all ingredients are acceptable as a fragrance-free product. Ingredients should be reviewed on SDS in addition to any referral to “scent” inclusion anywhere on the document. Ingredients should also be reviewed on the product labels. MSDS/SDS is not always a reliable source for the inclusion of Fragrance VOCs in a product.

If a fragrance-free option is not possible for environmental products, variances will be noted to Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety, tracked using the MSDS/SDS database and reviewed annually or as new fragrance-free alternatives become available. Wherever possible these variant products should have very minimal/low fragrance and/or emit low levels of volatile organic compounds (VOCs).

<INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Purchasing will inform all suppliers of this policy and ensure all products used and purchased by the hospital such as cleaning products, soaps, paints, hand hygiene products etc., are fragrance free.

All hospital departments must adhere to this policy when purchasing any products outside of standard purchasing processes.

Wherever possible, <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Building Services or Support Services teams will give one week's advance notice of activities in the area where work is being conducted that may produce odor such as carpet cleaning, spring-cleaning, painting, spraying, waxing, stripping the floors, etc. so that personnel concerned for their health can make arrangements or have their duties modified during that time.

### **Definitions:**

**Employee:** A person who works for or provides services to the Hospital on a full- or part-time basis, whether unionized (belonging to a bargaining unit) or not, including supervisory, managerial administrative staff, and Senior Officers. All personnel have an obligation to help maintain a fragrance-free environment. All hospitals have an obligation to protect patients, ensuring they don't become ill when they seek and receive care.

**Scented Product and Fragrance:** Refers to any product including, but not limited to:

- a) Personal Products such as perfume, cologne, essential oils, scented aftershave lotions, scented deodorant, scented moisturizing hand lotion, body or face washes, lotions or sprays, massage oils, scented sunscreen, and any scented hair shampoo, conditioner, mousse, gel, hairspray, scented powder or talc, solid or,
- b) Environmental Products such as spray air fresheners, incense, potpourri, candles, cleaning products, laundry products, detergents, fabric softeners, scent boosters, sterilizing products, adhesives, etc. Use of these products at home and in automobiles will cross contaminate scrubs and clothing attire.

<INSTITUTIONAL NAME> **Community:** Includes all employees, healthcare professionals, physicians, students, volunteers, researchers, contractors, patients, visitors to the hospital and members of the public.

### **Indoor Air Quality Standards and Regulations:**

<Hospital Occupational Health and Safety if applicable>

<Hospital Joint Commission if applicable>

<EPA>Indoor Air Pollution: An Introduction for Health Professionals

<https://www.epa.gov/indoor-air-quality-iaq/indoor-air-pollution-introduction-health-professionals>

### **Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Managers/Supervisors:**

- Instruct and educate employees about the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy.
- Ensure this policy is followed within their department.
- Assist employees in addressing concerns regarding scented products and fragrances.
- Review and investigate any employee incident reports related to scented products and fragrances and implement appropriate corrective actions.

**Employees:**

- Consider, if comfortable approaching members of the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> community to inform them of this policy.
- Complete an Employee Incident Report if experiencing an adverse reaction to a scented product. This completed form must be submitted to the Department Manager/Supervisor and Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety/Employee Health/Human Resources.

**Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety:**

- Develop educational materials such as fact sheets etc. and conduct employee education sessions as required to communicate this policy to the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Community.
- Review all Employee Incidents Reports related to scented products and fragrances and assist Managers/Supervisors and the Human Resources Department with the implementation of the corrective actions.
- Review annually, all products used within <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> to ensure they are acceptable as per this policy.
- Document product variants and review if fragrance free alternatives exist as required.
- Evaluate the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy on an annual basis in consultation with the Joint Health and Safety Committee/Patient Safety/Employee Health/HR.

**Patient Relations:**

- Receive and forward feedback related to scented products or fragrances from patients and/or visitors to the appropriate Department Managers/Supervisors and resource departments for them to address and resolve with the individual who provided the feedback.

**Building Services, Redevelopment Project Office and Corporate Support Services:**

- Inform contractors of this policy and ensure it is followed.
- Provide departments one week's notice of activities that may produce emission of VOCs/fumes.

**< INSTITUTIONAL NAME > Purchasing Department/Acquisition Services/Procurement Services:**

- Inform suppliers of this and ensure it is followed
- Ensure all products purchased by the hospital are fragrance free

**Background Information:**

Scented products and fragrances frequently cause health problems such as asthma attacks, shortness of breath, airborne contact dermatitis, headaches, migraines, nausea, sensory issues, and many more. They also trigger underlying respiratory and allergic conditions in sensitive individuals. Due to health concerns arising from exposure to scented products, the organization has instituted a fragrance-free policy order to provide a healthy and safe working, learning, teaching, and caring environment for staff, patients, and visitors alike.

**Procedure:**

**1. Awareness and Communication**

An awareness program to support the policy will be developed and administered with annual refresher campaigns.

Departments and clinics will display the appropriate signage to inform all members of the < \_\_\_\_\_ > Community that wearing, applying and using scented products is prohibited. Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety/Employee Health/HR can be contacted for the appropriate signage.

An internal communication campaign will be put into place to inform staff.

At new employee orientation/onboarding, all employees will be provided with information about the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy.

Information about the Scented Products and Fragrances Policy will also be included in the email reminders, instructions, appointment cards, outgoing phone messages, website for patients, families, visitors, hospital volunteers and in contractor agreements.

Occupational Health Wellness and Safety/Employee Health/ HR will provide advice on fragrance-free alternatives as required.

## **2. Reporting an Adverse Reaction to Scented Products and Fragrances**

Employees experiencing an adverse reaction to a scented product or fragrance should follow the < \_\_\_\_\_ > [Employee Incident Reporting Policy](#) (notify his/her manager responsible for investigating the incident and implementing the appropriate corrective action, complete an employee incident report and send it to Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety Department/Employee Health/HR).

Patients or visitors experiencing an adverse reaction to a scented product or fragrance should notify Patient Relations/Advocacy of their concern. Patient Relations/Advocacy is responsible for investigating the concern and liaising with appropriate Departments as required.

All members of the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Community requiring accommodation for a disability related to scent sensitivity may refer to the [Accommodation Policy](#) and the [Providing Access for People with Disabilities Policy](#) for more information.

## **3. Procedure and Recourse to Address Concerns Related to a Personal Scented Product or Fragrance**

Where possible, concerns about the use of scented personal products used by a coworker, patient or visitor should be communicated to the individual in a polite and respectful manner. Advise the individual that <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> is a Fragrance Free Environment. Ask the person to remove the scented/fragranced product, and/or to refrain from using the scented/fragranced product in the future.

Any member of the <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> Community who is not comfortable communicating this policy to the person using scented/fragranced personal products should discuss the concern with the supervisor or manager of the department.

The supervisor or manager may speak with the person or may refer to Employee Health/Human Resource Departments for any assistance and support.

A manager or designate has the authority to direct a person wearing the scented/fragranced product to take steps to remove it so that the scent/fragrance is no longer evident.

If a person working or visiting <INSTITUTIONAL NAME> has been made aware of the policy repeatedly and continues to wear scented personal products and fragrances in the hospital, the area

manager or supervisor should implement the [Disciplinary Process](#) for employee, and if required for visitor a [Trespass to Property Order](#) or simply ask them to leave.

#### **4. Procedure and Recourse to Address Concerns Related to an Environmental Scented Product or Fragrance**

If the source of the scent/fragrance is a product used within <\_\_\_\_\_>, contact the department manager responsible for the product to note the concern.

The Department Manager is responsible for investigating the product and reviewing with <\_\_\_\_\_> Purchasing/Procurement Services and the Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety Departments/Employee Health/HR to find an alternative product that may replace it.

In the case where no alternatives are available, this product will be added to the MSDS/SDS database as a variant and staff will be made aware of the hazard.

Additional Resource Departments that will provide assistance and support to the manager:

**<Insert Relative Departments for your institution>**

SAMPLES:

Human Resources  
Patient Relations/Advocacy  
Human Rights and Health Equity  
Occupational Health, Wellness and Safety  
Corporate Support Services  
Building Services  
Redevelopment Project Office  
Employee Health

#### **5. Review of Policy**

This policy will be reviewed annually/biannually and can be updated with new knowledge and procedures.

#### **6. Related Policies**

[Accommodation Policy](#)  
[Providing Access for People with Disabilities Policy](#)  
[Employee Incident Reporting Policy](#)  
[Disciplinary Process](#)  
[Trespass to Property Order](#)