

MODEL POLICY INCREASES TOBACCO AWARENESS PREVENTS SECONDHAND SMOKE EXPOSURE



Members of Leadership Team (from left to right) Sherry Locke Development & Communication Manager, Jason Parent Executive Director/CEO, Jamie Chandler Chief Operations Officer/COO and Robyn Locke Chief Financial Officer/CFO are pictured with one of the new signs received from Maine Prevention Services (MPS) for submitting a “best” level model Tobacco Policy at ACAP’s Main Street location in Presque Isle.

SUMMARY:

From Staff to Leadership to the Board of Directors, everyone is working together to ensure all of our property remains free from second hand smoke and litter from tobacco products.

Sherry Locke summed it well when she said, “It is just another example of the teamwork and problem solving that occurs here on a daily basis. The expansion of our programs provided a perfect opportunity to review our policy.”



CHALLENGE:

Recently employees at Aroostook County Action Program (ACAP) have witnessed adults smoking outside or getting out of their vehicles smoking and discarding butts. With the addition of Hope & Prosperity Resource Center at ACAP’s Main Street location, there has been an increase of visitors in vehicles as well as foot traffic in and around the Main Street location. Often the adults frequenting the Resource Center are tobacco product users and may be spending hours at the Center. *The adult smoking rate in Aroostook County is 25.4% and can be twice as high when considering education and income disparities subgroups, according to Maine Public Health Association (MPHA) State of Tobacco Use in Maine Fact Sheets.*

SOLUTION & RESULTS:

Through discussions with Heidi Rackcliffe, Coaching/Resource Center Supervisor, ACAP Tobacco Prevention Educators, Jo-Ellen Kelley and Kara Barnes offered to provide education onsite to help alleviate the reported tobacco use and secondhand smoke issues from adults at the Hope & Prosperity Resource Center that go outside for a short break and may use tobacco products. Further discussion with Sherry Locke, Development & Communication Manager, it was shared that the Executive Committee had been in discussions concerning the tobacco use on the property, specifically in vehicles and on one side of the building. Kara and Jo-Ellen reviewed the current tobacco policy and made recommendations →

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to update the policy to strengthen the language about smoking in vehicles on company property and the definition of tobacco products. The changes made it a “best” level model policy and ACAP was eligible to receive free signage from Maine Prevention Services (MPS). The new signs will increase awareness and visibility to everyone entering the 771 Main Street location and ensure it remains a tobacco/smoke-free facility.

