

**Secondhand Smoke Exposure in Restaurant and Bar Workers Before  
and After Lexington's Smoke-free Ordinance**

**Executive Summary**

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the effect of Lexington's smoke-free law on: (a) the exposure of restaurant and bar workers to secondhand smoke, as measured by hair nicotine levels; (b) self-reported respiratory symptoms and smoking behavior; and (c) attitudes toward the smoke-free law.

A sample of 106 adult restaurant and bar workers were recruited from 37 restaurants and five bars that were randomly selected from a total of 486 restaurants and bars in Lexington-Fayette County. Workers were asked to participate in three phone or face to face interviews (before the smoke-free law, 3 months post-law, and 6 months post-law), and provide two hair samples, one before the law went into effect and one after the 3-month interview to evaluate secondhand smoke exposure.

*We found a 56% drop in hair nicotine levels after the law went into effect in April 2004, regardless of whether workers were smokers or nonsmokers.*

Smoking workers were just as likely as nonsmokers to have a decline in hair nicotine levels. Given that the number of cigarettes smoked on a typical day did not change during this time period, this decline in hair nicotine can be attributed to a decrease in exposure to secondhand smoke.

*Workers reported a significant drop in average number of hours they were exposed to secondhand smoke at work after the law went into effect.*

Reported exposure to secondhand smoke in homes and vehicles remained unchanged.

*Workers were less likely to report colds and sinus infections after the law went into effect.*

*Smoking behaviors among workers did not change after the law went into effect. However, smokers reported fewer cravings to smoke.*

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For more information:

[www.mc.uky.edu/TobaccoPolicy/NewRelease.HTM](http://www.mc.uky.edu/TobaccoPolicy/NewRelease.HTM)