NEW SMOKING BANS FOR OUTDOOR DINING AREAS FROM 2017

The Andrews Labor Government will ban smoking in outdoor dining areas from 1 August 2017 so that Victorians can enjoy a meal outside without being subjected to second-hand smoke.

The proposed ban will cover all outdoor dining areas at restaurants, cafes, take-away shops and licenced premises.

Extensive consultation will be undertaken with health experts, businesses and the hospitality industry, local governments, and the community to inform legislation to be introduced into the Parliament in 2016.

The new ban aims to protect the community from the harmful effects of second-hand smoke, reduce the visibility of smokers and de-normalise smoking for young people, and support smokers to quit for good.

Community support for smoke-free outdoor dining continues to rise, with the latest Cancer Council Victoria research showing 73 per cent of Victorians support the ban.

 Sadly, about 4000 lives are lost each year in Victoria due to smoking, costing $2.4 billion in healthcare costs and lost productivity. Around 13 per cent of Victorians smoke.

The Labor Government is committed to reducing the harm caused by tobacco and will continue to identify further opportunities for reform.

It was Labor who first introduced smoking bans in Victoria in 2001 in enclosed restaurants, then workplaces, pubs and clubs.

Smoking is now also banned at many public building entrances, train stations and raised platform tram stops, in cars carrying children, and within 10 metres of playgrounds and skate parks, sporting venues during under 18s events, and within public swimming pool grounds.

Earlier this year, the Government brought forward bans on smoking within 4 metres of the entrances to public hospitals and community health services, schools, childcare centres, kindergartens and preschools, and many government buildings including Parliament, courts and police stations.

These bans are enforced by local governments, and individuals caught smoking face on-the-spot fines of $152, with a maximum penalty of $758.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Health Jill Hennessy

“We know that smoking kills, and we know that second-hand smoke puts the health of non-smokers at risk. These new bans will ensure all Victorians can enjoy a meal outside with their family and friends.”

“It’s important that businesses have enough time to prepare for these changes. We want to work with businesses and consult with them to ensure this important reform is introduced and implemented effectively.”

“We will continue to try to find more ways to reduce the harm caused by tobacco, because too many Victorians die every year from smoking-related illnesses.”

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