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# News Release

**Protecting Ontarians with Revitalized Smoke-free Ontario Act 2017**

For Immediate Release

Tuesday, October 23, 2018 | 10 a.m. | Windsor and Essex County

Aligning with the legalization of Cannabis, the Province of Ontario has passed the new *Smoke-free Ontario Act 2017* (SFOA 2017) which will replace the previous *Smoke-Free Ontario Act* and *Electronic Cigarettes Act* with one single legislative framework. The new Act will regulate the sale, supply, use, display, and promotion of tobacco and vapour products (e.g., e-cigarettes), and the smoking and vaping of cannabis in public places. In particular, these enhancements will expand those measures currently in place for tobacco, to vapour products and cannabis (both medical and non-medical) by prohibiting their use in certain public spaces.

Since 2005, regulations in Ontario expanded from smoking prohibitions in enclosed workplaces and public spaces, to also include bar and restaurant patios, hospital grounds, and within 20 metres of playgrounds and sport fields. In addition to these prohibited spaces, the new SFOA 2017 prohibits smoking of tobacco or cannabis and the vaping of any substance in the following areas:

* Within 9 metres of the perimeter of bar and restaurant patios.
* On recreation facility property and within a 20 metre perimeter of their grounds.
* On school property and within a 20 metre perimeter of school grounds.

Implementation of this Act, previously intended for July 1, 2018, was paused in order to align these regulations with the legalization of cannabis.

The Windsor-Essex County Health Unit’s (WECHU) Tobacco Enforcement Officers are designated to enforce these regulations. Theresa Marentette, Chief Executive Officer, supports a collaborative approach towards implementation. “We have been preparing for the implementation of these changes since they were originally set to come into force in July. By working collaboratively with our municipalities and business owners we are confident we can achieve compliance,” Marentette says. “The addition of new product and space prohibitions will contribute toward reducing second-hand smoke exposure, denormalizing smoking behaviours, and reducing social exposure to tobacco, cannabis and related products.”

Individuals with questions related to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act 2017 can contact the Windsor-Essex County Health Unit at 519-258-2146 ext. 3100 or visit the website at [www.wechu.org](http://www.wechu.org).