

# WoodGreen Community Services

Title of the Policy: Scent-Awareness Workplace Policy



<b>Policy #</b>	100 – 368 v0.1	<b>Original approval date:</b>	2022-11-11
<b>Category:</b>	Organizational Wide	<b>Effective date:</b>	2022-11-15
<b>Prepared by:</b>	People & Culture	<b>Last reviewed date:</b>	2022-11-11
<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>VP, People &amp; Culture</b>	<b>Next scheduled review date:</b>	2025-11-11

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## ***Scent-Awareness Workplace Policy***

### **Preamble:**

Increasing individuals are reporting serious adverse effects from scented products. These effects include headaches; dizziness; nausea; and shortness of breath. Staff and clients are exposed to scented products in the workplace through a variety of products including; cleaning products, personal hygiene products supplied in the workplace or used by staff members in their homes, air fresheners and deodorizers and lotions and creams. For the health and safety of our staff and clients, WoodGreen is committed to limit negative exposures to these products.

### **Policy:**

WoodGreen Community Services is committed to providing and maintaining health and safety, dignity and respect in the workplace for all. The organization recognizes that some employees and clients will have a negative reaction to scented products and will attempt to minimize any exposures that might occur at our office through the implementation of a scent safe environment through education and awareness. Staff and visitors are asked to refrain from using scented products when reporting to any of our offices.

### **Procedures;**

#### Reporting of Sensitivity

If you experience sensitivity to scents and require the strict enforcement of this policy at your worksite, you are asked to speak to your Manager. You will be asked to provide medical documentation to your Manager to support that you have a medical condition that is negatively impacted by the presents of fragrances and/or scents.

#### Staff Compliance

All staff will be encouraged to refrain from using scented products in the worksite and while at work, this includes both personal and non-personal products.

In the event that an individual who is sensitive to scents is being impacted by products being used by colleague, they are encouraged to approach that individual to discuss the situation and how the conflict can be resolved. In the event either party is not comfortable discussing the issue independently, or a resolution is not reached, the Manager should be approached to mediate the situation.

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In the event that an individual who is sensitive to scents is being impacted by products being used by a client, they are encouraged to approach the client's worker to discuss the situation and how the conflict can be resolved. In the event either party is not comfortable discussing the issue independently, or if a resolution is not reached or if the client does not have a worker, the Manager should be approached to mediate the situation.

### Building Maintenance

WoodGreen cleaning staff and contractors will be encouraged to use scent-free products, or low-scent products where scent-free options are not available. If a staff suspects they are reacting to products used by WoodGreen's maintenance team, they should report their concerns to their Manager who will work with the Manager of Building Service to try to resolve the issue. When feasible, WoodGreen will give one week's advance notice for carpet cleaning, painting, pest control, or other activities which are likely to produce extensive fumes. When notice is provided, staff with sensitivities should contact their Manager to discuss if they require special accommodation so that accommodation can be made in a timely fashion.

### Client Communication and Compliance

Information about our scent-free policy will be posted on all flyers, brochures and on the agency website. Signs denoting our office space "scent-aware" will be posted in a prominent location at all entrances. At sites with known staff sensitivities, clients will be informed of the policy by staff when scheduling office appointments. Site Managers at location with a known staff sensitivity will be expected to develop an action plan on how to resolve a situation when a client arrives on site with a detectable scent. The action plan will attempt to balance the needs of the client with the health and safety risk their presence poses to the staff member. The plan should explore if it is possible to provide the service at an adjacent WoodGreen office, reschedule the service or provide the service offsite in the community, if necessary. Communication with the impacted staff member is essential to minimize potential exposure and negative health effects.

### **Application:**

This policy applies to all WoodGreen Community Services employees, placement students, interns, and volunteers, present on any WoodGreen Community Services occupied place of business, whether owned, leased or shared.

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### **Definitions:**

**Personal Products: Hygiene:** Products include but are not limited to: Cosmetics, perfumes, colognes, after-shave and scented shaving creams, deodorant, shampoo/conditioners, hair spray, lotions and creams.

**Non-hygiene:** products include, but are not limited to, scented candles, potpourri and scented ornaments.

**Non-Personal Products:** Products with a distinct scent or fragrance and include scented household/industrial cleaning products, air fresheners, deodorizers, building materials (e.g. paint) and some types of flowers.

### *Employer*

- Ensure the commitment of senior leadership in the implementation of a scent-safe workplace
- Enforce compliance with maintaining a scent-awareness environment.

### *Managers/Supervisors*

- Educate workers on their rights and responsibilities under the Scent-Awareness Policy
- Ensure employees use scent-free products
- Ensure that signs are posted regarding the scent-awareness expectations at all entrances
- Work with staff who have a documented medical condition requiring accommodation on developing an action plan to respond when a client arrives heavily scented.
- Mediate conflicts from staff who report challenges in enforcing the scent-awareness policy.

### *People & Culture*

- Develop and maintain an effective scent-awareness workplace policy.
- Develop any required educational materials and signs to support the policy.
- Obtaining confirmation that a staff member has a medical condition that is negatively impacted by scents.
- Assist in the mediation of conflicts between staff regarding compliance of the policy.

### *Building Services*

- Ensure that any products used for the construction, maintenance and cleaning or our facilities are scent-free, where possible.
- Inform contractors of this policy before they provide any service at our locations
- Notify Manager when work is to take place that may involve the use of scented products,

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or products that may affect staff with a scent sensitivity. These activities include but are not limited to: painting, pest control spraying, carpet cleaning, and floor refinishing. Attempt should be made to provide a minimum of one weeks' notice to allow an accommodation plan to be developed.

### *Individuals*

- Refrain from using scented personal and non-personal products in the workplace.
- Provide documentation to the employer to support a request for accommodation, if needed.
- Respond to concerns raised by your colleagues with dignity and respect, and in good faith.
- Assist with education of clients and visitors to our sites details of our scent-awareness policy
- Assist in the enforcement of the scent-awareness policy when providing service in a manner that balances the needs of our clients with the health and safe risks of other staff.

### **Education**

Program Managers are responsible for educating their staff and any students placed in their program on this policy and any specific action plans developed to respond to the needs of scent sensitive staff. Volunteer Services is responsible for educating any new and existing volunteers on the policy.

### **Accountability:**

All workplace parties are accountable to comply with the policy, program, measures and procedures relating to scent-awareness workplace.