Support for Smokefree Outdoor Dining in the City of San Diego



Smoking leaves behind toxic chemical residue that contains over 25 chemicals listed under California's Prop 65 that are known to be hazardous to human health, such as nicotine and other carcinogens.





Patrons of outdoor restaurant patios can pick up and absorb the residue on their hands by touching tables and surfaces, even after active smoking stops.

The City of San Diego is the largest city in the county without a comprehensive smokefree outdoor dining policy.









73%

of San Diego County residents

would not eat a meal in an outdoor dining area if people in that area were smoking, consistent with statewide polling.

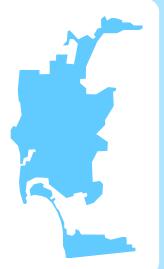
We can't do it alone

In interviews with San Diego restaurant owners and managers, we learned...

- Most who allow smoking on their patio believed they would not be able to implement a smokefree patio without a city or statewide policy.
- Most anticipate any economic impact from a city policy would be short term, similar to when indoor smoking bans were passed.
- Current smokefree workplace laws do not protect restaurant workers in restaurants where smoking and vaping is allowed on the patio.

78%

of San Diego County residents would support a law that banned smoking in all outdoor dining areas in the City of San Diego, including a majority of people who use tobacco.



of San Diego restaurant professionals surveyed personally prefer eating in smokefree outdoor dining areas.

100% 🖃



feel a smokefree policy would not have a negative impact on San Diego restaurants.

On average, San Diego restaurants that allowed smoking on their patios had...

14x higher levels nicotine on tables.



20% more locations with nicotine at levels of concern*

higher levels of nicotine found on volunteers' hands after a meal.

"Levels of concern" refers to detectable levels of nicotine above background levels expected to be found in a non-smoking environment. Published July 2025. Funded by the Tobacco-Related Disease Research Program #T33PC6863 and #T32PT6244.