

Dominican Republic
Ministry of Education
National Board of Education

Decision regarding the prohibition of smoking on the premises of educational facilities

Considering that the progress and development of a country depends on its capacity to provide its citizens with a good system of education that gives them the opportunity to access knowledge and develop their capacity and potential through productive work and systematic study in the institutions made available to them by the State;

Considering that the Ministry of Education is the principal institution of the Dominican State charged with laying down and implementing educational policies designed to encourage the full development of men and women in respect of thinking, feeling and acting in a way that contributes to the ends that citizens expect and society demands;

Considering that the policy framework for education clearly states that the purpose of education is to change the behaviour of persons as individuals or groups and to attend to their moral development, and that it is the duty of the Ministry of Education to monitor the respectable and exemplary behaviour of all stakeholders involved in the national education system.

Considering that over time and in the light of scientific progress, various human activities that were basically considered inoffensive are now recognized as harmful to physical and mental health;

Considering that it has been determined that tobacco use and the inhalation and exhalation by passive consumers of the smoke produced when tobacco is burnt is not a natural activity and has a serious and harmful impact on health;

Considering that nicotine is a highly addictive drug and that consumption of nicotine is the preventable cause of premature death owing to cancer, and that, among other forms of cancer, 80-90% of deaths due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease are the result of smoking;

Considering that numerous studies have shown that tobacco is equally or more addictive than cocaine and heroin, and that persons who use all these substances claim that nicotine is the hardest to stop using;

Considering that this habit is connected with the increased prevalence of a broad range of acute and chronic diseases resulting in more days of absenteeism from school or work and increased use of hospital services;

Considering that the habit of smoking in schools, educational establishments, sports facilities or offices of the Ministry of Education undermines the fundamental standards and responsibilities of this institution, and that the above constitutes an absurdity that

clashes with the essence and objectives of the national education system, and is also a bad example that challenges the moral, ethical and social values inherent in education;

Considering that our country, accepting the terms and proposals of the International Convention on Tobacco Control, adopted Act No. 48-00 pursuant to which smoking has been banned in all public places;

Considering that pursuant to this Act and subscribing to the efforts of the Dominican Government to phase out tobacco use, it is crucially important that the National Board of Education should take all necessary measures to enforce the Act with respect to the Ministry of Education and all premises for which said Ministry is responsible;

Considering the Education Act No. 66'97;

Considering the Use of Tobacco Act No. 48-00;

Considering the rules of procedure of the National Board of Education No. 252-98.

Hereby promulgates the following decision:

Article 1. Officials, teachers, students and employees shall be prohibited from smoking within the perimeter of all educational facilities in the Dominican Republic, administrative offices, teaching institutions or any facility supervised by or connected with the Ministry of Education. All visitors to said locations shall also be prohibited from smoking.

Article 2. Breaches of this decision shall be punished in accordance with the legal provisions and disciplinary regulations in force issued by the National Board of Education.

Done at the National Board of Education, the central office of the Ministry of Education, Santo Domingo de Guzmán, National District, capital of the Dominican Republic, on 25 January 2005.

By the National Board of Education

Alejandrina Germán
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