

Circular

Subject: Saudi Food and Drug Authority Policy Vis a Vis Tobacco industry

Circular number: 50970

Date: 28/6/1440 AH

With reference to the directive set forth in Royal Decree 51691 of 9/11/1438 AH mandating Saudi Food and Drug Authority as the competent body to inspect tobacco products; and draft, issue and approve tobacco-relevant specifications; further to the World Health Assembly Resolution WHA 54.18 inclusive of the findings of the Committee of Experts on Tobacco Industry Documents, namely, “that the tobacco industry has operated for years with the expressed intention of subverting the role of the governments and of WHO in implementing public health policies to combat the tobacco epidemic”; and with respect to, WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control and pertinent provisions on protection of public health against serious consequences of the tobacco industry;

Saudi Food and Drug Authority has decided to notify stakeholders in contact with tobacco manufacturers, wholesale distributors and importers of tobacco products equally to abide by SFDA policies vis a vis tobacco product companies and firms published on the Authority’s website.

Please accept our highest regards and appreciation,

**Saudi Food and Drug Authority Policy
Vis a Vis
Tobacco Industry**

28/6/1440 AH

With reference to the World Health Assembly Resolution WHA 54.18 inclusive of the findings of the Committee of Experts on Tobacco Industry Documents, namely, “that the tobacco industry has operated for years with the expressed intention of subverting the role of the governments and of WHO in implementing public health policies to combat the tobacco epidemic”; whereas Paragraph 3 of Article 5 of WHO Framework Convention on Tobacco Control (article 5.3) stated that “in setting and implementing their public health policies with respect to tobacco control, Parties shall act to protect these policies from commercial and other vested interests of the tobacco industry in accordance with national law”;

Further to the guiding principles of Paragraph 3 of Article 5 of WHO FCTC (Article 5.3) , Saudi Food and Drug Authority has adopted specific policies vis a vis tobacco manufacturers, wholesale distributors and importers of tobacco products equally. The policies shall include the following:

1. The tobacco industry produces, promotes and advertises a product proven scientifically to cause addiction, disease, death and a plethora of social ills inclusive of poverty. Therefore, Parties shall take necessary actions to provide utmost protection and draft and implement public health policies to combat tobacco and subvert the tobacco industry and products.
2. In view of the lethal aspect attributed to tobacco products by WHO, tobacco product companies and firms shall not receive any incentives to establish their business in Saudi Arabia.
3. SFDA shall take all necessary measures and precautions to undermine any direct dealing or cooperation on its part with tobacco product companies and firms; with the exception of actions needed to pursue SFDA control functions on tobacco products.
4. No partnerships nor non-binding agreements shall be concluded with tobacco product companies and firms. Furthermore, no invitations to engage in events organized by tobacco product companies and firms shall be accepted.
5. Tobacco industry shall not be allowed to pursue any activity under the theme of “social corporate responsibility”.
6. Tobacco industry shall not receive any preferential treatment to facilitate finalizing any tobacco product-relevant transactions and procedures.
7. SFDA requires all tobacco product concerned staff members to unleash any conflict of interest cases inclusive of all applicants for tobacco product related posts. SFDA reserves its right to take necessary procedures vis a vis staff and applicants accordingly.
8. SFDA prohibits resorting to any person(s) working in tobacco product companies and firms with the aim of drafting policies or measures to control tobacco products.
9. SFDA requires all tobacco product companies and firms to disclose information periodically pertinent to tobacco product import volume, market share, marketing disbursements and revenues realized.
10. SFDA requires all information provided by tobacco industry to be transparent and precise such as information relevant to activities and practices in order to take effective measures to prevent the said companies from subverting public health policies.
11. SFDA shall make available all tobacco relevant regulations and conditions to tobacco industry to avert any need for further communication with the aforementioned companies.
12. SFDA shall, only for purposes deemed necessary on its part, allow for a specific conduit of communication with tobacco industry via email i.e. tobacco.control@sfd.gov.sa.

13. SFDA shall not accept any conduit of communication other than the one mentioned in paragraph 12 inclusive of any requests for meetings, appointments or communication with SFDA Business Support Centers and SFDA Call Center.
14. SFDA shall, as necessary, revise and update periodically relevant policies vis a vis tobacco industry to effectively combat tobacco products.