TOBACCO* USER SURCHARGE

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

1. What is the tobacco surcharge?

An additional $30 per pay period will be deducted on a pre-tax basis for employees on the Parkland Employee Health Plan that attest as tobacco users and do not elect to complete a tobacco cessation program.

2. Why is there a tobacco surcharge?

The goal of this surcharge is to support the health and wellness of Parkland Employees and their family members by discouraging the use of tobacco products, which are harmful to health even when used in moderation. Parkland Health promotes a wellness and prevention culture, and the use of tobacco is inconsistent with this culture. In addition to the surcharge, Parkland Health provides access to tobacco cessation programs through the Employee Health Center and Cigna, including health coaching services. Other qualifying programs are also outlined in the Tobacco Cessation Programs document, offering additional options to meet the program requirements. Users are encouraged to talk to their health care providers about appropriate cessation tools.

3. Who has to pay the surcharge?

- Any employee who attests that they use tobacco products and does not commit to completing a tobacco cessation program will be subject to the $30 surcharge as of January 1st.
  OR
- Any employee who attests that they use tobacco products and does not complete a tobacco cessation program with proof of completion by June 30th, will be subject to the surcharge.
  OR
- Any employee who does not submit a Tobacco Surcharge attestation by October 21, 2026, will automatically be considered a tobacco user and will be subject to the surcharge.

Note: This does not include or apply to nicotine replacement therapies (such as patches, gum, or lozenges).

4. My spouse and I both use tobacco; how much do I have to pay?

Currently the surcharge is being imposed only on the employee's use of tobacco.

5. What if one of my children or other dependents covered under the Parkland Employee Health Plan uses tobacco – do I have to pay the surcharge?

No, currently the surcharge is being imposed only on the employee's use of tobacco.

6. What is considered a tobacco* product?

The following are considered tobacco products. If you use ANY of these products, you must attest as a tobacco-user.

Tobacco products include but are not limited to: Chewing Tobacco, Cigars, Cigarettes, Cigarillos, Pipes, Creamy Snuff, Snuff, Dipping Tobacco, Dissolvable Tobacco, E-Cigarettes, Vape, Hookah, Hand Rolled Cigarettes, and Pouches.

7. Who is considered a "Tobacco User"?

A Tobacco User is someone who regularly uses tobacco products in the 90 days prior to the date of attestation. If you use or have used tobacco products during the 90 days prior to the attestation, you are considered a Tobacco User.

8. How do I attest that I am (or am not) a tobacco user?

During the Open Enrollment period for your benefits elections, all employees on the Parkland Employee Health Plan will be required to complete a Tobacco Surcharge Attestation to attest to whether you use tobacco.

If you indicate that you do use tobacco, you have two options:

- Continue Using Tobacco: You can choose to continue using tobacco, in which case the Tobacco Surcharge will be applied to your paychecks every pay period.
- Complete a Tobacco Cessation Program: Alternatively, you can choose to enroll in one of our tobacco cessation programs. Completing one of these programs will allow you to avoid the tobacco surcharge.

Note: This does not include or apply to nicotine replacement therapies (such as patches, gum, or lozenges).

9. What if I don't/didn't complete the attestation?

If you do not complete the Tobacco User Surcharge Attestation, you will automatically be classified as a "tobacco user," and the surcharge will be deducted from your paycheck starting January 1st. This deduction will continue until you complete the attestation. Please note that no refunds will be issued for any surcharges applied to previous pay periods.

10. I don't use tobacco and am not making any changes to my benefits this year – do I need to do anything at Annual Enrollment?

Yes, if you are enrolled in the Parkland Employee Health Plan, you need to complete the Tobacco User Surcharge Attestation during Open Enrollment, attesting that you are not a tobacco user to ensure that you are not charged the tobacco user surcharge.

11. I am a tobacco user but want to quit now so I can avoid this charge – what do I need to do?

To attest as a non-tobacco user, you must not have used tobacco products regularly within the last 90 days. If you recently quit using tobacco, you will still need to attest as a tobacco user. However, if you successfully complete a tobacco cessation program and submit documentation by June 30th, the surcharge will not be applied moving forward.

12. What if I can't manage to give up tobacco, but I am able to quit sometime next year – do I continue to pay the surcharge all year long?

The Tobacco Surcharge policy does not require employees to become completely tobacco-free to avoid the surcharge. However, you must complete a tobacco cessation program by June 30th to avoid the surcharge. If you do not complete the program by this date, the surcharge will be applied until the next enrollment period.

Note: This does not include or apply to nicotine replacement therapies (such as patches, gum, or lozenges).

13. What if I do stop using tobacco and complete the cessation program then attest as a non-tobacco user but start using tobacco again?

The Tobacco Surcharge policy does not require employees to become completely tobacco-free to avoid the surcharge. However, to avoid the surcharge, you must complete a tobacco cessation program by June 30th.

The Tobacco Attestation is completed annually, requiring employees to confirm their status each year. If you continue using tobacco after completing a cessation program, the surcharge won't apply until the next Open Enrollment, when you must attest again. If you indicate you're a tobacco user, you'll need to enroll in and complete a cessation program by the deadline to avoid the surcharge. We highly encourage you to continue with health coaching or ongoing cessation programs to support your quitting efforts.

14. What if I am a tobacco user, but I attest that I am not (what if I lie to avoid the charge)?

We expect ALL employees of Parkland Health to have integrity and expect them to complete the Tobacco User Surcharge Attestation honestly.

15. What if I do not submit my documentation of completion by June 30th?

If you do not submit documentation of completion of a tobacco cessation program by June 30th, you will be subject to the surcharge starting the following pay period, and it will continue until the next Open Enrollment period begins. Documentation will not be accepted after this date, and no refunds will be provided.

16. How can I get help to quit using tobacco?

The Tobacco Surcharge policy does not require employees to become completely tobacco-free to avoid the surcharge. However, we encourage you to talk to your healthcare provider about available tobacco cessation products, programs, and resources. Parkland offers several structured resources to help you quit. In addition, employees can also explore other tobacco cessation programs independently. Please refer to the attached resources for a list of available programs and additional support options.

To avoid the surcharge, employees must complete a tobacco cessation program and submit documentation of completion.

Note: This does not include or apply to nicotine replacement therapies (such as patches, gum, or lozenges).