



HM Government of Gibraltar

Ministry of Health, the Environment,
Energy and Climate Change

PRESS RELEASE

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New Legislation makes it Illegal to Smoke in a Vehicle When There is a Child in the Vehicle

HM Government of Gibraltar is pleased to announce that, with effect from Thursday 31 March 2016, it will be an offence for an adult to smoke in an enclosed motor vehicle when there is a child in the vehicle and the vehicle is in a public place. In this context, an 'adult' means a person over the age of 18 and a 'child' is someone under the age of 18. An 'enclosed' vehicle is one that is enclosed wholly or partly by a roof.

This change in legislation is designed to protect children and young people from the damaging effects of second-hand smoke, which can put them at risk of serious conditions such as meningitis, asthma, cancer, bronchitis and pneumonia.

Similar legislation is already in place in UK, France, South Africa, much of Australia, Canada and the USA and several other countries.

The new legislation follows the Smoke-Free Environment Act 2012 which made it an offence to smoke in enclosed public places and in public service vehicles in Gibraltar.

Minister for Health, Dr John Cortes said, "This new legislation is designed to protect our children from second-hand smoke. Smoking just a single cigarette in a vehicle exposes children to high levels of air pollutants and cancer-causing chemicals like arsenic, formaldehyde and tar. People often wrongly assume that opening a window, or letting in fresh air, will lessen the damage.

"The new law applies to any private vehicle enclosed wholly or partly by a roof, even if the window is open, the air conditioning is on or the smoker is sitting in the open doorway of the vehicle. Research in UK has shown that, even with a car window open, levels of dangerous chemicals are over 100 times higher than recommended safety guidelines. No matter what the situation, children will always be exposed to dangerous chemicals which can put them at risk of developing serious health conditions."

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