

## New Smoking Ban in Orchard

By Chow Zi Hui Zoey

With the Singapore Government's new aim to bring the smoking rate down from 12% in 2017 to 10% in 2020, the legal smoking age has been raised to 19 and more smoke free zones have been created. As of January 1st 2019, Orchard Road has become a smoke free zone with designated smoking areas set up at different areas.



Starting on 1st January 2019, Orchard Road will become a smoke free zone as part of a plan to reduce Singapore's smoking rate to less than 10% in 2020.



All trash bins along Orchard Road have a sticker that states it's a "No Smoking Zone". When the QR code on the sticker is scanned, it leads to a map on the NEA website that shows the designated smoking areas.





When asked about the designated smoking areas, James Chan, 23, an employee working at a hair salon in 313 Somerset stated, "We would like more convenient areas instead of having to walk all the way everywhere just to smoke."



The ashtray portion of trash bins have also been covered by a plate to deter smokers from using it. However, according to Mr Chan, some plates had been removed by smokers who are lazy to walk to the designated smoking areas.





Over 40 designated smoking areas spaced 100m and 200m apart had been set up since November 22nd 2018.



Other designated smoking areas are in open areas such as the back or side of buildings, marked out by yellow lines or signs.





Brandon Lee, 37, and his sons “don’t walk outdoors on Orchard Road because of smokers”. They are in support of the ban as it “cuts down secondhand smoke”, which costs Singapore \$600 million a year in health cost and productivity.

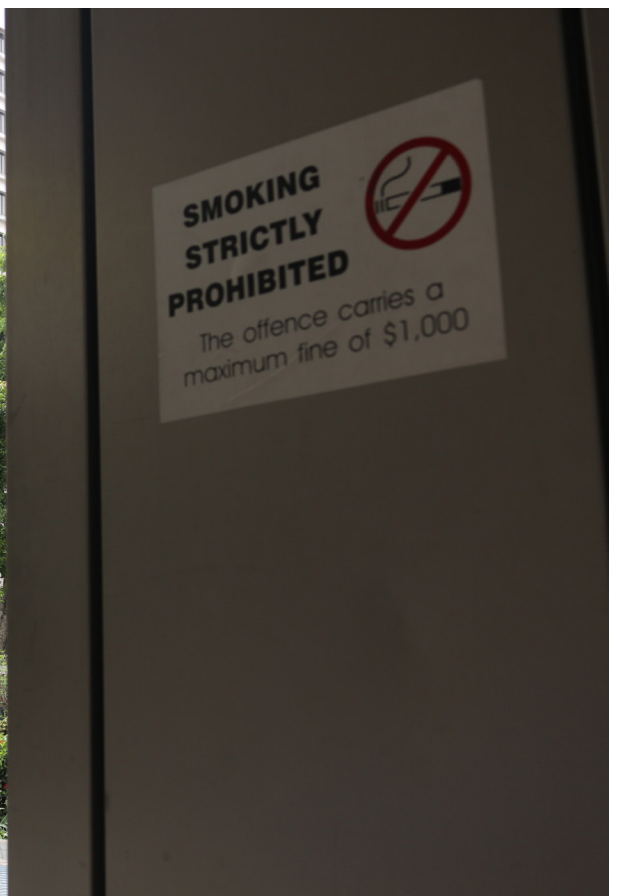


When asked if smoking bans in Singapore were too strict, 63-year-old English businessman Trevor Gray, stated, “No, I think they should ban it in England as well. Singapore laws are good and it’s actually not as strict in England.”





The NEA said it will take an “advisory approach” for the first three months, giving verbal warnings to smokers caught smoking outside the designated areas.



Starting from April 1st 2019, repeat offenders may face fines of up to \$1000. Sign are posted around Orchard Road and near designated smoking areas to inform the public about the fine.