

## DELRAY BEACH POSSIBLY HIRING NON-SMOKERS



There is currently an ongoing issue and debate going on in Delray Beach. The city is questioning whether or not it would be able to save a whole lot of money by hiring individuals who absolutely do not smoke. The Human Resources Director for Delray Beach, Bruce Koeser, presented some interesting facts to the City Commission earlier on in the week. Koeser claims that employees who use tobacco can actually cost employers a whole lot of money, somewhere around \$12,000 more each year, due to health-related costs. While he did present this information, he was not sure how much money it would help the city to save by only hiring non-smokers. The City Commissioner, Al Jacquet, says that this is definitely an innovative and unique idea that came about due to the budget and attempts to meet such a budget. Jacquet has made it clear that the city is definitely struggling and has been doing so for several years now and believes that by hiring only non-smokers, the city would be able to solve a series of issues. If this proposal is actually adopted by Delray Beach, they will not be the first to do so. In fact, other well-known cities, such as Hollywood, have also taken these steps to adopt policies that are quite similar to the one that has been proposed in Delray Beach. In fact, in some cities, smokers are charged more for their health insurance and are also offered programs that will help them to quit smoking and generally kick the habit. Fire Departments are also only allowed to hire non-smokers. In a different area, Boca Raton, anyone working as a civil worker, firefighter or police officer is not allowed to smoke. It has been nearly a decade since Hollywood first came up with its policy for smokers. Although employees who smoked and already had positions ended up not having to pay more towards their health insurance while others have had to. The city has made it clear that they want employees to be as healthy as possible because they believe that is what makes the working environment better for everyone. While some are in favor of such policies, not everyone is a fan. In fact, one professor for the University of South Florida, Jay Wolfson, believes that by making up such policies, the human resource director and the city would be crossing the line. Wolfson says that smoking is not illegal and also points out that other types of behavior, such as eating foods that are high in fat and grease could cause just as much health problems as smoking cigarettes.

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