

Washington State Tobacco Quitline

Frequently Asked Questions

Calling the Quitline

Q: *What happens when I call 1-800-QUIT-NOW?*

A: When you first call the Quitline, a Registration Intake Specialist will answer your call and ask you a number of questions, including whether or not you have health insurance (if you have health insurance, please have your insurance card ready). The Registration Intake Specialist collects this information so that they can match you with the highest service benefit available to you. This information includes: Insurance plan or status, employer or employment status, and any important health conditions to know during treatment. Proof of citizenship is not asked as part of the call process. All information collected is kept strictly confidential and is treated as Protected Health Information (PHI). If your insurance plan has a contract with the Quitline service provider, Optum, the Registration Intake Specialist will share information about what you can expect from the service and then transfer you to a Quit Coach™. If your insurance plan uses a different program, the Registration Intake Specialist will transfer you to your plan's call center or another cessation resource.

Q: *Do I need health insurance to use the Quitline?*

A: No, but if you have health insurance and your plan offers a tobacco cessation telephone counseling benefit through another service provider, you will be transferred to your plan's call center. If you are between the ages of 13-17 and/or are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding, then you can receive services from the Quitline, regardless of your health insurance plan.

Q: *How will the Quitline help me quit tobacco?*

A: The Quitline helps you quit using tobacco by addressing the psychological, behavioral, and physical aspects of addiction. The Quitline provides you with tailored telephone-based support and medications (if available and appropriate). Specially-trained Quit Coaches work one-on-one with you to help you identify barriers to quitting, overcome urges, and create a quit plan. Self-help materials and text messaging support are also available.

Q: *Can anyone in Washington State call the Quitline?*

A: Yes, but services vary based on characteristics such as tobacco use, age, and insurance status. A summary of current insurance coverage of telephone counseling services is available at:
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/340-207-QuitlineCoverage.pdf>

Q: *How often can I call the Quitline?*

A: Washington State residents can call the Quitline as needed. However, enrollment in a program (including self-help materials and medications, if appropriate) is available to qualifying tobacco users once per 12-month period.

Q: *Does the Quitline conduct calls in other languages?*

A: In addition to English, there is a dedicated Spanish-speaking line answered by Spanish-speaking Quit Coaches. The phone number for the Spanish line is: **1-855-DEJELO-YA** or **1-855-335-3569**. Translation is available in over 240 languages and dialects; the Quitline connects you to the interpretive service. In

addition, the Quitline offers a dedicated line for the deaf or hard of hearing: **1-877-777-6534**. For Chinese, Korean, and Vietnamese speakers, the Washington State Department of Health recommends calling the Asian Smokers' Quitline:

- Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin): 1-800-838-8917
- Korean: 1-800-556-5564
- Vietnamese: 1-800-778-8440

Q: Do you have to verify documentation of U.S. citizenship to use the Quitline?

A: No. As part of the registration process, you will only be asked to provide a home address in the state of Washington for mailing purposes.

Quit Coaches

Q: Who are the Quit Coaches?

A: Quit Coaches have Bachelor's degrees in counseling, addiction studies, community health education or social work. Some have graduate degrees, and many have previous counseling experience. Quit Coaches are selected for strong communication skills and their ability to demonstrate empathy. They receive more than 240 hours of training in tobacco cessation counseling and ongoing training in motivational interviewing, cultural competency, and skills for working with special populations. Quit Coaches represent multiple age groups, various ethnicities and come from a variety of backgrounds. They are also required to have been abstinent from tobacco and nicotine for at least two years.

Q: What type of training do the Quit Coaches receive?

A: Quit Coaches receive intensive new-hire and ongoing training. The new-hire Quit Coach training, which is accredited by the Association for the Treatment of Tobacco Use and Dependence (ATTUD) Advisory Council, consists of over 240 hours of work in tobacco cessation counseling, motivational interviewing, cultural competency, and skills to work with special populations. Quit Coaches who complete the initial new-hire training take part in a transition team for a minimum of 320 hours. On the transition team, their counseling quality, consistency, and caller satisfaction are closely monitored. Coaches continue to receive training and education around new medications, cultural competency, and new techniques.

Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT)

Q: Does the Quitline prescribe nicotine patches?

A: Quit Coaches may recommend nicotine patches based on the tobacco user's health information, the latest science, the product manufacturer's use instructions, and on the Quitline budget. Quit Coaches go through initial and ongoing training to correctly assess for health conditions and medications that may affect nicotine patch use. They also stay current with the latest science on quitting and medications. The Quitline will not distribute nicotine patches to pregnant women or those for whom it may not be medically appropriate without a medical override (a prescriber's permission).

Q: Can you just call the Quitline to get a supply of free nicotine patches?

A: No. Not all plans offer free patches. Any recommendation for a supply of free nicotine patches is always accompanied with counseling and medication support because this increases your chances of quitting tobacco. Quit Coaches are available for more support and discussion about nicotine patch usage.

Q: Does the Quitline recommend nicotine patches for pregnant women?

A: No. Quit Coaches will advise pregnant and breastfeeding women to speak to their healthcare provider about using nicotine patches or other nicotine replacement therapy.

Quitline Materials

Q: Are there materials available for special populations?

A: Yes. The Quitline has special materials available for pregnant women, people of American Indian/Alaska Native origin, people identifying as LGBTQ, and people supporting another person's efforts to quit. The Quitline also has special materials for people who only use smokeless tobacco.

Q: Are materials available in different languages?

A: Yes. Self-help materials are available in English and Spanish.

Healthcare Providers

Q: If I am a healthcare provider, can I call the Quitline to get more information?

A: Yes, providers can call the Quitline either to speak with a Quit Coach about the intervention process or to request a sample set of materials. Sample materials are limited to one set per clinic.

Q: What is a fax referral?

A: A fax referral is a form that a healthcare provider can use to refer a patient to the Quitline for treatment. The provider and the patient jointly complete the form and the clinic faxes it to the Quitline. Traditionally, the patient has to initiate the first call to the Quitline to begin services, but when a fax referral is received, the Quitline initiates a call to the patient to begin services. The fax referral can remove this barrier for patients and help them begin treatment. It can also be used as an opportunity to follow up about the patient's quit attempt at their next appointment.

Q: How does the fax referral program work?

A: The healthcare provider and patient determine that the Quitline is a good treatment option. The patient completes a fax referral form with the provider or another clinic/office member and signs the form. The clinic faxes the form to the Quitline. The Quitline makes three attempts to reach the patient. The provider can receive a referral outcome report if they include their fax number on the form.

Q: Where can I get a copy of the fax referral form?

A: You can download a copy of the Quitline fax referral form from:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/Pubs/340-221-FaxReferralForm.pdf>

Funding and Operations

Q: Who funds the Quitline?

A: The Washington State Department of Health sponsors the Washington State Tobacco Quitline with funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Q: Who operates the Quitline?

A: The Quitline is operated by Optum, Inc., a third-party provider of telephone-based tobacco cessation counseling services. In partnership with the American Cancer Society®, Optum operates over 20 state quitlines. They also work with over 800 employers and more than 30 major health plans. In 2014, Optum acquired Alere Wellbeing, which had previously acquired Free & Clear, the Seattle-based company that started the Quit For Life® Program in 1985. For more information about the Washington State Tobacco Quitline, please contact Nick Fradkin, Tobacco Cessation Consultant, at nick.fradkin@doh.wa.gov.