

Smoking ban in Jersey City parks advances

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A measure to ban smoking at Jersey City parks advanced at tonight's City Council meeting. Jersey Journal file photo

A smoking ban in Jersey City parks is one step closer to adoption, with the City Council voting unanimously tonight to introduce the measure. The bill, which requires one more vote before it becomes law, bans smoking in all of the city's nearly 70 parks and recreational areas. E-cigarettes, which had been part of the ban in a previous draft, are no longer included.

Councilman at large Rolando Lavarro, a smoker himself, suggested the move, saying the ban is "the right thing to do."

The ban isn't expected to face much opposition, though Ward C Councilman Rich Boggiano said he thinks the council should busy itself with more important matters, like next year's budget.

The earlier draft of the ban said smokers caught lighting up in city parks would be subject to a \$250 fine for the first offense, \$500 for the second and \$1,000 for each subsequent offense. The newer version implements a "general penalty," which could be up to \$1,250 and imprisonment up to 90 days.

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