

Policy Regarding Tobacco Depictions in Films

Mission. In light of the serious health risks associated with smoking, Universal Pictures has undertaken efforts to reduce depictions of tobacco smoking in Universal films that are rated for a youth audience. As a core part of its efforts, Universal Pictures has established a policy and procedures for identifying, evaluating and, where appropriate and feasible, eliminating smoking incidents from its youth-rated films. As used in this policy, the phrase “smoking incidents” refers to both tobacco smoking, whether in the foreground or background of a film, and the appearance of any tobacco-related signage or paraphernalia.

Scope. This policy applies to films produced by Universal Pictures or any wholly-owned Universal Studios film label (including Focus Features and Working Title Films) and anticipated to be released in the United States with a G, PG or PG-13 rating. Sometimes Universal business units are involved in the production or distribution of other films with respect to which they have less or no control over content. These may include films co-produced by Universal and another studio, acquired by Universal complete or in post-production, or distributed by Universal on behalf of a third-party producer. Although this policy does not apply to these other films, Universal Pictures discourages depictions of tobacco smoking in all youth-rated films and will exert its influence, where possible, to minimize the occurrence of smoking incidents in them.

Policy. As a baseline, Universal Pictures presumes that no smoking incidents should appear in any youth-rated film produced by Universal Pictures or any wholly-owned Universal Studios film label and released in the United States. This presumption can be rebutted with respect to a given smoking incident based on the importance of the incident to the film, from a factual or creative standpoint, and/or the difficulty in removing it from the film. Whether or not the film will be marketed to adolescents, either primarily or as part of a mixed audience, will also be taken into account. This presumption against smoking incidents in youth-rated films means that, as a default, smoking incidents should be avoided. Smoking incidents may be permitted in a youth-rated film only when there is a substantial reason for doing so.

In the event that a smoking incident is permitted in a youth-rated film that is subject to this policy, Universal Pictures will release the film with a health warning in certain distribution channels. This warning may appear in or on materials or elements such as end credits, DVD content and packaging, and marketing materials.

In addition, Universal Pictures makes no product placement, tie-in or other promotional arrangements with tobacco companies for any of its films, regardless of rating. No Universal production may receive consideration of any kind in exchange for depicting tobacco or tobacco-related signage or paraphernalia in a Universal film.

Procedures. Universal Pictures has established internal procedures to identify smoking incidents at each stage of the development and production processes, both in films subject to this policy and in all other Universal films (regardless of anticipated rating), to promote dialogue with filmmakers regarding depictions of tobacco smoking, and to govern evaluation of smoking incidents under this policy. In addition, Universal Pictures has formed a “Tobacco Depictions Committee,” comprised of executives with responsibilities across a variety of disciplines. The Tobacco Depictions Committee meets regularly to ensure compliance with these procedures,

assess their efficacy and address any issues that may arise under this policy. From time to time, the Tobacco Depictions Committee may recommend revisions to this policy or to Universal's internal procedures, based on its experience and developments industry-wide.

Effective for films commencing principal photography on or after April 16, 2007

This Tobacco Policy was last updated on 04/16/2007.

SOURCE: <http://www.universalpictures.com/legal/tobacco/>