

# **Scented Product Guidelines**

## **Responding to Scent-Related Questions in the Fleming Workplace**

Fragrances are found in a wide range of products, including perfume, cologne, deodorant, soap, shampoo, hairspray, air fresheners, essential oil room diffusers and cleaning agents. Exposure to fragrance chemicals in scented products can trigger health reactions in some individuals with conditions such as asthma, allergies, migraines, or chemical sensitivities. The guidelines below are intended to provide some steps for responding to scent-related issues in the Fleming work and learning environment.

### **If you use scented products:**

- Use them sparingly. A general guideline is that the scent should not be detectable more than an arm's length away from the user.
- Consider using unscented alternatives.

### **If you experience health effects or discomfort from exposure to scented products:**

- If the source of your symptoms is isolated to a specific scent or individual, approach the individual if you feel comfortable doing so. Let them know in a cordial and respectful manner that you react to fragrances and describe the types of symptoms you experience. Ask for their understanding and cooperation in avoiding or minimizing the use of the fragrance.
- If you are uncomfortable approaching the fragrance user, if the user continues to use the fragrance after you have talked to them, or if the scent issue is more generalized, inform your supervisor about your concerns. Discuss options for dealing with the issue. Ask them to discuss the matter with the individual, the work group or the class, asking for their cooperation in not using or minimizing their use of scented products.
- Consult with your physician about your symptoms.
- Consult with Fleming resources, such as the Student Services, the Health & Safety web site.

**If you are a supervisor and are approached by an employee about scented product concerns:**

- Be open with and respectful to the individual who comes to you with information that he/she is sensitive to scented products. Clarify the issue as to the type of products, the health reaction and whether the individual has consulted a physician about their symptoms. You may request that the individual provide you with supporting medical information from his/her physician.
- Use good judgment to provide an appropriate and timely resolution. Look at measures to reasonably accommodate those who are affected by scented products. Depending on what is appropriate to the circumstances, this may range from a request for individuals to voluntarily cooperate in establishing a scent-reduced environment, to a possible relocation of a person who is being affected by scented products.
- Decide whether you should discuss the issue with an individual or an entire group. Discuss the issue in an open and non-threatening manner. Focus on the potential health concerns associated with fragrance chemicals, and the types of actions individuals can take.
- Consult with Fleming resources, such as Student Services or the Health & Safety web site.

**If you are approached about the scented product you wear:**

- If an employee, student or supervisor informs you that the scented product that you use is a concern to others and asks that you reduce its use, or not use it at all, you may initially feel hurt, upset, puzzled or annoyed. Focus the conversation, in an open and respectful manner, on the issue of fragrances, and the chemicals in the scented product. Discuss the issue openly, and work with cooperation and understanding towards a satisfactory resolution.