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World no smoking day “in appreciation of restaurants generally becoming non-smoking according to new metropolitan regulations”, says the Governor of Tokyo

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Tokyo Governor Koike held an open event “World no smoking day” established by the World Health Organization (WHO) on the 31st in Tokyo to appreciate metropolitan regulations to prevent passive smoking inside of Tokyo restaurants, which will be fully enforced by April of next year.

Ms. Koike, who gave the address, said that any restaurant that pays employees should generally be non-smoking indoors, and that the municipal regulations to prevent passive smoking, which are stricter than national regulations, will be fully enforced on April 1 next year. She also explained that municipalities have established systems to support smoking cessation for residents hoping to quit smoking by subsidizing the cost of smoking cessation treatment.

Furthermore, she stated that “metropolitan regulations have set new rules to protect children and working people. From May 31, we will start ‘smoking cessation week’ to help citizens understand the contents of the regulations.”

In addition to this event, it was reported that a business alliance was established in Tokyo for employees to continue working on smoking cessation, that Chiba will implement the same regulations as Tokyo from April of next year, and that efforts to prevent passive smoking are currently spreading to other places.

Enhancing measures against passive smoking in steps

To prepare for the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics next year, passive smoking measures will be enhanced in steps at several types of institutions in Tokyo.

from July 1

Under the national revised Health Promotion Act; schools, universities, hospitals, government offices, and other institutions are required to have non-smoking buildings, and the installation of indoor smoking areas will not be allowed.

from September 1

As for kindergartens, nursery schools, elementary and junior high schools and high schools, including the premises outside of the buildings, it is required that these facilities in Tokyo be non-smoking as well, based on the new metropolitan regulations.

In addition, at Tokyo restaurants, it is mandatory to display the seating for non-smoking sections and smoking rooms at the storefront.

from April 1

The revised Health Promotion Act and the metropolitan regulations to prevent passive smoking will be fully enforced.

Restaurants will generally become non-smoking indoors, and smoking is permitted only in a designated and enclosed space called a "smoking only room" where measures have been implemented to prevent smoke from leaking out.

The metropolitan regulations will widen the scope of restaurants to which no smoking restrictions are applied.

According to existing laws, small privately owned stores with a seating area of less than 100 m² may have tobacco smoking if the storefront displays that smoking is allowed.

But according to the new metropolitan regulations, any store that pays employees will generally become non-smoking, regardless of the size of the restaurant.

The city estimates that about 84% of restaurants within the metropolitan area will be covered by the new regulations.