

# The Rule rule

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The new rules of the Alexandria Fire Department, which automatically reject those who smoke, seem to us to be repulsively intrusive on the rights of individuals.

Quite frankly, we hold it to be the inalienable right of anyone on this earth to go to hell in his/her own way. And we don't think it's any business of any city bureaucrat, as long as the individual performs the assigned task.

The conventional wisdom of 200 years ago was that bathing every day was a major health hazard. Wouldn't it have been equally reasonable then to keep anybody who took a daily shower out of government service?

We also think the point that city expenses are increased because of smoking is almost inhuman.

If smokers draw more disability pensions, as claimed, then non-smokers (who live longer), certainly draw more retirement money for longer periods. Perhaps the city should hire only smokers. They die sooner, so city costs for retirement pensions are lower.

Does that make sense? Yes. It makes exactly as much sense as the fire department rule on hiring only non-smokers.

If this rule is upheld, perhaps we'll soon be hiring school teachers who do not eat eggs for breakfast or put butter on their corn. Cholesterol, you know.

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