

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED AT THE ANNUAL CONVENTION
JUNE 10-13, 1991 – HOMAWACK LODGE, SPRING GLEN, NY

I. MEDICAL ETHICS

A. HEALTH CARE PROXY

Whereas many people are using various “living wills” and similar documents to offer guidance to the medical care-providers in the event of serious illness or death

Therefore, the rabbinical Council of America, in convention assembled, urges its chaverim to disseminate information such as the RCA Health Care Proxy, allowing the patient to be part of the process of the medical decisions to be made for him or her. Further, we urge that any such decisions or documents utilized include the guidance of a competent Rabbi so as to include Halakhic guidance in these crucial decisions.

B. SECONDHAND SMOKE

Whereas it is an established fact that Halacha prohibits the inflicting of injury on another and

Whereas it is an established fact that the inhaling of secondhand smoke constitutes a real and present health risk and a serious public nuisance and in many places is forbidden, thereby making smoking a violation of public law and

Whereas it is the opinion of a preponderance of poskim that one may not smoke in the presence of those who would thereby be offended or harmed, thus making smoking a chillul Hashem

Therefore, the Rabbinical Council of America, in convention assembled, resolves

1. that all smoking will henceforth be banned from all public RCA functions and meetings.
2. the Rabbinical Council of America urges its members to sensitize their congregations to the severity of this halachic prohibition of exposing people to secondhand smoke and accordingly to establish by whatever means are appropriate to the particular congregation a smoke-free environment in the synagogue precincts at all times.
3. we call upon all Orthodox organizations and institutions to ban all smoking from public functions and meetings.
4. the Rabbinical Council of America calls upon its members in positions of influence in Jewish schools and youth groups to endeavor to establish a smoke-free environment therein since impressionable children are present.
5. the Rabbinical Council of America calls upon its members to set an example for their congregants by not smoking.