



CHANGE IS IN THE AIR

An Action Guide for Establishing Smoke-Free Public Housing and Multifamily Properties

100% Smoke-Free: A National Trend

Smoke-free housing policies are rapidly becoming the norm in public, subsidized and market rate multifamily housing. A notable increase in policy adoptions in Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) began when the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) issued a Notice in 2009 stating HUD “*strongly encourages PHAs to implement non-smoking policies in some or all of their public housing units.*” Since then, HUD continues to take measures to encourage smoke-free policy adoption nationwide, including issuing additional Notices to PHAs and owners/agents of federally subsidized private housing, distributing “smoke-free toolkits” to 2,200 PHA directors, and issuing this new publication.

Interviews with PHAs and Owners/Agents that Adopted a Smoke-Free Policy

Change is in the Air: An Action Guide for Establishing Smoke-Free Public Housing and Multifamily Properties complements HUD’s Smoke-Free Housing Toolkits. The Action Guide presents in-depth interviews with PHA officials and owners/agents of subsidized and market-rate properties that adopted a smoke-free policy and provides step-by-step implementation guidance for adopting and enforcing a smoke-free policy based on recommendations.

“I was concerned about the ability to monitor it...I was adamant that the policy was going to take too much effort, and we were going to be spending our whole lives to get people to stop smoking. It was not actually like that at all.”

— Diane Martin
Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Duluth, Minnesota

This new publication responds to input HUD received on its October 2012 request for information in the Federal Register. HUD asked for suggestions on how it can best continue to support the implementation of smoke-free policies for both public housing and multifamily housing. Information on real examples of implementation were requested as well as more guidance on the process for policy adoption.

The *Action Guide* features real stories about converting properties to 100% smoke-free housing, including in-depth interviews with the following people:

Scott Alderman, *Landura Management Associates*

Rick Ball and Diane Martin, *Housing and Redevelopment Authority of Duluth, MN*

Bill Cook, *King County Housing Authority, WA*

Faye Dodd, *Murray Housing Authority, KY*

Andrea Janis, Matthew McGuire and Todd Puhl, *National Church Residences*

Gail Livingston, *Boston Housing Authority, MA*

Carmen Moore-Minor, *Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency, Nashville, TN*

John Bower and Larry Sisson, *TESCO Properties*

Scott Wilkerson, *Ginkgo Residential*

The *Action Guide* contains advice and experiences from “smoke-free pioneers,” documenting their recommended steps for adopting, implementing and enforcing a smoke-free policy. The Action Guide addresses common questions and concerns, including:

- How do you engage residents in supporting smoke-free housing?
- How do you enforce a smoke-free policy?
- Does a smoke-free policy affect occupancy?

Leading Reasons to Go Smoke-Free

HUD encourages PHAs and owners/agents of subsidized and market-rate properties to adopt smoke-free policies for the following reasons:

1. Protect the Health and Safety of Residents and Staff

In 2006, the U.S. Surgeon General concluded that there is no risk-free level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Secondhand smoke exposure can cause heart disease, cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, and other lung diseases. It triggers asthma attacks, and it exacerbates existing heart, lung, and respiratory conditions. Living with a smoker increases the chances of developing lung cancer by 20 to 30 percent, even in people who have never smoked.¹

2. Cost Savings

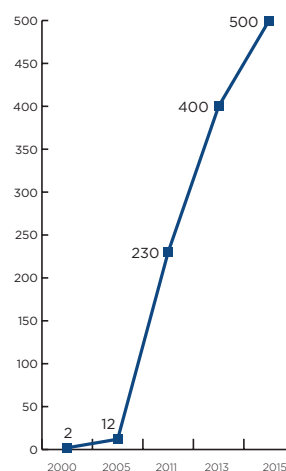
Implementing smoke-free policies across the country in subsidized housing would save approximately \$521 million per year, including \$341 million in secondhand smoke-related healthcare expenditures, \$108 million in renovation expenses, and \$72 million in smoking-attributable fire losses, according to a recent study from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.²

3. Movement of Secondhand Smoke between Units Cannot Be Controlled

The international standard-setting body for indoor air quality, The Board of Directors for the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers, unanimously agreed that ventilation and other air filtration technologies cannot eliminate all the health risks caused by secondhand smoke exposure.³

For more information about HUD’s Healthy Homes Program and smoke-free housing efforts, please visit: <http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/smokefreetoolkits1> or email smokefreehousing@hud.gov.

Public Housing Authorities with a Smoke-Free Policy



4. Residents Prefer Smoke-Free Housing

About one-quarter of all Americans live in multiunit housing, and the majority (80%) have smoke-free home rules, including people who smoke. Even though the majority of people do not allow smoking in their homes, 36 percent of this population are regularly exposed to secondhand smoke.⁴

5. Smoke-Free Policies are Legal

Smoke-free policies are not discriminatory because they do not prohibit anyone from renting a unit. They merely set rules as to what activities are permitted on the property. Smokers are not a protected class and do not have any special legal status.

Smoking-related reasonable accommodation requests are rare, and must be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. In considering reasonable accommodation requests, housing providers should keep in mind that a primary reason for adopting a smoke-free policy is to protect non-smokers from exposure to secondhand smoke.

Take the next step towards smoke-free housing with HUD’s new resource: *Change is in the Air: An Action Guide for Establishing Smoke-Free Public Housing and Multifamily Properties*.

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *The Health Consequences of Involuntary Exposure to Tobacco Smoke: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2006.
 2. King, B., Peck, R., Babb, S. (2013). Cost-Savings Associated with Prohibiting Smoking in U.S. Subsidized Housing. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*.
 3. American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air Conditioning Engineers Board of Directors. “ASHRAE Position Statement on Environmental Tobacco Smoke.” 2013
 4. King, B., Babb, S., Tynan, M., & Gerzoff, R. (2012/12/17). National and State Estimates of Secondhand Smoke Infiltration Among U.S. Multiunit Housing Residents. *Nicotine @ Tobacco Research*, 10.1093/ntr/nts254.