

No Smoking Policy Plan Options & Talking Points for Housing Authorities

Prepared under a State of Washington Dept. of Health Grant by Comprehensive Health Education Foundation, Pacific Northwest Regional Council of NAHRO, and the Association of Washington Housing Authorities

Goal Statement:

The following are examples of policy options that may be selected in a variety of combinations by housing authorities as they seek to limit or prohibit smoking in or near their properties:

Because of all of the inherent risks of smoking in or near residential properties (particularly multi-family type properties, but also in single family type properties) the _____ Housing Authority has decided to adopt a policy that effectively:

- ☐ Prohibits smoking in all of its units as of _____ and within 25 feet of buildings or on any Housing Authority property. New developments for which construction started after _____ will be smoke free (no smoking on the premises during construction or thereafter once occupancy occurs).
- ☐ Prohibits smoking only in all new developments for which construction started after _____ (no smoking on the premises during construction or thereafter once occupancy occurs).
- ☐ Prohibits tenants who lease units in one or more specifically identified properties (list) _____ effective _____ from smoking in their units. Current tenants living in those properties who smoke **may be** required to relocate via transfers or use of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers or may be “grandfathered” and allowed to continue smoking in their units. “Grandfathered” tenants may be subject to a lease addendum that requires payment of an additional security deposit of \$_____.

- ☐ Prohibits smoking in one or more specifically identified properties (list)_____ effective _____. Tenants living in those properties who smoke will be required to relocate via transfers or use of Section 8 Housing Choice Vouchers (or no transfer options are to be offered). The following properties (list) _____ will become no smoking according to a subsequent schedule to be announced at a later date.
- ☐ Prohibits all Housing Authority staff from smoking on any Housing Authority property including grounds, units, offices and non-residential buildings, common areas, vehicles, et. al. effective _____,
- ☐ Offers support for its no smoking/smoke-free policy by entering into collaborative partnerships with local public health and non-profit organizations that can provide resources to tenants and staff who may chose to quit smoking.

Housing Authority No Smoking Policy Work Plan

Scheduled Date	Work Objective	Work Task	Comments
	Discuss the idea of a no smoking policy with staff and Board of Commissioners	Use talking points summary paper attached below to convince stakeholders	
	<p>Conduct agency-, program-, or property-wide survey to determine extent of smoking practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> # smokers vs. non-smokers <input type="checkbox"/> # residents with health problems aggravated by 2nd hand smoke <input type="checkbox"/> # smokers who would like to quit <input type="checkbox"/> # who would like to see a smoking ban 	<p>Collect & analyze information from the survey (use the model survey available in the CHEF toolkit, and/or a survey developed in cooperation with your local health department)</p> <p>Collect & analyze data re: maintenance costs of smoking unit renovations last 12 months, fires due to smoking last 5 years.</p> <p>Analyze results of survey and research on costs/fires with stakeholders (Board, staff tenants). Solicit feedback, record, analyze, and use to create policy.</p>	<p>Local public health department or other non-profit group may be able to assist with the various aspects of a survey. Use of such a “third party” may be effective by lending greater validity & impartiality to a survey.</p>
	Create a draft no smoking policy for consideration	<p>Create a policy development/ implementation committee (staff, residents, public health, other) to work on policy components and provide input</p> <p>Staff drafts proposed plan (draft policy & implementation schedule) with assistance of committee</p> <p>The proposed plan is reviewed with agency leadership, staff, and residents (stakeholders in general)</p>	<p>See HUD Notice PIH-2009-21 (HA) issued July 17, 2009 “Non-Smoking Policies in Public Housing”</p>

Scheduled Date	Work Objective	Work Task	Comments
	Board adopts no smoking policy based on staff recommendations, stakeholder input.		
	No smoking policy implementation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Update the housing authority's PHA Plan relative to rules and standards that will apply to those properties where no smoking will be allowed. 2. Notice to affected residents (4-6 mos before effective date) 3. Begin signing lease addendums (3-4 mos before effective date) 4. Meet with public health partners & schedule meetings at affected properties to make "quit" resources available (ongoing support groups, promotional items) 5. Collect data to show results 6. Provide resources to staff who smoke esp. live-in managers 7. Additional courtesy notices (30-60 days prior to effective date) 8. Effective date: implement, enforce consistently in all projects & buildings where no smoking policies apply. 9. "Remedial" meetings 10. Signage (This is a no smoking building effective (____)) 11. Violations may be reported to _____. 12. Report to stakeholders on progress at 3, 6, 12 mos. 13. Provide certificates of recognition to smokers who quit (tenants & staff) 14. Other steps as desired.... 	

No Smoking Policy Talking Points

The purpose of this paper is to identify talking points and, specifically, the reasons that housing authorities (or any other property manager) should implement a no smoking policy.

General facts

- √ A two pack a day smoker will spend over \$5,000 per year on tobacco (particularly relevant for smokers with low-incomes who give up necessities for tobacco)

Health-related issues

Health-related issues for those in treatment

- √ An analysis of 18 studies found that when tobacco addiction was addressed, alcohol & other substance abuse outcomes were 25% more successful
- √ Tobacco-related illness is the leading cause of death for those in recovery
- √ Smokers with mental illness have a life span 25 years shorter than the general population (twice the cardiovascular disease and respiratory disease and three times the incidence of cancer)
- √ Smoking represents a significant barrier to successful integration into the larger community especially in the area of housing and jobs
- √ Clients in treatment report that smoking lessens stress, yet
 - research shows that stress levels of adult smokers are higher than those of non-smokers
 - adolescent smokers report increasing levels of stress as they develop regular patterns of smoking
 - smoking cessation leads to reduced stress
 - tobacco use does not alleviate stress but actually increases it

Second hand (and third hand) smoke

- √ In multi-family properties especially, HVAC systems guarantee that the second hand smoke from tenants smoking in their own units will spread and **not** be confined to those units
- √ Second hand smoke lingers in the air for hours after cigarettes have been extinguished and migrates between units in multi-family buildings
- √ Second hand (and now third hand) smoke has been shown to present serious health risks to those who come in contact with it (deaths in adult non-smokers are estimated at nearly 50,000 per year – these include lung cancer and heart disease)
- √ Second hand smoke exposure causes disease and premature death in children.
- √ Smoking-caused odors are highly objectionable and reduce the quality of life for those who do not smoke and forced to be in contact with those odors in their living environments
- √ Housing authority employees and employees of in-home service providers who must enter smokers' units to perform their work duties are subjected to both second-hand smoke in the air and third-hand smoke on surfaces, both of which are toxic and hazardous to health. Housing authorities and other employers are obligated to provide a safe working environment for employees and that is probably impossible in a unit occupied by a smoker

Vulnerable tenants/neighbors

- √ Housing authorities house a range of clients, many of whom are frail elderly and disabled persons and who have few if any choices about where they will live due to their inability to compete in the private rental market.
- √ Many housing authority tenants also have acute/chronic medical problems which are exacerbated by the presence of second hand smoke

Fire-life safety

- √ The U.S. Fire Administration estimates that there were 18,700 smoking-related fires in homes in 2006. These fires resulted in 700 deaths (not including firefighters) and 1,320 injuries
- √ Smoking-related fires are frequently the cause of injury or death to both smokers and other tenants. In multi-family buildings 26% of deaths by fire were caused by smoking (2005).
- √ In mid-February 2010, a tenant in his 70's, who used oxygen and smoked, was killed when his apartment burned. Damage to the Seattle Housing Authority property was estimated at between \$250,000 – 300,000. Although the fire was contained in the victim's apartment, smoke and water damage displaced 11 other tenants from the 129 unit concrete built building until repairs could be completed.

Property related issues

Marketing rental units

- √ In Washington, there is a clear market demand for smoke-free housing. Surveys of renters show more than 80% of all renters prefer smoke-free housing. More than half of smoking renters prefer smoke-free housing.
- √ Guardian Property Management (a private sector firm) implemented a no-smoking policy in their apartments and reported that 43% of tenants reported smoking less tobacco since the policy started. Nearly half of those who smoke reported making an attempt to stop smoking since implementation. Two-thirds of those cited the policy as part of, or the main reason for, their attempt to quit smoking.

Risk management (insurance costs)

- √ Smoking is not the only cause of residential fires, but it ranks high on the list
- √ In 2006, smoking-related fires caused **\$496 million in direct property damage**

- √ Eliminating smoking on the premises of any multi-family property will necessarily reduce the likelihood of fires that can cause injury, death and property damage. When this happens, insurers acknowledge the reduced risk and insurance premiums are reduced, resulting in savings to the property owner.
- √ In 2009, a smoker on the balcony of a multi-family, multi-story property owned by the Vancouver Housing Authority discarded a cigarette in a planter box containing bark. The resulting fire did not cause any deaths, but damage to the building was approximately \$1.1 million.

Deterioration of rental housing property and renovation costs

- √ Rental units occupied by tenants who smoke require extraordinary maintenance and renovation efforts to prepare a vacated unit for the next tenant (who may be a non-smoker)
- √ Surfaces (walls, cabinets, flooring, carpets, blinds/shades, countertops) must be thoroughly cleaned and often sealed or replaced entirely to remove the residual smoke odor. Extra painting is required
- √ Fabric-style draperies may not be cleanable and may need total replacement
- √ Fixtures and appliances must also be given extraordinary attention
- √ Costs for renovating a unit occupied by a smoker may result in three to ten times the costs for a non-smoking unit depending on how long the unit was occupied by a smoker

Individual rights issues

Smokers are not a protected class

- √ Fair housing protections do not apply to smokers
- √ Smokers do not have a right to smoke in rental properties that they lease if the property owner chooses to impose (with proper notice and reasonable rules) a no smoking policy
- √ Frequently, mental health and chemical dependency treatment personnel will ignore a client's addiction to tobacco "for the sake of dealing with their more critical issues." Current methodology is changing and no longer ignores

addiction to tobacco because it makes treatment of those other critical issues less effective in terms of therapy and medications

- √ While a client with serious mental health and chemical dependency issues may be challenging for treatment personnel, ignoring the use of tobacco which will seriously shorten the client's lifespan

It's not about not smoking, it's about not smoking here

- √ As property owners and managers, housing authorities have the right to impose reasonable policies for the protection of other tenants and of their properties
- √ Smoking poses a tremendous danger to both tenants and property in both the short term and long term.
- √ Maintenance and renovation expenses can be significantly reduced in properties where smoking is not allowed either in common areas or in individual living units
- √ There are at least 112 housing authorities and commissioners in the United States that have implemented non-smoking policies
- √ The U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, for the reasons stated above, strongly encourages housing authorities to implement non-smoking policies in some or all of their public housing units. See PIH-2009-21 (HA) July 17, 2009
- √ Implementation of a no smoking policy by a housing authority is not telling a tenant that they must stop smoking, rather it is a policy that says the tenant may not smoke in the housing authority's property. Smoking "off-campus" is at the discretion of the tenant who chooses to do so.