

Implementing HUD's **SMOKE-FREE POLICY** in Public Housing



OFFICE OF PUBLIC AND INDIAN HOUSING

HUD FACT SHEET

PHA Staff Tips

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has finalized a new smoke-free policy that covers all public housing agencies (PHAs). PHAs in every state in the nation have already implemented smoke-free policies within their facilities and on their grounds. Here are some tips to get the job done efficiently and effectively.

Resident Engagement

✔ **Give residents a voice.** Include feedback collection and review in the policy. Solicit feedback during policy development, prior to implementation, and continuously afterward. Comments may originate from individual tenants, through a Resident Council, or during public meetings (including specific smoke-free policy meetings, PHA Plan meetings, or others). Provide as many opportunities as possible for tenants to voice their opinions, and facilitate the dialogue by providing responses to common questions and concerns. Consider providing materials in the languages spoken by your residents.

✔ **Focus on the smoke, not the smoker.** You should clarify that you are not trying to change or target the person. People who smoke can still live in smoke-free properties. You are focused on changing the action of smoking within the smoke-free spaces. Ensure that residents know that smoking is not allowed in smoke-free areas by residents or their guests.

✔ **Highlight the benefits for residents.** A smoke-free environment offers documented health benefits. Talk to your residents about the risks of secondhand smoke. Your local health department may be able to help with this.

✔ **Provide resident support.** Cessation services are often available from city, county, and state health departments. Many national organizations offer free materials and information as well. Consider providing free space onsite for cessation support group meetings, distribution of materials, and related activities.

✔ **Provide adequate smoke-free signage.** Display smoke-free signage to remind your tenants and their guests of your smoke-free policy.

✔ **Follow reasonable accommodation procedures.** Refer to HUD's guidance on reasonable accommodations at <https://go.usa.gov/xXQP2>. Smoking inside a public housing unit is not a reasonable accommodation.

Staff and PHA Engagement

- The smoke-free policy will benefit the PHA and its staff as well as residents. Talk to your staff about how the policy will affect them.
- The policy will have health benefits for PHA staff members who will no longer be exposed to secondhand smoke.
- The PHA will be at lower risk of fire due to unattended cigarettes and other lit tobacco products.