



Smoke-Free Housing: Moving Ahead and Making a Smoke-Free Change

Steps for a successful policy implementation:

- 1. Survey your tenants:** Conduct a survey to find out how many tenants smoke in their apartments and how they would view a smoke-free policy in your building(s). Use the survey to determine if any patterns emerge. Are the no-smoking apartments clustered in buildings, wings, or floors? Use these patterns to decide which areas you will make smoke-free.
- 2. Determine a budget for incentives:** You can speed up the move toward smoke-free buildings by offering incentives to tenants to move to other floors, wings or buildings. These expenses could include moving expenses or other incentives (like savings on rent) for tenants willing to relocate to another apartment.
- 3. Set a time frame for the change:** Check the date when your leases are up for renewal. If your tenants are on month-to-month leases, you can make changes relatively quickly. All that's required is providing a one month notice of changes in policy. If your tenants are on one-year leases, notify them of changes one month prior to their renewal date.
- 4. Notify tenants of your plans:** Well ahead of your smoke-free date, notify tenants of your new policy. Provide them with your reasons to be smoke-free which typically include a combination of health and safety and business concerns. Be clear that the policy you are implementing prohibits smoking, not smokers.
- 5. Make tenants aware of community cessation services:** Many community agencies and organizations offer cessation classes, groups and counseling sessions. The Nebraska Tobacco Quitline, **1-800-QUIT-NOW**, provides free and confidential cessation counseling for all Nebraskans.
- 6. Introduce new leases or addendums:** You should include language that makes tenants aware of their obligation not to smoke in their unit and the consequences if they do not meet these obligations. Make sure that residents also know who to call if they suspect a violation of the policy.
- 7. Post signs:** A few days before the building becomes smoke-free, send out an announcement to tenants and employees and post signs at the entry ways.

Tenant survey on next page.



[Date]

Dear Residents:

We are pleased that you have chosen to reside at [name of building/property]. The [name of management company or apartment building] have been studying changes that are occurring in the management of apartments. Many owners are deciding to regulate the use of tobacco products within their properties.

Apartment building owners are adopting smoke-free policies for a number of reasons. Secondhand smoke is a health hazard, especially for children, the elderly, and persons with chronic illnesses, for which there is no safe exposure. (Source: U.S. Surgeon General, 2006).

To ensure the health and safety of all persons living here, we are considering adopting a smoke-free policy for our building and individual units. We would like to hear from you! Let us know what you think about having rules about tobacco use in the building and on the grounds. Please fill out the short survey below and return it to [name of office, etc.].

Sincerely,

[Apartment Manager's name]

Cut here  -----

Do you smoke in your unit?

- Yes, I smoke in my unit
- No, I do not smoke or allow others to smoke in my unit

Can you smell smoke in your unit?

- Yes, I can smell secondhand smoke coming into my unit from another unit
- The smoke smell bothers me/The smoke smell makes me ill
- I'm worried about the effects the secondhand smoke has on my health or the health of people who live with me

Would you like to live in a smoke-free building?

- Yes, I would like our building to be smoke free; including the units
- No, I would like our building to continue to allow smoking in the units
- I have no preference
- Building Name: _____

Comments:

Optional Information:

Name: _____ Unit #: _____

Phone: _____