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# Benefits of No-Smoking Policies

## IN AFFORDABLE HOUSING



HUD encourages public housing authorities and multifamily housing rental assistance programs to implement no-smoking policies in some or all of the units they own or manage.

-- HUD Notice PIH-2009-21 (HA)

-- HUD Notice H-2010-21

*"The scientific evidence is now indisputable: secondhand smoke is not a mere annoyance.*

*It is a serious health hazard that can lead to disease and premature death in children and nonsmoking adults."*

— US Surgeon General, 2006



Oregon Smokefree Housing Project

Industry leaders agree that no-smoking policies provide a cost-effective, safe and healthy environment for staff and residents.

### No-smoking policies help affordable housing stay affordable.

*"HACSA [Housing Authority of Lane County] will also find itself spending less to repaint, recarpet and clean its public housing units, and the units themselves will be generally more appealing. Soon after the no-smoking policy goes into effect in public housing, the only question will be why it took so long."* — Eugene's Register-Guard Editorial 7/18/10

### No-smoking policies ensure that safe and healthy housing is not a luxury.

#### ■ Decent housing is an essential component of a person's physical safety & well-being.

*"When I realized that secondhand smoke was a Class A carcinogen, in the same category with asbestos, I knew we had to adopt a no-smoking policy for all of our properties to protect our employees and residents."* — Dianne Quast, Director of Real Estate Operations, Housing Authority of Portland

#### ■ Most renters want smokefree housing.

A survey found that Oregon renters, regardless of smoking status, prefer to live in smokefree housing and that 40% would even pay extra rent! Most don't smoke (only 27% smoke daily and 6% some days) and over half of those who do already go outside. What's more, results were similar across all income groups.\*

#### ■ No-smoking policies are an easy and affordable way to improve indoor air quality for all residents.

*"At present the only means of effectively eliminating the health risks associated with indoor exposure is to ban smoking activity."* — American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers

*"Adopting the policy was easier than we thought. Some people threatened to move out but none did."* — Margaret Mahoney, REACH Community Development Corporation

#### ■ Most smokers want to quit. No-smoking policies move them in that direction.

A survey of Guardian Management's low-income residents showed that, after their no-smoking policy went into effect, 43% were smoking less. Almost 50% of smokers said they tried to quit and 2/3 of those cited the no-smoking policy as the main reason.\*\*

*"In one senior and disabled building, a few tenants came up and thanked me for making it smokefree because they wanted to quit smoking. Then they quit – out of twelve smokers in the building, only three are still smoking."* — Kathy Lucas, Executive Director, Clatsop County Housing Authority

Landlords who have adopted no-smoking rules say they would never go back!



*"I am happy to support Tobacco Freedom, an initiative committed to providing consumers of mental health services with tobacco free treatment, residential facilities and grounds. These changes are a triple win: a win for clients and consumers by providing environments that make it easier to quit, a win for employees by reducing their exposure to secondhand smoke and a win for our state by improving the health of our residents."*

— Richard Harris, Assistant Director for the Addictions and Mental Health Division, Oregon Health Authority



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### ■ No-smoking policies are legal

Oregon law now requires landlords, as part of the rental agreement, to disclose their smoking policy.

*"Neither smokers nor the act of smoking is included as a protected class under federal, state, or local Fair Housing laws."* — The Fair Housing Council of Oregon

### ■ No-smoking policies prevent fires

*"This summer in Portland, we had 33 smoking-related fires resulting in \$366,116 in losses. It's time to put a stop to this. Asking smokers to smoke outside their dwellings and to extinguish their cigarette butts safely in water or sand would save thousands of dollars and even more importantly, save lives."* — Paul Corah,

Public Information Officer, Portland Fire and Rescue

## RESOURCES TO HELP YOU MOVE FORWARD

### LANDLORD TOOLS:

Visit [www.smokefreehousinginfo.com](http://www.smokefreehousinginfo.com) for tools to implement your no-smoking policy and for more information about the new Smoking Policy Disclosure Law.

Public Health partners are eager to work with housing providers to adopt no-smoking policies. Local tobacco prevention coordinators can work hand-in-hand with you to conduct tenant surveys, assist with informational resident sessions, prepare for board presentations, link smokers who want to quit with resources, etc.

### FIND YOUR COUNTY CONTACT AT:

[www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/docs/contractorsgrantees.xls](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/docs/contractorsgrantees.xls).

*"We have been collaborating with our local health department's Tobacco Prevention and Education Program who have been a great resource. Our community should utilize these folks more often."* — Andy Wilch, Administrator, Salem Housing Authority

### QUITTING RESOURCES:

If a resident wants to learn about and get support to quit smoking, the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line can help! Either you or the resident can call the Oregon Tobacco Quit Line at **1-800-QUIT-NOW** or 1-800-784-8669 (English) and 1-877-266-3863 (Spanish) for free resources including counseling and, quite often, nicotine replacement therapy.

*This work is funded by the Tobacco Prevention and Education Program, Oregon Public Health Division*

\* Survey conducted 8/08 by Campbell DeLong Resources, Inc – full report at [www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/docs/08/08rentsurvey.pdf](http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/ph/tobacco/docs/08/08rentsurvey.pdf).

\*\* Pizacani BA et al. Smoke-free subsidized multiunit housing: Adherence, acceptance, economics and health implications. Unpublished data.