

## STAFF TRAINING

***BUILD SUCCESS BY*** training staff on how to effectively share information about the policy and the importance of consistent enforcement.

### Planning for success

During the planning period, develop the training, and schedule training sessions to prepare housing staff to effectively share information about the policy and to ensure that they recognize the importance of consistent enforcement.

### Key information for staff

Educate staff about the policy's purpose and its requirements. The Resident information sheet may provide a useful summary. It can also serve as an enforcement tool for housing staff when addressing violations.

Staff may benefit from this additional information:

- The policy will help protect the health of building staff, as well as its residents. One-third (34%) of adult residents in public housing smoke, which is more than twice the rate of smoking in the general population (15%), putting themselves, neighbors, and housing staff at increased risk of health problems from secondhand smoke.<sup>1</sup> A reduction in smoking will have a positive effect on resident and staff health.
- Residents often mistakenly believe that the policy requires smokers to quit. The policy is “smoke-free,” not “smoker free.”
- Tobacco dependence is one of the hardest addictions to break. Maintaining a compassionate attitude will help residents feel supported and respected.
- Violation of the smoke-free policy should be handled the same as other lease violations, for example, quiet hours or pets.
- Smoke-free policies reduce maintenance costs and make it easier to clean and turn over units. HUD's Regulatory Impact Analysis estimates that smoke-free policies will save an average of between \$16 million to \$38 million per year in reduced maintenance, and the reduced fire risk will save \$38 million across all HUD PHAs.

### Promote consistent enforcement

Housing staff are responsible for investigating reports of policy violations and for including policy violation checks during routine work and maintenance. Consistent enforcement is necessary to maximize compliance.

Trainings should provide staff with clear guidance on:

- Which staff roles are responsible for enforcement (some staff may be more effective as resident allies with limited enforcement requirements—for example, resident service coordinators)
- How to include policy violation checks during routine work and maintenance

- How to respond to resident reports of possible violations
- What evidence of a violation is required

During training sessions, present and discuss information about the enforcement process:

- Steps in the process
- Required documentation

Encourage staff to talk through how to respond to potential situations of residents violating the policy and discuss how best to respond to likely scenarios.

## Ensure that staff training is ongoing

Offer check-ins or refresher trainings with staff to provide opportunities to troubleshoot problem situations. Ongoing support and training are important for consistent enforcement and effective implementation, as well as to address any new issues that emerge, even years after the policy has been adopted.

- Determine how new staff will be trained
- Bring staff together on a regular basis to discuss the implementation process, share their experiences, identify emerging issues, and troubleshoot challenging situations

## Resources

**Change is in the Air: An Action Guide for Establishing Smoke-Free Public Housing and Multifamily Properties (HUD)** [www.hud.gov/sites/documents/SFGUIDANCEMANUAL.PDF](http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/SFGUIDANCEMANUAL.PDF)

**HUD memo on medical marijuana** [www.hud.gov/sites/documents/MED-MARIJUANA.PDF](http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/MED-MARIJUANA.PDF)

**Implementing HUD's Smoke-free Rule (HUD)**

[www.hud.gov/sites/documents/SMOKEFREE\\_GUIDEBK.PDF](http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/SMOKEFREE_GUIDEBK.PDF)

**Instituting Smoke-free Housing: Final Rule** [www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/05/2016-28986/instituting-smoke-free-public-housing](http://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2016/12/05/2016-28986/instituting-smoke-free-public-housing)

**Questions and Answers on HUD's Smoke Free Public Housing Proposed Rule (HUD)**

[www.hud.gov/sites/documents/FINALSMOKEFREEQA.PDF](http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/FINALSMOKEFREEQA.PDF)

**Smoke-free Policy Recommended Checklist (HUD)**

[www.hud.gov/sites/documents/2\\_SMOKEF\\_POLICYCHECKLIST.PDF](http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/2_SMOKEF_POLICYCHECKLIST.PDF)

**US Surgeon General Report** [www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/secondhand-smoke-consumer.pdf](http://www.surgeongeneral.gov/library/reports/secondhand-smoke-consumer.pdf)

**PHA Staff Tips (HUD)** [www.hud.gov/sites/documents/1\\_HUD\\_SMOKEFREE\\_TIPS.PDF](http://www.hud.gov/sites/documents/1_HUD_SMOKEFREE_TIPS.PDF)

**The Impact of Secondhand Smoke (Truth Initiative)** <https://truthinitiative.org/news/impact-secondhand-smoke>

Reference

<sup>1</sup> Helms, V., King, B., Ashley, P. Cigarette smoking and adverse health outcomes among adults receiving federal housing assistance. *Preventive Medicine* Vol. 99 June 2017 pgs. 170-177.

**The Building Success project** supports efforts to implement smoke-free policies by sharing practical ideas and insights from housing providers and residents who went smoke-free. Learn more at [www.BuildingSuccessSmokefree.org](http://www.BuildingSuccessSmokefree.org).