Adopting a Smoke-Free Policy:

A Guide for Hawai'i Multi-Unit Housing Owners, Associations and Managers

HaleOlaPono

A Smart Investment In Healthy Living

Purpose

Who should read this guide?
This guide was created for owners, associations and managers of multi-unit housing properties (condominiums, townhouses, co-ops, etc.) in the State of Hawai'i.

Purpose of this guide
This guide was designed to help you make an informed decision about adopting smoke-free policies. The more we learn about the dangers and costs of secondhand smoke, the more we need new rules to protect the health of all multi-unit housing residents, staff and visitors.

What if I need more help?
The Hale Ola Pono program at the Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i offers guidance with all stages of adopting a smoke-free policy. Call (808)591-6508 or visit: www.smokefreehomes.org

Why go smoke-free?

- Secondhand smoke can kill and makes existing illnesses worse.

- The majority of people in Hawai'i do NOT smoke.

- It's good for everyone's health.

- Secondhand smoke cannot be controlled because smoke drifts.

- It is perfectly legal to have a no-smoking policy on your property that includes units, lanais and all outdoor common areas.

- There is increasing demand for smoke-free housing.

- Smoke-free policies save money on cleaning and repair costs.

- Going smoke-free decreases risk for fires.

A safer environment

- Smoking related fires are the #1 cause of fire deaths.

- There is $303 million in property loss from fires each year.

- Fires caused by smoking result in more deaths and property damage than any other cause.

Smoke-free home policies are made to protect *'ohana*, *keiki*, friends and pets from secondhand smoke.

Secondhand smoke basics

What is secondhand smoke?
- The smoke that comes off the end of a lit cigarette.
- The smoke that is exhaled by a smoker.
- Secondhand smoke contains more than 4,000 chemicals, over 50 are cancer causing chemicals.

How does it impact health?
Those exposed to secondhand smoke have higher risk of:
- Lung cancer
- Heart attack
- Stroke

Secondhand smoke hurts babies and kids:
- "Crib death" or SIDS
- Asthma attacks
- Infections (lung, throat, ear)
- Bronchitis and pneumonia

The American Lung Association reports that 50,000 people in the U.S. die each year from secondhand smoke.

What is third-hand smoke?

Secondhand smoke causes an estimated 46,000 premature deaths from heart disease and 3,400 lung cancer deaths in the U.S. among non-smokers every year.

-- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2008

- Smoke particles that cause cancer and that get into air vents, furniture and carpeting.

- Third-hand smoke contributes to health-related problems.

- When a smoker moves out, the repair and cleaning cost $1500-$3000 for paint, new carpeting, outlets, countertops, smoke detectors, window treatments, light switch covers, refrigerator door seals, labor, etc.

A healthier building

In an apartment or condo, up to 65% of air in one unit is shared with other units.

Secondhand smoke easily drifts to other units that share the same roof.

Residents are breathing in what their neighbors are breathing out.

Toxins in cigarette smoke stay in the air.
- No air ventilation or purifier system can remove all the toxins and odors from cigarette smoke.
- Exposure to secondhand smoke can still occur even if smokers are separated from non-smokers.
- Even small amounts of secondhand smoke can cause immediate damage to the body.

The only solution for protecting residents from the dangers of secondhand smoke, is to have a 100% smoke-free building.

Even after spending extra time and money to prepare a unit, lingering odor can still make the unit more difficult to rent.
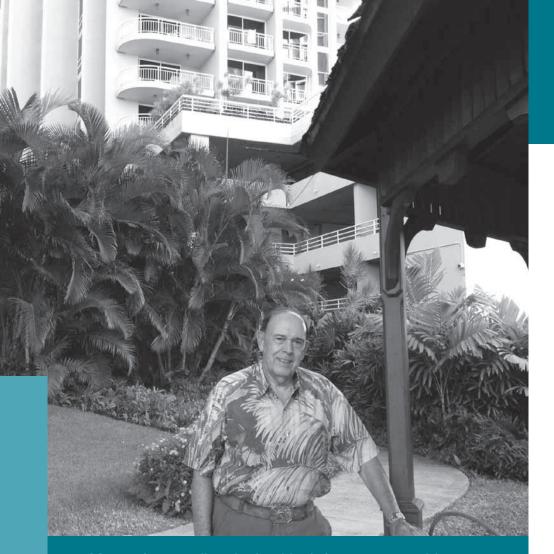
Homeowners save money

Lower maintenance and repair costs
- Units last longer
- Turnover costs are less for units with non-smokers

Potential for lower homeowners insurance rates
- Decreased fire risk may lower rates
- Maximizes low-income housing funding from the government

There is also a significant financial burden for smokers—it costs more than $96 billion a year in medical costs and another $97 billion a year from lost productivity.

Save Money

"Many of us predicted a backlash from upset residents when we announced plans to consider going smoke-free, and that just didn't happen. To the contrary, owners voted to adopt the new policy and since implementing it, many residents have expressed appreciation for having a 100% smoke-free property. Even those who remain smokers have come to understand and follow the policy. Overall, compliance with residents has not been a problem, we've only needed to remind visitors occasionally."

-- Larry Stults
(resident at Nuʻuanu Parkside Condominium, Honolulu, HI)

Positive response

Many owners are afraid of getting a negative response from residents, but the response is often positive.

- The majority of residents prefer smoke-free homes and smoke-free environments.

- Surveys found that people will pay more for a non-smoking apartment.

- Non-smoking units get rented faster.

- 79.5% of owner-occupants said they would choose a smoke-free building over a building that allowed smoking.

What are you waiting for?

81% of Hawai'i residents prefer smoke-free housing.

The benefits of smoke-free policies are compelling.

- ✓ Saves money
- ✓ Saves lives
- ✓ Meets a demand: 4 out of 5 residents want a smoke-free environment

If bars, restaurants, worksites, schools, beaches, parks, and public transportation can go smoke-free, so can your condo or apartment complex!

Addressing common responses respectfully

Be sure to invite input from residents when developing the smoke-free policy to get their views on how well the policy is complied with after it is implemented.

"It's my right to smoke!"
Health is also a right, smoking is a choice. Children and other residents can't choose to avoid second and third-hand smoke in apartments and condos. Also, there is no U.S. constitutional right to smoke.

"Will the new policy take a long time?"
It may. Changing policy takes time and money, but the long-term benefit of going smoke-free will be greater.

"What if people don't want change?"
Change is often hard, but over time and with the right information, most people come to see the benefits of going smoke-free. Good communication is key. For example, use surveys to discover your residents' opinion on smoke-free housing and send letters to inform residents about upcoming changes.

"What if people move out and vacancies don't fill or sell because of the new smoke-free policy?"
This is a legitimate concern for apartment and condo owners, but more people are willing to invest in smoke-free housing.

8 Steps
for going smoke-free

Step 1: Get Informed
Learn all you can about the benefits of smoke-free housing policies, dangers of secondhand smoke exposure, and the process to get them implemented.

Step 2: Share the Information
Respectfully reach out to all people who may be impacted or serve as decision-makers in the smoke-free policy adoption process (board of directors, residents, and property managers) to share what you've learned and to push for change.

Step 3: Gain Support
Talk with residents, write letters to the owner or decision-making body, do surveys, conduct a petition – anything to build support for going smoke-free.

Step 4: Present to the Board or Owner/Landlord
Talk to the Board and/or owner because they may not be aware that adopting smoke-free housing policies is 100% legal and that there are both financial and health benefits.

Step 5: Decide / Vote to Adopt a Smoke-Free Policy
This step involves different actions depending on the type of property/ownership.

Step 6: Educate and Promote
Once the decision/vote is made to adopt a smoke-free policy, getting the word out in a positive and clear manner through a variety of means is essential to a smooth transition, and will increase the likelihood of good compliance by residents, guests and workers. Fliers, letters, posters, presentations, celebration events, and signage posted in key locations on the property are all good methods for communicating.

Step 7: Implement and Enforce
Generally, smoke-free housing policies have been found to be "self-enforcing" if the communication about the new policy is positive, clear and consistent. If residents know that complaints about violations to the smoke-free policy are responded to quickly, firmly and fairly, the transition will usually go smoothly.

Step 8: Evaluate
With any policy change, it is always wise to evaluate the impact it is having, both positive and negative, and to make adjustments if needed.

Make a Plan

Hold employees accountable. Staff must understand and comply with the policy even if they are not residents.

During construction, make sure contractors and workers aren't smoking. The same applies to vendors. You don't want residents to see anyone on the property breaking the rules. Additionally, the smoke could permeate the walls, carpet and insulation during construction projects.

If you're implementing a partial non-smoking policy, designate smoking areas to help ease the transition to a smoke-free environment.

Be understanding and supportive. Provide smokers who are ready to quit smoking with information and resources to help them with this process.

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Resources

Coalition for a Tobacco-Free Hawai'i
808-591-6508
http://www.tobaccofreehawaii.org

Hawai'i Smoke-Free Homes
(808) 946-6851 xt. 202
http://www.hawaiismokefreehomes.org

Includes links to sample letters, surveys, petitions, and model language for smoke-free policies and lease agreements

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Hawai'i Tobacco Quitline
1-800-QUIT NOW (1800-784-8669)
http://www.clearthesmoke.org/quit

Smoke-Free Housing Partners

Hawaii Asthma Initiative

HAWAII STATE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

'Imi Hale
Native Hawaiian Cancer Network
A Program of Papa Ola Lōkahi

Halehuki circa 1940

AMERICAN LUNG ASSOCIATION.
IN HAWAII

COALITION FOR A
TOBACCO-FREE HAWAI'I

HAWAII COALITION COPD

www.hawaiismokefreehomes.org