

Enforcing a Smoke-Free Policy

Developing an Enforcement Plan

Congratulations, you have taken steps to protect residents, staff and visitors from secondhand smoke exposure. As you go through the no-smoking policy development process, be sure to develop a system for addressing and documenting infractions.

A new policy requires prompt and consistent action to address non-compliance. This will send a clear message that smoking is no longer allowed. Lack of enforcement with one resident may hinder compliance efforts with other residents.

Most smoke-free policies are self-enforcing. Residents can be your greatest allies. If a resident complains about being bothered by smoke or knows of another resident who has violated the policy, document the facts and resolve the matter promptly. Treat violating the no-smoking policy like any other lease violation. Keep in mind behavior change takes time.

Considerations for an Enforcement Plan

1. Continue educating residents about the benefits of the policy and engage them in the process of implementing the rule. Make sure all new and current residents are aware of the policy and have signed a lease addendum.
2. Post No-Smoking signs and signs that clearly identify designated smoking areas.
3. Remove ashtrays and smoking receptacles from areas where smoking is restricted.



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4. Update existing complaint and Infraction forms to include a violation of the no smoking rule.
5. Have a process for documenting and investigating complaints that outline the procedures for handling a complaint from initial intake to closing out the complaint.
6. Consult with an attorney regarding the enforcement process, procedures, forms and potential legal challenges. Follow the existing procedures for inspections.
7. Train staff about the new policy and the enforcement process. A written enforcement process will assist with consistency and new hires.
8. Identify resources for discussions about the infraction (ex. cessation information, secondhand smoke fact sheet, copy of the no smoking policy...) Resources are available at www.livesmokefree.ri.gov.
9. Track all verbal and written complaints and infractions. You may need this information if non-compliance persists.
10. Evaluate the policy and process for lessons learned and possible modifications or improvements to the policy. Evaluation is an effective way to share lessons learned with other housing agencies locally and nationally. To ensure effective monitoring, all activities related to securing compliance with the smoke-free policy should to be properly recorded.