



Promoting Smoke-Free Policy Compliance: Tips for Managers

1. Before the policy has gone into effect, communicate the key policy components below to staff and residents and include them in your policy or lease addendum language:

A. Policy Details

i) Define what will be considered “smoking.” Sample definitions¹ to include are:

Smoking. The term “smoking” means inhaling, exhaling, breathing, or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, or other tobacco product or plant product in any manner or in any form. Smoking also includes use of an electronic smoking device.

Electronic Smoking Device. “Electronic smoking device” means any device that can be used to deliver aerosolized or vaporized nicotine to the person inhaling from the device, including, but not limited to an e-cigarette, e-cigar, e-pipe, vape pen or e-hookah. Electronic smoking device does not include drugs, devices, or combination products approved for sale by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, as those terms are defined in the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act.



ii) Outline policy coverage:

To maximize the benefits of a smoke-free policy, your policy should cover 100% of the indoors. For a stronger policy, consider including outdoor spaces like building entrances, patios/balconies, garages, pools, playground areas, or the whole property.

B. What Will Count as a Violation

i) Explain what will count as an infraction. Sample infractions² to include are:

- ⇒ Staff witnesses a resident, or a guest of a resident, service provider, relation, or other person smoking in a prohibited area.
- ⇒ Staff finds smoking-related damage to the interior of the unit, which could include burns, tobacco residue on walls and surfaces, clogged plumbing, or compromised ventilation caused by smoking product or products.
- ⇒ Evidence of smoking in a unit such as cigarette or other smoking product smells, cigarette ashes, smoke clogged filters, and damage to the walls or surfaces.
- ⇒ Staff sees a lighted or extinguished smoking product in an ashtray or smoking receptacle inside of a unit.
- ⇒ Repeated reports to staff of violations of the smoking policy by third parties.



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C. Enforcement Steps

Enforce a policy the way you would any other policy (e.g. noise, pets, etc.) Sample enforcement steps³ to include are:

First Violation: Staff will send the resident a reminder of the smoking policy and include a copy of the smoke-free policy.

Second Violation: Staff will schedule a meeting with the resident to discuss the smoke-free policy and their repeated offenses. Management will discuss strategies to help the resident comply with the policy. If the resident does not attend the meeting, they will be issued a lease violation.

Third Violation: The resident will be issued a lease violation.

Fourth Violation: An eviction notice to terminate the lease will be issued.



2. Shortly before and after a policy has gone into effect, perform these on-site activities to foster a smooth transition:

A) Educate Onsite Staff

Everyone working on the property should be aware of the policy details, what counts as a violation, and the enforcement protocol. This includes management, maintenance staff, and social service staff.

B) Meet with Residents

Resident meetings are great opportunities to gather feedback, discuss the benefits of going smoke free, how violations will be handled, and answer questions about the policy.

C) Provide Educational Resources

Offer information on the benefits of smoke-free policies and available cessation resources in the management office and community spaces.

D) Post Signage

Display signage anywhere on the property that you don't want smoking to occur. FREE signs are available at: www.mnsmokefreehousing.org.



E) Utilize Appropriate Messaging

Employ positive, culturally-appropriate talking points. Emphasize that a smoke-free policy promotes a “healthier, safer, cleaner living and work environment” and is based on the activity of smoking in the building, not a person’s status as a smoker.

F) Inform Residents Comprehensively

Communicate the policy details and implementation timeline frequently, and advertise it via multiple formats to reduce misinformation and accommodate various learning styles.

G) Distribute In-Unit Reminders

Providing giveaways (like key chains or refrigerator magnets) are good daily reminders for residents. FREE giveaways are available at: www.mnsmokefreehousing.org.

H) Celebrate

Hold a resident celebration to emphasize the positive benefits that this policy will bring to the community.



Photo Credit:
Olmsted County Public Health

3. After policy implementation, administer enforcement protocol:

A) Document Violations Consistently

Record and collect any evidence of policy violations including witness accounts and pictures of damages. Obtain written accounts from third parties if possible. This information will be important when you discuss a smoking violation with your resident and/or if you need to proceed to eviction.

B) Enforce the Policy Uniformly

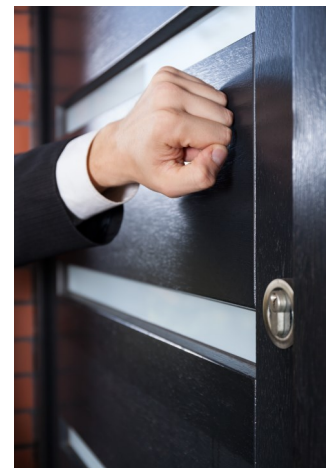
Every infraction should receive the appropriate enforcement step immediately after the occurrence.

C) Encourage staff and residents to notify you of infractions

Managers cannot monitor a property 24/7. Ask other on-site staff and residents to notify you when they witness a violation.

D) Contact Live Smoke Free

For further support and resources, get in touch with Live Smoke Free at the contact information listed below.



1: The definitions for “Smoking” and “Electronic Smoking Device” were developed by the Public Health Law Center.
2,3: Components of Part 1 were inspired by the Lawrence-Douglas County Housing Authority’s Smoke-Free Policy.