

Spokane Housing Authority Smoking Policy

Background

According to the American Lung Association, cigarette smoking is the number one cause of preventable disease in the United States. The elderly and young populations, as well as people with chronic illnesses, are especially vulnerable to the adverse effects of smoking and secondhand smoke. The EPA has identified secondhand smoke as a Class A carcinogen. A class A carcinogen is a cancer causing agent. Allowing smoking within apartment units exposes all residents and site staff to these known carcinogens.

Smoking is a leading cause of residential fires and the number one cause of fire deaths in the U.S. Some insurance companies offer discounts on property casualty insurance for multi-unit owners with a 100% smoke-free policy.

Apartment turnover costs can be two to seven times greater when smoking is allowed. SHA survey reports that the majority of residents would like:

- smoking banned in all units,
- some type of outside smoking area;
- to have the new smoke-free policy put into action within 3-6 months.

Definitions

For the purpose of this document we will use the **following definitions**:

- ❖ *Smoke-Free* properties are those buildings/sites that had never been smoked in (even by construction and/or redevelopment workers) and will not allow smoking anywhere on the property.
- ❖ *No-Smoking* buildings are classified as buildings where smoking had been allowed in the past but, at the time of implementation, smoking will be allowed in designated areas outside the building.

Purpose of No-Smoking Policy:

1. To mitigate the irritation and known health effects of secondhand smoke.
2. Minimize the maintenance, cleaning, and redecorating costs associated with smoking.
3. Decrease the risk of smoking-related fires to property and personal safety.
4. To allow all staff the opportunity to perform their job duties in an environment that is non-smoking.

Proposed Policy

It is proposed that all SHA properties and W. 55 Mission campus implement a no-smoking policy.

Properties that will implement the no-smoking policy:

- ❖ Cornerstone Courtyard, Agnes Kehoe Place and the Pearl are smoke-free properties.
- ❖ All other properties will implement the no-smoking policy.

Non- Smoking Areas

Smoking will not be permitted in **individual apartment homes** or the **common spaces** of a SHA community or facility of any type, unless otherwise specified.

Definition of smoking: The term "smoking" means inhaling, exhaling, breathing or carrying any lit cigar, cigarette, electronic cigarette, or other tobacco product or similar product in any manner or in any form. This includes the smoking of medical marijuana. Burning of incense, sage and similar products are also not allowed in the designated areas.

- ❖ **Individual apartment homes** are defined as the interior and exterior spaces tied to a particular unit. This includes, but is not limited to, bedrooms, hallways, kitchens, bathroom, patios, balconies and unit entryway areas.
- ❖ **Common spaces** are defined as areas within the building that are open to the public, including but not limited to swimming pools, sport courts, playgrounds, community rooms, community bathrooms, community kitchens, lobbies, reception areas, hallways, laundry rooms, reception areas, stairways, offices and elevator, and within 25 feet outside of building(s) including entry ways, windows, porches, balconies and patios.
- ❖ **Designated smoking areas** will be indicated on each property's map if applicable (see Attachments 1 through 11).

Those affected by the no smoking policy

This policy applies to everyone (residents, guests, visitors, service personnel and SHA employees) who visits, lives and works at SHA properties.

Resident Responsibility

1. It shall be the resident's responsibility to inform his/her household members, and guests of this No-Smoking Policy.
2. The resident shall prohibit smoking by his/her household members or guests while on the premises that would violate this policy.
3. Failure to comply or upon repeated violations to this policy may be cause for lease enforcement action up to and including termination of resident tenancy.

Employee Responsibility

It will be the responsibility of all SHA employees to inform residents, guests, visitors, and service personnel of the SHA No-Smoking Policy and to enforce the policy.

The new no-smoking policy **does not mean** that residents/employees will have to quit smoking in order to live and/or work at SHA properties/campus. The new policy will only limit smoking to designated areas.

No-Smoking Signage

SHA properties (as indicated) and campus shall post "No Smoking" signs at designated locations.

Enforcement for Residents

If a resident or employee complains about being bothered by smoke or knows of another resident who has violated the policy, the following steps will be taken:

- ❖ 1st Violation - Site staff will visit the resident and document whether or not (s)he smelled or witnessed evidence of smoke inside the unit. Staff will follow-up the visit with a letter acknowledging the conversation and the outcome. ("Friendly Warning Letter") **
- ❖ 2nd Violation - If the problem repeats, send a 10 Day compliance notice and information regarding cessation assistance. After the 10 days are up, post a 48 Hour Notice for inspection.
- ❖ 3rd Violation – Another repeat violation will result in a 10 Day compliance notice and a warning letter. ("Violation Warning Letter") After the 10 days are up, post a 48 Hour Notice for inspection.
- ❖ 4th Violation – If the violation persists, a 10 day notice to comply and/or possible eviction proceedings will be initiated if necessary.

Evictions due to violations of the no-smoking policy must be approved by the Director of Assets.

** For smoke-free properties, the first offense generates a 10 Day Notice.

Enforcement for Employees

See Employee Handbook.

Temporary Exemption

There is a temporary exception available at initial implementation date of the policy for current residents who are smokers. Any current resident as of February 28, 2011 who smoke must complete a "Temporary Smoking Exemption" form allowing them to smoke in their apartment. (See Temporary Smoking Exemption form in the policy) This exemption will continue only until the date of the resident's lease renewal, at which time the no-smoking policy will also apply to current residents who are smokers.