

Minnesota Department of Health
Statewide Health Improvement Program



***Smoke-free
Multi-unit Housing***

**Guide to Implementation
and Evaluation**

Fiscal Years 2012 and 2013

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Smoke-free Multi-Unit Housing

Implement voluntary smoke-free housing policies in multi-unit housing.

Description and Scope

In Minnesota and across the nation, owners and managers of multi-unit housing are adopting and implementing voluntary smoke-free policies for their apartments and condominiums to protect tenants from exposure to secondhand smoke. Implementing a smoke-free policy for multi-housing units is the only way to fully protect elsewhere in the building or on the property. These policies increase the number of smoke-free environments and promote healthy communities by establishing community norms that tobacco use is not an acceptable behavior.

Outcomes

Standardized outcomes for required strategies are still under development. Strategies will be measured primarily on policy, systems and environmental change outcomes and health behavior change outcomes and then linked through literature projections to health care cost savings.

| Evaluation measures | | |
|---|--|---|
| Policy, Systems, Environmental changes Existing tools or MDH database | Health risks and behavior change Existing tools or medical records | Cost savings Actual savings or literature projections |

Target Populations

- Buildings:
 - Owners and managers
 - Developers
 - Tenants (especially disparate populations)
- Privately-owned (market rate) rental buildings
- Public housing such as that offered through Housing and Redevelopment
- Temporary/transitional housing shelters
- Residential housing owned by nonprofit agencies
- Condominiums

Settings

- Town, city, or county containing multi-unit housing developments

Recommended Partners

- Individual landlords
- Apartment management companies
- Tenants and tenant organizations
- Building developers
- Housing and Redevelopment officials
- Community leaders and community organizations
- Social service agencies
- Minnesota Asthma Coalition

Planning and Assessment of *Smoke-free Multi-unit Housing*

1. Prepare and plan.

- A. Review the information on smoke-free multi-unit housing located at Live Smoke Free's website at: http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org/tenants/tenant_index.html
- B. Review the information regarding smoke-free multi-unit housing located at the American Lung Association's website at: <http://www.lungusa.org/associations/states/minnesota/indoor--outdoor-air/smokefree-housing.html>

2. Conduct an assessment.

- A. Assess the number of apartment buildings and other multi-unit buildings in the community.
- B. Identify the landlords or management companies that own those facilities.
- C. Conduct a phone or mail survey of tenants to assess their experiences with secondhand smoke in their living space and their support for smoke-free building policies. For sample surveys, contact Live Smoke Free or the American Lung Association of Minnesota.
- D. Conduct focus groups of landlords or tenants.

3. Build support among tenants.

- A. Assist tenants dealing with secondhand smoke exposure in their apartments to assess the problem.
- B. Mobilize tenants to advocate for a smoke-free policy for their building.
- C. Work with landlords to address the issue.

4. Educate landlords and tenants.

- A. Meet with landlords or building owners to explain the benefits of a smoke-free housing policy.
- B. Set up meetings with tenants to discuss the problem of secondhand smoke exposure.
- C. Assist landlords in conducting a short survey of building residents to assess support for a smoke-free building policy.

Implementing *Smoke-free Multi-unit Housing*

- 1. Assist landlords and owners with the policy development and implementation planning.**
 - A. Share with landlords Minnesota's model smoke-free lease addendum located at ANSR's Live Smoke Free website in RESOURCES section.
 - B. Assist landlords with drafting a policy for their buildings.
 - C. Determine locations where smoking will be prohibited (i.e. all individual residential units, balconies, decks, patios, picnic areas, playgrounds, pools, building entrances, etc.).
 - D. Assist landlords in developing a timeline for transition in making their building smoke-free.

- 2. Assist landlords and owners with implementing the policy.**
 - A. Identify a date that the landlord selected to go smoke free.
 - B. Provide a kick-off event for tenants to educate them about the policy.
 - C. Provide landlords with smoke-free signs to promote the policy among tenants.
 - D. Distribute a news release about the building to the local media.
 - E. Assist landlords with advertising that their building is smoke free in local Shoppers, newspapers and other venues.
 - F. Contact Live Smoke Free to list the smoke-free apartment on Minnesota's smoke-free housing directory.

Sustaining Long-Term *Smoke-free Multi-unit Housing* Changes

1. **Maintain the relationship with the landlord or building manager** to assist with future publicity or to utilize as a reference or spokesperson.
2. **Recognize the anniversary date** of the building going smoke-free.
3. Continue to **provide signs and other implementation materials** to the building as needed.

Resources

- **Americans for Nonsmokers Rights** is a national organization that provides information and useful resources for landlords and tenants about smoke-free multi-unit housing including apartments, condominiums and public housing Intervention #C-T-C2 authorities. Resources and toolkits are located at <http://www.mnsmokefreehousing.org/>
- **Public Health Law & Policy - Technical Assistance Legal Center**. This organization is working with California communities, however many of their materials on their website may be useful in understanding the issue. www.talc.phil.org
- **Smoke-Free Environments Law Project**. This national organization provides legal information related to smoke-free multi-unit housing, including public housing facilities. Click on ETS & Apartments. <http://www.tcsg.org/sfelp/home.htm>
- **Tobacco Control Legal Consortium** has developed five legal synopses: “Infiltration of Secondhand Smoke into Condominiums, Apartments and Other Multi-Unit Dwellings,” “There is No Constitutional Right to Smoke,” “The Americans with Disabilities Act: Effective Legal Protection Against Secondhand Smoke Exposure,” “Legal Authority to Regulate Smoking and Common Threats and Challenges,” and “Legal Options for Condominium Owners Exposed to Secondhand Smoke.” <http://www.tclconline.org/>