SMOKE-FREE IS
LEGAL PROFITABLE EASY

A toolkit for property managers, owners and condominium associations to make their multi-unit buildings smoke-free.

RESPIRATORY HEALTH ASSOCIATION®

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SMOKE-FREE IS **LEGAL**

SMOKE-FREE IS **PROFITABLE**

SMOKE-FREE IS **EASY**

Everyone deserves to breathe clean air, especially at home.

In a multi-unit building, 35 to 65 percent of the air in any given unit is shared air from other units and common areas. No air ventilation system or air purifier can remove all of the toxins found in cigarette smoke, so residents are breathing in what their neighbors are breathing out.

Living in a building where smoking indoors is allowed increases the risk of heart attacks, stroke, lung cancer, and early death. Babies who breathe secondhand smoke are more likely to die from SIDS (crib death), and children who are exposed to secondhand smoke have an increased risk of asthma attacks and infections caused by tobacco smoke, including bronchitis, pneumonia and ear infections.

Going smoke-free doesn't mean that you don't allow residents who smoke. Simply put, a smoke-free building is one in which smoking is not permitted in any indoor units or common areas. Implementing a smoke-free policy is an important way to encourage healthy living and ensure a safer living environment for your tenants.

The market for smoke-free housing is growing. Renters are becoming increasingly aware of the dangerous health effects of smoking and secondhand smoke, and health-conscious and eco-friendly renters want to live in smoke-free buildings. A poll of Chicago renters found that 44 percent are willing to pay more to live in a smoke-free environment.

This toolkit provides the information you need to start transitioning your property to smoke-free. For more information, visit lungchicago.org or contact Matt Maloney at (312) 628-0233 or mmaloney@lungchicago.org.

Smoke-free housing is endorsed by The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the American Academy of Pediatrics, Sudden Infant Death Services of Illinois and Apartment People.

A WIN-WIN FOR OWNERS AND TENANTS

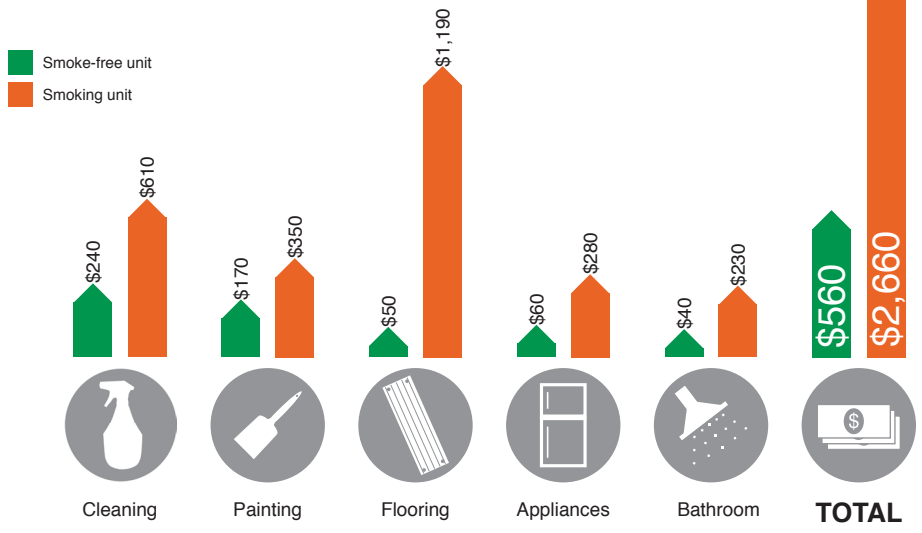
It's legal.

People who smoke are not a protected legal class, so there is no "right to smoke" under any U.S. law. In fact, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development encourages both public and private housing providers to implement smoke-free policies.

Property managers and associations are empowered by federal and Illinois law to make smoke-free rules for their properties just as they can make rules regarding pets or noise: to create a better, safer living environment.

It's profitable.

Going smoke-free protects your investment and your tenants. Smoking is a leading cause of residential fires, and allowing smoking increases turnover costs.



Data reflects surveys from housing authorities and subsidized housing facilities collected and reported by Smoke-Free Housing New England, 2009.

It's easy.

Smoke-free buildings are in demand in Chicago and across the U.S. Tenants prefer smoke-free environments and many already don't allow smoking in their homes, so smoke-free policies are largely self-enforcing. Plus, a majority (59 percent) of Chicago renters say they would be more likely to rent in a smoke-free building.

BY THE NUMBERS

443,000
deaths are caused by smoking and exposure to secondhand smoke in the U.S. each year.

1 in 5
Chicagoland residents are estimated to be affected by lung diseases such as asthma, COPD and lung cancer.

70
percent of people who smoke say they want to quit.

44
percent higher asthma rates were recorded among children who lived with a person who smokes.

35 to 65
percent of air in any given unit is shared air from other units and common areas.

44
percent of Chicago renters polled say they would be willing to pay more to live in a smoke-free building.

MAKING THE TRANSITION

1 MAKE A PLAN.

Create a policy and timeline that work for your property. Consider the measures and tools necessary to implement and communicate the policy, such as enforcement strategies and signage.

2 INFORM YOUR RESIDENTS.

Send a notification to your residents to let them know when the building will be going smoke-free, and include information on the benefits of smoke-free housing and resources to help people quit smoking. Provide a feedback form so that anyone who currently smokes in the building can notify you – that way you can anticipate tenants who may need extra time to transition. You can also hold a meeting with residents to address their questions.

3 AMEND ALL LEASES.

Update new leases or other governing documents to include the smoke-free policy and add it to existing agreements whenever possible. (You may have to delay implementation in certain units until lease renewal.)

4 PROMOTE YOUR STATUS.

Make it clear to current and prospective residents that the property is smoke-free. Keep signs or notices in community spaces such as bulletin boards, and note that the property is smoke-free in any marketing.

SAMPLE TIMELINE

Day 1
Review the policy and rollout documents with staff and managers.

Day 3
Order necessary signage, compile community resources for smoking cessation.

Day 10
Send out notification to residents that building will go smoke-free on a set date, ask for information on renters who smoke in their units.

Day 20
Review responses to notification, log units where people smoke, send follow-up to residents who did not respond.

Day 25
Hold a meeting to address resident questions and further explain the policy.

Day 30
Send out a reminder that the building will be going smoke-free in 30 days, and post reminders in common areas.

Day 60
Begin enforcing the policy and breathing easier.

Download a more detailed plan and timeline for implementation at www.lungchicago.org/smoke-free-housing-managers

GET STARTED TODAY

For more free resources, including sample leases and bylaws, information on secondhand smoke and materials to create resident buy-in, contact Matt Maloney at Respiratory Health Association: (312) 628-0233 or mmaloney@lungchicago.org

Window decals

Indoor and outdoor signs

Doorhangers

TESTIMONIALS

According to Maurice Ortiz of the Apartment People, a housing search firm serving Chicago and Evanston, "Smoke-free housing is an emerging trend in Chicago. Environmentally friendly and health conscious properties are simply easier to rent."

Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) concluded in 2005 that the "only means of effectively eliminating health risks associated with indoor exposure [to smoke] is to ban smoking activity."

In 2010, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development encouraged both public and private housing providers to implement smoke-free policies.

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