



Steps to go smoke-free

Smoke-free policies can help keep your residents safe from the dangers of secondhand smoke (SHS). They can also protect your investment in your property.

Tips to make your community smoke-free

- Talk about it! Sit down with residents who live in your building and talk about ways to make the complex smoke free.
- Do not allow smoking in your apartment or condominium. Politely ask people—even house guests—to smoke outside.
- Let others know that you are keeping your apartment or condominium smoke free to protect others from the harmful effects of SHS, not to punish someone who smokes.
- If you provide a designated smoking area, make it as comfortable as possible. Thank friends and family for helping to keep the community smoke free.
- Change the rental lease to ban smoking in the units, common areas, and on patios, or balconies.
- Make signs available to residents that indicate a smoke-free community. Post no smoking signs in common areas, playgrounds, etc.
- Offer incentives to support a smoke-free policy. A property owner or apartment manager can offer non-smoking residents an opportunity to move into vacated units that have been freshly painted or cleaned. This will help to create a smoke-free building.
- Let residents who may want to quit know about resources to help them stop smoking.

When your rental community decides to develop a policy to prohibit or restrict smoking, it is time to come up with a plan to help put the policy into place. Below are suggestions to implement a smoke-free policy in new and existing building(s).

New buildings

If it is a new community, it should be easy to implement a smoke-free policy. Your residents have no pre-existing expectations. Simply follow these steps to create a healthy and safe policy for your new property.

- Register your community at Utah's Smoke Free Apartment and Condominium Statewide Directory. This will help people who are looking for smoke-free housing find you.



- Advertise your property as smoke free in the newspaper and real estate magazine ads. This will set you apart from other multiple unit housing communities that allow smoking. It will also make it easier for you to deal with questions about the policy since potential residents know what to expect.
- Include smoke-free provisions in your lease/rental agreements. Putting smoke-free language in your lease or declaration makes it enforceable. Consult your legal advisor about the terms and language of rental agreements or declarations.
- Post signs that say smoke-free area or no smoking in designated areas. This will make enforcement of the smoke-free policy in common areas a lot easier.
- Educate employees on how to answer questions regarding the policy. The more your employees know about the law and policy, the easier it will be to deal with any problems that may come up.

Existing buildings

If you would like to implement a new smoke-free policy in an existing building, think about these helpful tips:

Make a plan. Decide what areas of your property you want to be covered in your smoke-free policy (i.e., units, outdoor areas, common areas, etc.) and decide which method would work best for your building(s).

- Phase in. Once a smoker moves out, the unit becomes smoke free. Fewer people will be against the policy using this approach; however, it delays implementation until all smokers have agreed to abide by the new policy or move out when their lease expires. An alternative would be to grandfather them for a certain amount of time, such as 3 or 6 months. This gives your residents who smoke time to get used to the policy.
 - Designate specific areas as smoke free. Separate sections, patios or hallways can be designated as smoke free. Select the area with the fewest number of smokers to become a non-smoking section. If there is more than one building, one building could be designated as smoke free.
 - Do not allow smoking in common use areas. Areas that everyone uses such as lobbies, hallways, balconies, laundry facilities, playgrounds, clubhouses, swimming pool, and spa areas can be made smoke free.
- Post smoke-free area or no smoking signs in designated areas. This will make enforcement of the smoke-free policy in common areas easier.
 - Remove ashtrays and move receptacles for smoking materials at least 25 feet away (or further if your policy requires it) from entrances. Put up signs to indicate smoking is not allowed. This will encourage residents and guests to smoke away from common areas.



- It is safe to assume not everyone will like the idea, but focus on the dangers of SHS, and the fact that SHS drifts from unit to unit. You may want to survey your residents to find out how much support you have for the policy. Surveys can also help you assess what buildings can easily be made smoke free, and then try to move non-smoking residents to those buildings. Offer an incentive, such as a free month's rent, to encourage residents to move.
- Let all residents know about the policy change in a letter. Ask renters to sign a copy saying they intend to comply with the new policy. Leases should be updated with the new smoke-free language, which becomes effective upon lease renewal. Putting smoke-free language in your lease makes it legally enforceable. You should consult your legal advisor about the terms and language of rental agreements.
- Put flyers in mailboxes and in common areas. If there is a resident newsletter, include information about the new policy to notify residents. Let them know about resources available to help smokers quit (e.g., Utah Quit Line at 1-800-QUIT-NOW or waytoquit.org).
- Educate employees on how to answer questions about the smoke-free policy. The more your employees know about the law and policy, the easier it will be to deal with any problems that may come up.
- If smoking is allowed in some part of the building, give your maintenance staff the right equipment such as door sweeps and caulking materials to deal with drifting smoke. But be aware that sealing treatments provide only a small benefit in reducing secondhand smoke exposure.
- Promote your smoke-free community. Advertise your property as smoke free in the newspaper and real estate magazine ads. Send out a press release to the media and develop a waiting list for individuals who are interested in moving to your community. This will set you apart from other multiple housing units that allow smoking. Register your apartment or condominium complex on Utah's Smoke Free Apartment and Condominium Statewide Directory. This will help people who are looking for smoke free housing find you.