

# SMOKE-FREE POLICY

## Information for Residents

To ensure the quality of air and the safety of residents and staff, all Cohoes Housing Authority properties will be smoke-free as of October 1, 2017.

### What is the smoke-free policy?

- Smoking will not be permitted indoors. This includes all common areas and individual apartment units.
- Smoking will not be permitted on the grounds. This includes balconies, porches, entryways as well as the entire grounds.
- The policy applies to residents, staff and visitors. Please tell your guests about the policy.

### Why is Cohoes Housing Authority going smoke-free?

- To protect everyone who lives, works or visits our buildings from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke. Because secondhand smoke travels between units, the only way to eliminate the health risk is to ban indoor smoking.
- To reduce the risk of smoking related fires, damages and deaths. Smoking is the leading cause of residential fire deaths and injuries.
- To create a cleaner, healthier building. Smoking in units leaves a residue on carpets, walls and furniture that is highly toxic and difficult to clean. This thirdhand smoke contains 250 chemicals and can cause learning problems in children and trigger asthma.
- HUD requires all public housing authorities to adopt a smoke-free policy by July 30, 2018.

### Is secondhand smoke dangerous?

- Secondhand smoke comes from tobacco that is burned in a cigarette, pipe, or cigar, including smoke that is breathed out by a smoker.
- Secondhand smoke can cause difficulty breathing, cancer, heart disease and other serious health problems in non-smokers. It is especially dangerous for children, babies, women who are pregnant and seniors.
- There is **no safe level** of exposure to secondhand smoke.

### Why does the policy include e-cigarettes?

Electronic smoking devices are currently unregulated products that have no requirements for ingredient disclosure, accurate labeling or quality control. The aerosol from e-cigarettes can contain a variety of toxins, including those that cause cancer. There have also been several reports of e-cigarettes exploding and catching on fire.

### Isn't a no-smoking policy discriminatory to smokers?

A no-smoking policy does not discriminate against smokers because it does not prevent anyone from renting a unit. Smokers are welcome to continue living in the buildings as long as they limit smoking to areas off the property.

Smoking is a behavior, not an inborn characteristic like race or sex, so prohibiting smoking does not target any particular group. Much like the rule prohibiting loud noise after a certain time at night, this rule is meant to prevent the behavior of one resident negatively affecting the living conditions of other residents.

### Am I required to quit smoking?

No. Smokers can continue to smoke, just not indoors or on Cohoes Housing Authority property.

Although this policy is not meant to force anyone to quit smoking, some may want to quit. For those who do, we encourage you first to contact your healthcare provider. Help is also available through:

- **The Butt Stops Here** - group counseling sessions, 4-week supply of nicotine replacement  
For more information, call 459-2550 or visit [www.healthprograms.org/the-butt-stops-here](http://www.healthprograms.org/the-butt-stops-here)
- **The New York State Smokers' Quitline** – coaching support, online community chat room, free 2-week nicotine replacement starter kit  
Call 1-866-NY-QUITS or visit [www.nysmokefree.com](http://www.nysmokefree.com)

### What should I do if I see someone smoking indoors or on the grounds?

- Support your neighbors and remind them of the new smoke-free policy.
- Submit concerns or complaints about policy violations to your Development Manager.

Cohoes Housing Authority is going SMOKE-FREE October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017