

Reading Housing Authority
Smoke-Free Policy

1. Background: In accordance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Final Rule (FR-5597-F-03), Instituting Smoke-Free Public Housing, Reading Housing Authority (RHA) has implemented this policy to prohibit the use of tobacco and other products in its Public Housing Program. This legislation is intended to improve indoor air quality, benefit the health of public housing residents and RHA staff, reduce the risk of fires and lower overall maintenance costs.
2. Effective Date: April 1, 2018
3. Applicability: The policy applies to all residents, guests, employees and contractors while on-site at any property owned and operated in conjunction with the Public Housing Program. This policy extends to all property, including but not limited to, all structures and grounds as described below.
 - a. Structures include all residential units, hallways, building common areas, entryways, community centers, porches, balconies and patios, rental and administrative offices and buildings, maintenance buildings, laundry centers and storage areas.
 - b. Grounds include any exterior area owned by Reading Housing Authority, including resident yards, grassy areas, playgrounds, interior sidewalks and parking lots, including vehicles parked in parking areas. This policy enacts a campus-wide ban on the prohibited products, as listed below.
4. Policy: Smoking is prohibited on any property owned and operated by Reading Housing Authority in conjunction with the Public Housing Program. "Smoking" means inhaling, burning or carrying any lighted or heated cigar, cigarette, pipe, or any other lighted or heated tobacco or plant product intended for inhalation, including water pipes ("hookahs"). "Smoking" also includes the use of an electronic smoking device ("e-cig") which creates an aerosol or vapor, in any manner or form, including by use of materials for "vaping".

Residents who violate this Smoke-Free policy will be considered to be in material non-compliance of the Lease Agreement. In accordance with Section 9 of the Lease Agreement, residents are responsible for the behaviors of their guests and minor household members, and as such, shall be considered to be in breach of the Lease Agreement resulting from violations to this policy that are committed by their guests and minor household members. Violations to this policy will be addressed with a 3-tiered approach, in which violations result in a written notice for the 1st infraction, followed by a written notice and mandatory in-person lease counseling for the 2nd infraction, and lastly, with the issuance of a 30-day notice of lease termination for the 3rd infraction. Property Management reserves the right to re-initiate the 3-tiered approach for cause, should violations occur after the passage of substantial time between occasions. RHA may elect to forgo the 1st and 2nd stages for subsequent episodes in which violations are provocative or deliberate.

Residents who observe violations of this policy are strongly encouraged to report the incident to the Property Management office, and may remain anonymous in doing so. RHA is committed to enforcing this policy to the greatest and most reasonable degree possible, and shall adopt strategic methods for education, enforcement and ongoing resident compliance. Equally, RHA asserts that the adoption of this policy does not make RHA a guarantor of a smoke-free environment or any resident health-related status associated with the policy.

While this policy does not require residents to quit smoking (but rather, requires that smoking does not occur on agency property as defined above), the agency embraces this opportunity to promote the overall health and wellness of residents by assisting with any desired smoking cessation goals for no less than 24 months following the effective date of this policy. Cessation materials, including access to written materials, counseling and support groups, and nicotine replacement therapies will be sought in conjunction with the Council on Chemical Abuse, Berks Community Health Center and others. Resident input, via partnerships with the Citywide and development-based Resident Councils, shall be pursued as the greatest avenue to ensuring successful implementation.

5. Contacts: Enforcement: Willis Center for Administration 610-775-4813 info@readingha.org
Cessation: Department of Resident Services 610-376-8413 residentservices@readingha.org