



The Benefits of Smoke-Free Living



Living in a smoke-free environment is one of the best things you can do for your health and the health of your family. It makes the air in your home cleaner and fresher, and your building a safer place to live.

What is smoke-free housing?

In smoke-free housing, smoking is not allowed anywhere in the building, including inside apartments. Because air moves around in multifamily buildings (even with good ventilation and air-sealing), not allowing smoking in apartments prevents secondhand smoke from traveling from one apartment to another. Smoking might also be restricted in certain outdoor spaces. Those who smoke can live in the building, but they cannot smoke there.

What are the dangers of secondhand smoke exposure?

There is no known safe level of exposure to secondhand smoke. Breathing secondhand smoke:

- Irritates your airways. This can make it harder to breathe and trigger respiratory symptoms, including coughing and wheezing.
- Increases your risk for heart disease, respiratory illness and lung cancer.

What are the health benefits of smoke-free housing?

- Raising children in a smoke-free environment will lower their risk for developing asthma, pneumonia, bronchitis and ear infections. For children with asthma, a smoke-free environment reduces the likelihood of frequent and severe asthma attacks. Children raised in a smoke-free environment are also less likely to become smokers as adults.

- If you are pregnant, eliminating exposure to secondhand tobacco smoke lowers your baby's risk of low birth weight and impaired lung development.
- For newborns, eliminating exposure lowers the risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS).
- Living in a smoke-free environment promotes healthier hearts and lungs.
- Smoke-free housing also reduces the risk of fire-related injuries and death.

What are other benefits of smoke-free housing?

- Your family, guests, pets and building staff will all find the air more pleasant to breathe.
- Your apartment will be free of the toxins from tobacco smoke that linger in carpets and walls long after visible smoke clears, which may be dangerous to your health.
- Your apartment will be "greener," thanks to improved indoor air quality.

Is smoke-free housing discriminatory?

Smoke-free housing does not ban smokers from buildings, only smoking. It does not violate federal Fair Housing Laws or the Americans with Disabilities Act. Landlords can (and many already do) prohibit smoking indoors. New York City's Smoke-Free Air Act already prohibits smoking within indoor common areas of residential buildings with 10 or more units.

What you can do:

LET YOUR LANDLORD OR MANAGING AGENT KNOW YOU SUPPORT GOING 100% SMOKE-FREE IN YOUR BUILDING!

If you smoke and would like help quitting, call 311 or visit nyc.gov and search NYC QUILTS.

