

East Point Housing Authority
Smoke-Free Housing Policy
June 1, 2018

I. Background:

The East Point Housing Authority (EPHA) owns and manages nearly 400 federally-funded family and elderly/disabled public housing units in the City of East Point. This portfolio varies from campus-like multi-family sites to an off-site smaller property. Regardless of building type, all EPHA public housing consists of attached units sharing property walls, with the majority of units in multi-level buildings with residents living next to each other.

Why go smoke-free? Secondhand smoke contributes to disease and early death. A known cause of lung cancer, secondhand smoke is also linked with heart disease and breathing problems in nonsmoking adults. The health effects of secondhand smoke are especially bad for children, older adults, and people with lung problems.

More than 600 public housing agencies (PHS's) have already gone smoke-free and now HUD will require the rest to join in.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) is encouraging Public Housing Authorities to adopt smoke-free policies. The purpose of this new policy is multifold: improved resident health, improved environment for employees accessing units, and decreased maintenance and insurance expenses. Smoke-free housing means that no one is permitted to smoke anywhere inside an East Point Housing Authority public housing building or outside any building within a specified distance of the building. The smoke-free policy applies to every member of the household, as well as all visitors to the unit. Violating the policy (by smoking on the premises) will constitute a lease violation and could result in enforcement actions up to and including eviction. **Smoke-free housing does not mean that smokers are prohibited from living at smoke-free buildings. It simply means that residents and visitors must smoke outdoors away from the premises.**

Partnership: QUIT SMOKING ASSISTANCE

EPHA has information from the **Georgia Tobacco Use Prevention Program (GTUPP) related to assistance with smoking cessation**. Public Housing Residents can call the Georgia Tobacco Quit line for help quitting smoking and using tobacco. EPHA's goal is to develop a smoke-free policy for the EPHA's HUD-funded units that meets the requirements of applicable HUD regulations. It is also our goal to apply the smoke-free policy to all sites on the same timeline as required by the federal government.

It is important to note that EPHA will partner with **Georgia's Department of Public Health** agency. EPHA will work hard to ease the transition process for residents who smoke. This partnership will continue to work directly with the resident community to offer education and cessation services during this transition period. These services include access to cessation programs, nicotine patches, a trained tobacco cessation specialist, support groups, referrals, and other resources. **While the smoke-free housing policy does not require smokers to quit or to move, smoking cessation and education resources will be available to ALL EPHA residents during the implementation period.**

¹ The hazards of second-hand smoke are broadly documented and it is not our goal to relay this well-accepted body of research in this policy statement. For more information on *the hazards of second-hand smoke*, see the *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site at http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/basic_information/secondhand_smoke/index.htm*.

II Proposed Policy

1. Purpose: The purpose of the smoke- free policy is to mitigate the irritation and known health effects of second-hand smoke in East Point Housing Authority (EPHA) buildings. In addition, it is intended to decrease maintenance costs and decrease risk of fire in EPHA units.
2. Definition of Smoking: The term “smoking” means inhaling, exhaling, breathing or carrying any lighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, electronic cigarettes, or other tobacco product, as well as marijuana or any other similar lighted product in any manner or any form.
3. Smoking will NOT be permitted on the East Point Housing Authority property, including but not limited to locations listed below. Violating the policy (by smoking in a smoke- free building) will constitute a lease violation and could result in enforcement actions up to and including eviction.

Section 1. EPHA Offices

Main office located at 3056 Norman Berry Drive
EPHA satellite office located at 3022 Randall Street
Community Buildings: 1148 Calhoun Avenue, 1147 Calhoun Avenue & 3045 & 3047 John Freeman Way
Maintenance location at 1706 Connelly Drive

Section 2. EPHA Vehicles

Smoking is prohibited within all EPHA provided vehicles.

Section 3. EPHA Playground Areas

Smoking is prohibited within in or around any playground areas located on EPHA property.

Section 4. EPHA Resident Properties

Smoking is prohibited in all apartments, shared porch areas, common use exterior walkways, entryways, **and parking lots.**

Section 5. EPHA Postal Station

Smoking is prohibited around all Postal Stations located on East Point Housing Authority Property.

- Effective June 1, 2018, all current and new residents, all employees, guests and visitors in and/or on East Point Housing Authority properties will be prohibited from smoking on all campus premises.
- Any resident, including the members of their household, guests, or visitors will be considered in violation of the lease if found smoking in any East Point Housing Authority facility or apartment, or anywhere on East Point Housing Authority properties. Three (3) violations will be considered to be a repeated violation of the material terms of the lease and may be cause for eviction.
- After the first warning, a cleaning charge of \$250.00 may be added to the resident account for each violation of the policy that occurs on or in East Point Housing Authority properties. (Any cigarette butts not properly disposed of may also be cause for a cleaning service charge.

ENFORCEMENT

- EPHA will implement a graduated enforcement approach including the following steps:
 1. Verbal Warning with referral to smoking cessation services
 2. Written warning with referral to smoking cessation services
 3. Final warning with referral to smoking cessation services
 4. Eviction proceedings.

- “No Smoking” signs will be posted both outside and inside of the East Point Housing Authority properties. Residents will be responsible to inform all their guests and visitors that their apartment is smoke- free and that their housing may be affected by violators.
 - If the smell of smoke is reported, East Point Housing Authority will seek the source of the smoke and appropriate action will be taken. Residents are encouraged to promptly give Landlord a written statement of any incident where tobacco smoke is migrating into the Resident's unit from sources outside of the Resident's unit.
 - Upon adoption of this policy, all residents presently living in East Point Housing Authority units will be given a copy of the policy. After review both incoming and current residents will be required to sign the smoke- free lease addendum. A copy will be retained in the tenant file.
5. Lease Enforcement of smoke- free policy: A violation of the smoke- free policy shall be considered a breach of the Lease and shall give the EPHA and resident all of the enforcement rights contained in the Lease.
 6. EPHA to Promote smoke- free policy: EPHA shall post no-smoking signs at entrances to all buildings and promote the smoke- free policy as appropriate in meetings and discussion with residents.
 7. Residents to Promote smoke- free policy: Residents shall inform their guests and occupants of the Smoke- free Policy.
 8. EPHA is Not a Guarantor of Resident Health: The smoke- free policy does not make the EPHA a guarantor of resident health or of the smoke-free condition of the resident’s unit or common areas.
 9. Reasonable Accommodation: Residents may request a Reasonable Accommodation in relation to the smoke- free policy, in accordance with the EPHA’s Reasonable Accommodation Policy. Residents must adhere to the smoke- free policy until such time as a Reasonable Accommodation is granted.

III. Proposed Process and Timeline:

The following steps describe the timeline and process by which the EPHA proposes to implement the policy at family and elderly sites over an 18 Month period:

1. The EPHA will continue to conduct surveys, outreach and community forums on an ongoing basis to ensure that EPHA residents are aware of the proposed policy and able to make suggestions about its implementation.
2. Georgia Tobacco Use Prevention Program (GTUPP), the partner will also work directly with the resident community to offer education and cessation services. While the smoke- free housing policy does not require smokers to quit or to move, smoking cessation and education resources will be available to ALL EPHA residents during the implementation period
3. Upon HUD approval of the EPHA 2017 Agency Plan, EPHA will begin to execute the new Lease Addendum with existing resident re-certification and with new placements. The Lease Addendum will alert new and existing residents that their housing is scheduled to become smoke- free at a future date to be noticed by EPHA. The EPHA will likely phase the implementation such that some units may become smoke- free before others. The earliest date that the EPHA expects to implement this policy at any occupied building is June 1, 2018.
4. A site-specific smoke- free Housing Plan will be developed for each site by March 30, 2018 for public review and comment`.

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