

Quick Guide to Responding to Community Housing Provider Enquiries

1. Recommend that the community housing provider meet with public health unit/agency staff in person to discuss the issue. This is an opportunity to share information about the health unit and available resources, as well as to learn more about the housing provider.
(Note that the housing sector is diverse, with many different kinds of social/community housing providers that house many different kinds of tenants.)
2. Suggest that a joint committee be established between public health and the housing provider to develop and implement a no-smoking policy. The Region of Waterloo's successful no-smoking policy implementation in 2009 is a great example of what can happen when organizations work together in partnership.
 - Refer to the Program Training and Consultation Centre (PTCC) document "The Development of a Smoke-Free Housing Policy in the Region of Waterloo: Key Success Factors and Lessons Learned from Practice":
<http://smokefreehousingon.ca/resources/program-training-consultation-centre/>
3. To get started, refer to the step-by-step guide developed for landlords:
<http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/how-to-guide/existing-buildings/>
 - Step 1: Strike a committee or working group
 - Step 2: Conduct a tenant survey <http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/tools-resources/tools/>
 - Step 3: Develop the policy <http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/tools-resources/tools/>
 - Step 4: Develop a communications strategy <http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/tools-resources/tools/>
 - Step 5: Develop an enforcement plan <http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/how-to-guide/enforcement/>
 - Step 6: Implement the no-smoking policy <http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/how-to-guide/existing-buildings/>
4. Keep in mind that access to smoke-free housing is a health equity issue.
 - To learn more, refer to the Smoking and Health Action Foundation document "Smoke-Free Affordable Housing: Picking on Poor People or a Case for Social Justice?":
<http://smokefreehousingon.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/social-justice-final.pdf>

Additional resources to share with housing providers include:

- A generic half-hour PowerPoint presentation geared to landlords from Smoke-Free Housing Ontario:
http://smokefreehousingon.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/generic_MUDs_ppt_for_landlords.pdf
- A list of Ontario housing providers that have adopted no-smoking policies:
<http://smokefreehousingon.ca/smoke-free-housing-directory/>



5. To help raise much-needed public awareness on this issue, take advantage of earned media opportunities. When a housing provider passes a no-smoking policy:
 - Offer to write a press release: <http://smokefreehousingon.ca/landlords/tools-resources/tools/>
 - Write a letter to the editor, congratulating the housing provider;
 - Give the housing provider an award, recognizing it as a “Smoke-Free Champion.”