

CHA Smoke-Free Housing Initiative Amended September 21, 2016

At its September 17, 2014 meeting the Chelsea Authority (CHA) Board of Commissioners approved a plan to make all its properties smoke-free as of September 1, 2015. The policy was further amended September 21, 2016, to comply with HUD's definition that Smoke-free includes the prohibition of lit tobacco products in all living units, common areas, administrative offices and all outdoor areas up to 25 feet from the housing and administrative office buildings. Smoking means the inhaling, exhaling, breathing, carrying or possession of any lighted cigarette, cigar, pipes, other product containing any amount of tobacco, or other similar lighted product.

The CHA owns and manages over 900 public housing apartments in Chelsea. The CHA's support for this initiative is a proactive measure to improve the health of our residents around the problem of second hand smoke. Our residents, particularly those who are senior citizens, have disabilities, as well as the children in our family developments, are impacted the most by this problem. The Board felt strongly that this is an important public health issue that needs to be addressed. This does not mean our tenants can't smoke, they just won't be able to smoke inside our buildings. The move is not meant to be punitive, but a move toward goals of overall wellness for residents, including the best air quality possible.

Furthermore, the CHA is looking forward to saving on the cost of repairs and maintenance from the damage caused by secondhand smoke, such as nicotine stained wall surfaces.

The CHA has been working on this initiative for the past year. Meetings were held for residents in each of its developments to seek comments on the plan and explain the dangers of second hand smoke.

It's important to note that the smoke free housing initiative does not impact those residents that receive rental subsidies through CHA under the Section 8 Program or state rental assistance programs and live in privately owned properties, unless the landlord has decided to do so.