

Smoke-Free Housing Policy

Great Barrington Housing Authority cares about your health and that of your neighbors. The purpose of the policy is to establish a smoke-free environment with all GBHA's buildings/grounds to promote the health and well-being of our residents, improve indoor quality, reduce the risk of fire, and create a comfortable living environment for all residents.

This Policy aims to:

1. **Protect the health of tenants from secondhand smoke.** There is evidence that exposure to smoke, direct or second hand, causes adverse health conditions, including, but not limited to, respiratory illness, cardiovascular disease, stroke, coronary heart disease, cancer, and asthma.
2. **Prevent fires and fire-related deaths** from smoking as smoking is the primary cause of home fire deaths.
3. **Reduce unit turnover costs.** The extent of the work required in renovating an apartment for re-occupying is much greater in a unit which was occupied by smokers than one which was occupied by nonsmokers.
4. **Protect property from damage.** Smoke free housing will help protect property from fires, odor, or stain damage.

Implementation

Implementation of the **updated** Smoke-free Policy **began July 6, 2023**, which supersedes the previous policies. **All forms of smoking are prohibited on all the GBHA properties. Smoking also includes the use of electronic smoking devices, such as e-cigarettes, vape pens or similar devices. Prohibited areas include individual apartments and commons areas, such as entry areas, community rooms, bathrooms, hallways, lobbies, laundry rooms, office spaces, etc.**

This policy applies to anyone on the GBHA including tenants, guests, visitors, employees, home health aides, visiting nurses, contractors, etc.

Tenants are responsible for informing their guests and visitors of this policy. The head of the household is responsible for the actions of its family members. The GBHA will post notices in all buildings and will inform all others referenced above.

Tenants who smoke are reminded that smoking cessation costs are considered a deductible medical expense. Tips and resources for quitting smoking are available at GBHA's main office.

We request that if a tenant or his/her guest must smoke, that he/she do so outside in the marked smoking areas or at least 25 feet away from any door or window to avoid smoke drifting or lingering. We also request that you safely dispose of all smoking materials i.e., cigarette butts and matches.

Reasonable Accommodation

Reasonable Accommodations will be considered for residents with disabilities who require smoking as a reasonable accommodation. Requests for reasonable accommodation must be made in writing and supported by appropriate documentation.

Enforcement and Reporting

Residents are encouraged to report any violations of the no smoking policy to the HA management office. Reports will be investigated promptly, and appropriate action will be taken to address the violations.

Complaints and Resolution

Failure by any GBHA tenant to abide by the smoke-free housing policy will be considered a violation of his/her lease and he/she will be subject to lease enforcement, up to and including termination of his/her lease.

All legitimate complaints of smoking against a tenant shall be referred to the Executive Director to pursue a resolution.

Upon receipt of a first complaint the ED will meet with the tenant against whom a complaint has been made and seek to resolve the matter. Note to tenant file will be made. Unit inspection will be scheduled. The HA will provide information and resources to encourage the residents to cease smoking.

Upon receipt of a second complaint the ED will meet again with the tenant to discuss the matter. The ED will inspect the unit and view for possible smoking activity. If found in non-compliance conditions may be set such as monitoring systems or routine apartment inspections. A tenant will be required to clean all smoke damage. Note to the tenant file will be made along with written violation.

Upon the receipt of a third complaint, the ED shall meet with the tenant and if noted to be in non-compliance will commence the process of a 30-day notice to quit for lease violation of the GBHA smoke free policy.

Liability for Damage

The cost of repairing or replacing any damage to housing authority property (exterior, interior, doors, walls, floor coverings and fixtures in the unit) which is a result of a tenants smoking shall be passed on to that tenant in accordance with the Lease for State-Aided Public Housing. Charges for damage will include materials and labor. The goal of the HA is to repair the damage as quickly as possible to improve air quality and when noted on inspection.

Grievance Procedure

If the tenant or complaining party is dissatisfied with resolution of the matter, he/she may file a grievance under the Grievance Procedure in effect for Great Barrington Housing Authority.

Amendments

This Smoke-Free Housing Policy may be amended from time to time as necessary.

This Policy supersedes all other GBHA smoking policies.

This no smoking policy is established to ensure a healthy and safe environment for all residents. It is the responsibility of every resident to adhere to this policy and cooperate in creating a smoke-free community.

I hereby acknowledge that I have received and understand the Smoke-free Housing Policy.

Tenant

Date

Address

Phone number

Approved by the board of commissioners July 6, 2023