

# Steps to Smoke-free Housing NY

## REALTORS' GUIDE

AS PUBLIC TOLERANCE for secondhand smoke exposure decreases, consumer demand for smoke-free apartments, coops and condos is rapidly increasing. Health and value-minded individuals and families want to live free from the annoyance and hazards of drifting secondhand smoke. They also understand that smoke-free properties have lower maintenance costs and higher value.

### 1 Capitalize on the Demand

- Consumers prefer smoke-free housing:
  - In New York, 74% of non-smokers favor no-smoking policies where they live.<sup>1</sup>
  - Many renters view smoke-free housing as a desirable amenity.
  - In fact, in a 2005 survey, 50% of NYC renters expressed a willingness to pay more to live in a smoke-free building.<sup>2</sup>

### 2 Know the Value

- Smoke-free properties preserve their value:
  - Apartments that smell of secondhand smoke are harder to rent.
  - Smokey coops and condos are harder to sell.
- Smoke-free properties lower maintenance costs:
  - Less cleaning is needed when turning over a unit.
  - Less painting is required.
  - Decreased need to clean or replace carpets or window treatments.
  - Less floor and counter damage.
- Smoke-free properties reduce fire loss:
  - Cigarettes are a leading cause of residential building fires.<sup>3</sup>
  - Discounts on fire, life and property insurance are offered by some companies to smoke-free buildings.<sup>4</sup>
- Smoke-free policies are a means for landlords and management companies to protect property and tenants from the damage caused by secondhand smoke. And smoke-free policy adoption is legal.<sup>1</sup>

### 3 Profit from Promotion

- Let consumers know that you represent smoke-free properties.<sup>2</sup>
- Add 'smoke-free' to the drop-down 'amenities selections' for consumers on your web-site.
- Create a special web section for smoke-free housing and/or list properties as smoke-free.
- Include special 'smoke-free housing' sections in brochures and newspaper ads.
- Remind prospective sellers and buyers of the added value.

*\*Indicates a definition or exception*

# References and Resources

## References

<sup>1</sup> The New York State Adult Tobacco Survey (ATS). Data collected between May and July 2007.

<sup>2</sup> *Annual Tobacco Attitudes and Actions Survey*, Zogby International for the NYC Coalition For A Smoke-free City, December 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Revised Regulatory Impact Statement, New York State Office of Fire Prevention and Control (Published 9/3/03).

<sup>4</sup> *Smoke Signals*. Report by Susan Schoenmarklin and Jacque Petterson, December 2007 [www.naahq.org](http://www.naahq.org).

\*Exception: Rent-controlled and rent-stabilized units operate under a different set of regulations.

\*Definition: "Smoke-free" is defined as a property whose written lease, by-laws or CC & R's explicitly prohibit(s) carrying or using a lit tobacco product in both public and private areas of the building. Landlords are advised to include the definition on promotional materials.

## Resources

*Coops, Condos & Secondhand Smoke*, New York Times, August 8, 2006

*MI Smoke-Free Apartments Factsheet*  
[www.mismokefreeapartment.org](http://www.mismokefreeapartment.org)

*Section 8 Housing, HUD & FHA*, Susan Schoenmarklin

*There is No Constitutional Right to Smoke*, Technical Assistance Legal Center



[www.SmokeFreeHousingNY.org](http://www.SmokeFreeHousingNY.org)

