

Fort Valley Housing Authority Smoke-Free Housing Policy

I. Background:

The Fort Valley Housing Authority (FVHA) owns and manage 100 federally-funded family and elderly/disabled public housing units in the City of Fort Valley, Georgia. This portfolio varies from campus-like multi-family duplex building types. Regardless of the building type, all FVHA public housing consists of attached units and shared property walls, with the majority of the units in duplex style buildings where residents are 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 (PHA'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, improve environment for employees accessing units, and decreased maintenance and insurance expenses. Smoke-free housing means that no one is permitted to smoke anywhere inside the Fort Valley 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

FVHA 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. FVHA goal is to develop smoke-free policy for the FVHA'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 FVHA will partner with **Georgia's Department of Public Health** agency. FVHA 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 or to move, smoking cessation and education resources will be available to ALL FVHA residents during the implementation period.**

Adopted by Fort Valley Housing Authority Board of Commissioners on May 29, 2018

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 Fort Valley Housing Authority (FVHA) buildings. In addition, it is intended to decrease maintenance costs and decrease risk of fire in FVHA 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 Fort Valley Housing Authority property, including but not limited to location 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. **FVHA Offices**

Main office located at 108 Anderson Avenue- Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

FVHA Family Investment Center located at 203 Hunt Street-Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

Maintenance Shop located at 203 Hunt Street-Fort Valley, Georgia 31030

Section 2. **FVHA Vehicles**

Smoking is prohibited in ALL FVHA provided vehicles.

Section 3. **FVHA Common Areas**

Smoking is prohibited in ALL common areas located on FVHA property.

Section 4. **FVHA Resident Properties**

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

- **Effective May 29, 2018, all current and new residents, all employees, guest and visitors in and/or on Fort Valley Housing Authority properties will be prohibited from smoking on ALL FVHA premises.**
- **Any resident, including the members of their household, guest, or visitors will be considered in violation of the lease if found smoking in any Fort Valley Housing Authority facility or apartment, or anywhere on Fort Valley 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 Fort Valley Housing Authority properties. (Any cigarette butts not properly disposed of may also be cause for a cleaning service charge.)**

ENFORCEMENT

- **FVHA 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 Fort Valley Housing Authority properties. Residents will be responsible to inform ALL guests and visitors that their apartment unit is smoke-free and that their housing may be affected by violations.**

- **If the smell of smoke is reported, Fort Valley Housing Authority will seek the source of the smoke and appropriate actions will be taken. Residents are encouraged to promptly give Landlord a written statement of any incident where tobacco smoke migrating into Resident’s unit from source outside of the Resident’s unit.**

- **Upon adoption of this policy, all residents presently living in Fort Valley 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 addendum. A copy will be retained in the tenant’s 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 FVHA and resident all of the enforcement rights contained in the Lease.
 6. FVHA to promote smoke-free policy: FVHA 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 guest and occupants of the Smoke-Free Policy.
 8. FVHA is Not a Guarantor of Resident Health: The smoke-free policy does not make the FVHA 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 smoke-free policy, in accordance with the FVHA’s Reasonable Accommodation Policy. Residents must adhere to the smoke-free policy until such time as a Reasonable Accommodation is granted.

