

## Fact sheet

March 2010

# Smoke-free areas

From 1 July 2005 smoking was banned in the internal common areas of Housing NSW properties. Internal common areas include: common and community rooms, shared laundries, stairwells, hallways, entranceways and lift areas.

### Why did these changes occur?

Housing NSW wants everyone to enjoy the environment they live in, and be able to use common or community rooms, shared laundries and other enclosed common areas safely. Exposure to cigarette smoke can dramatically affect the health of some people, particularly those suffering from emphysema and other respiratory diseases. These people may not be able to safely use common areas if other people are smoking. Everyone will benefit from the ban on smoking in internal common areas. Exposure to passive smoking can cause irritation to the eyes, nose, throat and lungs. It can also increase the risk of lung cancer and other lung diseases. The ban is also in line with government policy. In NSW, the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000* was introduced to prevent the harmful effects of passive smoking by requiring most enclosed public places in NSW to be smoke-free. By prohibiting smoking in internal common areas in our properties, we are voluntarily complying with the standards set by the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*.

### What has Housing NSW done to notify people?

Housing NSW has put up signs to identify the smoke-free areas that apply to everyone including residents, visitors, Housing NSW staff and contractors.

### What are my responsibilities?

Tenants who choose to smoke are still able to do so, once inside their own dwelling, on their balcony or in open spaces on Housing NSW property. Tenants are responsible for their own conduct, and for the behaviour of other household members or people who visit their home. Therefore, if you have someone visit you, it is requested you inform them of the no-smoking areas.

### Where can I smoke?

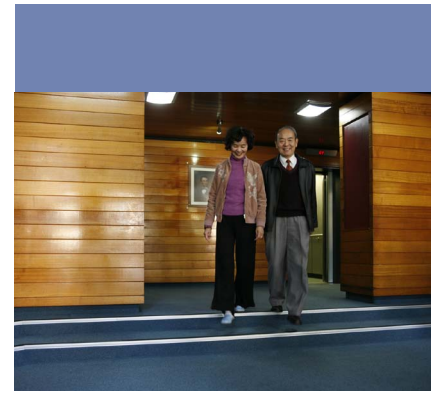
When in common areas, smoking is permitted in spaces that do not have a roof, or walls to enclose it as a room. Residents who choose to smoke are able to do so in their own apartments, townhouses, bedsitters, villas or houses. Tenants who choose to smoke are also able to do so in any private courtyard or on their balcony.

### What about staff and contractors?

Housing NSW staff and contractors employed by Housing NSW are not able to smoke in the enclosed common areas.

### Will there be any penalties for smoking in a smoke free zone?

Any ongoing breaches of the smoke-free zone policy will be addressed in line with Housing NSW's During a Tenancy Policy.



### I have smoked here for 20 years. Why do I have to stop now?

As a responsible landlord, we are identifying the internal common areas as smoke-free zones to take into consideration the rights of all residents, visitors, staff and contractors, who enter enclosed common areas. You can still smoke inside private areas of residential premises or in open common areas. Housing NSW is looking after the safety and well being of everyone in line with government policy.

### My neighbour is still smoking in a common area. What do I do?

Everyone has a responsibility to look after the environment they live in. If you see someone smoking in an internal common area, you should remind them about the ban and suggest they smoke somewhere that is not covered by the ban. Remember, at first, your neighbours may not even be aware of the ban. You can also consider whether you and your neighbours need to set up a designated smoking area outside. Please discuss any situation where a neighbour is breaching the During a Tenancy Policy with your client service officer.

### Where can I obtain information about quitting smoking?

Call Quitline on 131 848.

# Smoke-free Areas

## Where can I obtain further information about the *Smoke-free Environment Act 2000*?

Contact NSW Health on toll free 1800 357 412 or visit the website [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au)

## More information

For more information you can:

- visit your local office, Monday to Friday, 8.30 am–4.30 pm (closed public holidays and 8.30 am–1.00 pm on Wednesdays). Office hours may vary in some locations
- phone 1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746), 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- go to the Housing NSW website [www.housing.nsw.gov.au](http://www.housing.nsw.gov.au)

It is illegal for an officer of Housing NSW to ask for money or favours or other benefits of any kind in exchange for helping you with your housing needs.

It is also illegal for you or anyone else to offer money or favours or other benefits of any kind to an officer of Housing NSW in exchange for helping you. If you have any information regarding this, please contact Business Assurance on 1300 HOUSING (1300 468 746). Housing NSW may refuse the provision of further housing services to anyone who has engaged or sought to engage in corrupt or illegal conduct.

### Translation service

Arabic	خدمة الترجمة الخطية والشفهية الجانية اتصل على الرقم 131 450
Chinese	免費的翻譯傳譯服務 致電 131 450
Russian	Служба бесплатного письменного и устного перевода Позвоните по номеру 131 450
Spanish	Servicio Gratuito de Traducción e Interpretación Llame al 131 450
Vietnamese	Dịch vụ Phiên dịch và Thông dịch Miễn phí Điện thoại 131 450