

# 11.4(a)

**Sent:** October 15, 2019 3:43 PM

**Subject:** Advisory Committee for Persons with Disabilities  
Outstanding Business List Item 2017-B re: Smoke Free Policy for  
Social Housing

At the CityHousing Hamilton (CHH) Board meeting in September 2019, a Smoke-Free Living policy for our buildings was approved for implementation effective January 1, 2020 (see Report #19027, attached as Appendix "A" to this correspondence). Essentially, any new and transferring units will be rented as smoke free. Tenants currently living in our units will be grandfathered. It will take many years until a building is entirely "smoke free". This policy applies to CHH buildings and not "...all social housing in Hamilton". Please let me know if you require anything further.

Thanks,

Tom Hunter,  
CEO, CityHousing Hamilton



**Date:** September 24, 2019

**Report to:** Board of Directors  
CityHousing Hamilton Corporation

**Submitted by:** Tom Hunter  
Chief Executive  
Officer/Secretary

**Prepared by:** Kate Mannen,  
Manager Partnership  
Development and Support  
Services

**Subject:** **Smoke-Free Living Policy (Report #19027)**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

That the following CityHousing Hamilton (CHH) policy, information and actions be approved:

- (i) That the results of the smoke-free living resident survey, Appendix A, be accepted to support the development of a smoke-free policy for all CHH buildings to be implemented January 1, 2020.
- (ii) That Appendix B, respecting a Smoke-Free Living Policy for all CHH properties be approved.
- (iii) That Appendix C, respecting a smoke-free lease addendum for new and transferring tenants in all CHH buildings be approved.
- (iv) That tenants are aware of new smoking and vaping restrictions and prohibitions under the CHH Smoke-Free Living policy, Appendix "D 1-3".
- (v) That the CHH Smoking and Second Hand Smoke Survey, Appendix E, be received as information

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom Hunter".

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Tom Hunter  
Chief Executive Officer/Secretary

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

Building on the initial Smoke-Free Living policy passed in June 2018 and the Public Health Services/CHH resident survey conducted in Q1 2019, CHH proposes that all buildings should be smoke-free.

The Smoking and Second-Hand Smoke Survey results included responses from 912 households of which 68% resided in seniors' apartment buildings. Seventy-two percent do not currently smoke cannabis, tobacco and/or shisha. While 62% of respondents would support a smoke-free policy in all CHH buildings, 80% think smoking should be prohibited within 9 metres from CHH building entrances/exits. The CHH Smoking and Second-Hand Smoke Survey Results Infogram is presented as Appendix A.

Ontario legislation allows current residents to be grandfathered to allow smoking in their units until they transfer units or cease to be a tenant. The new policy would affect new and transferring tenants to any CHH building who will not be allowed to smoke or vape in their unit or balcony. In Ontario social housing, experience indicates it typically takes 15 years for a multi-dwelling building to become totally smoke-free.

**BACKGROUND:**

At the June 2018 Board meeting, the Board passed CHH's first smoke-free living policy (Appendix B), which prohibited smoking and/or vaping in any new or retrofitted CHH building. An odour control plan was also approved for apartment buildings in preparation of cannabis legalization in October 2018.

The Board also directed staff to

- (i) Explore the development of a smoke-free policy for all CHH properties through a resident survey.
- (ii) Ensure signage as prescribed in the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (July 1, 2018) is posted at entrances, exits and common areas.
- (iii) Ensure residents are aware of new smoking and vaping prohibitions under the Smoke-Free Ontario Act.

CHH, in partnership with Public Health Services, posted provincial smoke-free signage at entrances, exits and common areas in all multi-unit buildings. These became available and were installed in October 2018. Every resident received a letter from CHH informing them of the new smoke-free policy and changes to the Smoke-Free Ontario Act in Q3 2018.

The Smoking and Second-Hand Smoke Survey was conducted in March 2019. The survey is attached as Appendix E. Survey results demonstrate support for a Smoke-Free Living Policy, Appendix A.

An odour mitigation plan has been implemented utilizing education materials, an updated complaints policy and brochure, referrals to Public Health Services smoking cessation supports and a pilot program of smoke filtration devices. These devices, commonly used in cancer clinics, use essential oils to dissipate odour molecules. They have proven to be successful in eliminating tobacco and cannabis odours. Since the pilot inception in November 2018, 55 units at approximately \$100.00 per unit have been distributed to CHH apartments. Upon tenant requests or complaints Property Managers or Community Relations Workers assess the need and place them accordingly.

## **DISCUSSION:**

The Smoking and Second-Hand Smoke Survey results have been tabulated and analyzed by the City of Hamilton's Public Health Services. These results have informed the development and implementation of a Smoke-Free Living policy and implementation plan. Surveys were sent to CHH apartment buildings. The survey rate of return was similar to other large municipal comparators including Ottawa.

### **Survey Highlights:**

#### **Demographics**

- 4,134 surveys were distributed; 912 households responded providing a 21% return rate
- 68% of respondents reside in seniors' apartment buildings
- 72% do not currently smoke cannabis, tobacco and/or shisha

#### **Smoking in Homes and Health Impacts**

- 43% reported at least 1 person in their household have health problems that worsen with exposure to second-hand smoke
- 60% reported 'sometimes' or 'always' being exposed to second-hand smoke from tobacco in their home, including smoke drifting into homes from outside.
- 80% of respondents understand that breathing in second hand smoke from tobacco is harmful to a person's health

#### **Smoke-Free Policy Support**

- 38% of respondents would oppose a smoke-free policy in all CHH buildings signifying 62% would support a smoke-free policy.

- 80% think smoking should be prohibited within 9 metres from CHH building entrances/exits
- 49% are not concerned that current residents may still smoke in their homes if a smoke-free policy is in place.

In response to the survey results, recommendations have been developed to create a CHH wide smoke-free living policy and implementation plan for CHH buildings.

### **Implementation Plan**

Upon approval of a revised Smoke-Free Living Policy next steps include:

- Sharing survey results (Appendix A) with all tenants
- Communication to tenants, staff, contractors and community partners (Appendix D1, D2 and D3)
  - Education and awareness letters
  - Newsletter articles
  - Smoking cessation workshops
  - Wide distribution of complaints brochure
  - Targeted information sessions

### **CONCLUSION:**

CHH will continue the journey to smoke-free living through a multi-pronged approach including:

- a) Prohibiting smoking of any substance including tobacco, shisha and cannabis in all CHH buildings for new and/or transferring tenants.
- b) Educating tenants through signage, communication and education sessions on CHH's Smoke Free Living Policy and providing smoking cessation supports through a partnership with Public Health Services.

### **ALIGNMENT TO THE 2017-2021 STRATEGIC PLAN:**

This report implements:

#### **Community Engagement & Participation**

CityHousing Hamilton has an open, transparent and accessible approach in working with its residents to make a positive impact on the community.

#### **Healthy and Strong Communities**

CityHousing Hamilton believes that housing is a key influential determinant of health and is strongly tied to the quality of life as it impacts the physical, social, emotional and mental health of all persons.

**Built Environment and Social Infrastructure**

CityHousing Hamilton is committed to finding new ways to be innovative that will contribute a dynamic City characterized by unique infrastructure, buildings, and public spaces. The maintenance, renewal and new development of our housing stock will ensure that the quality of life, well-being and enjoyment of our residents', influences the design and planning of our homes.

**Culture and Diversity**

CityHousing Hamilton supports, accepts and celebrates people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. We work together to ensure residents have access to the supports and opportunities they need to succeed.

**Our People Our Performance**

CityHousing Hamilton aims at delivering consistent and excellent service for all its residents, while searching for ways to increase efficiencies and effectiveness in how we operate. To provide the highest quality of service to our residents within current resources, we work to empower staff to deliver on our service commitments by strengthening staff competencies, standardizing operating processes, streamlining services and technology and holding staff accountable to better respond to the needs of residents.

TH/km

Mission: We provide affordable housing that is safe, well maintained and cost effective and that supports the diverse needs of our many communities.