



Report To:	Program Planning Committee
From:	Donna Moroso, Director of Integrated Social Services and Rhonda McCauley, Social Housing Program Supervisor
Date:	April 23, 2014
Re:	<b>Social Housing Smoke Free - Issue Report</b>

## **Report:**

### **Purpose**

To update the Board on the progress of the tenant surveys and provide recommendations with respect to a Smoke Free Policy in Social Housing buildings.

### **Background**

Given the health impacts of smoking and second hand smoke, the transition towards smoke free is common in today's society. Workplaces, public spaces and residential living are embracing a smoke free environment.

While smoking is not specifically addressed in Ontario's *Residential Tenancy Act*, landlords may legally include no-smoking clauses in new tenancy agreements by banning smoking in individual units, including outdoor patio areas and balconies or any areas of the residential property.

Following the [Smoke Free Social Housing Buildings - Issue Report](#) dated January 23, 2014; the task of surveying residents with respect to smoking was undertaken. The survey asked five basic questions of residents including:

- declaration from the resident as to whether they are a smoker or allow smoking in the unit currently
- their interest in designating their building and unit as smoke free
- their interest in an offer of smoking cessation programs
- their interest in signing a new lease to designate their unit as smoke free.

The survey showed that currently 57.7% of residents smoke and 42.3% do not, receiving responses from 44% of residents for this question.

Based on the results of the surveys staff are recommending that we adopt an approach that has proven successful with other Social Housing Providers by using the attrition method. This will see all new tenancies adopting the smoke free Policy with leases to support no smoking in the unit, or on the balcony. Buildings currently have no smoking permitted in all common areas.

Using the attrition methodology, existing tenants may choose to adopt the Policy in their units and designate the unit to be smoke free for themselves and their guests. Current residents who smoke will be grandfathered in their current unit for the duration of their tenancy. This will not extend to moves or transfer to ground floor.

DSB staff will also be sending a letter to tenants on the wait list advising them of the new Smoke Free Policy, giving them the option to remain on the list or remove their name from the waitlist.

Further, as it is the goal of the organization to transition buildings to smoke free, residents will be offered support from local organizations for Smoking Cessation Programs.

Education and information will be the key to success of the program with non-compliance reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Once the Smoke Free Policy is approved, non-smoking units will be identified and designated as smoke free. Existing tenants, who wish to voluntarily designate their unit as smoke free, will sign an addendum to their existing lease. All new tenants will be required to sign leases that include a smoke free requirement.

New and amended leases will include information advising of the penalty for smoking in a smoke free designated unit, which will include a cleaning fee of \$300 and may result in termination of tenancy.

Designated smoking areas will be established and identified on each DSB property.

## **Conclusion**

Staff are recommending that the Manitoulin-Sudbury DSB move forward with the transition to smoke free within all Social Housing Buildings by adopting a Smoke Free Policy. Staff are recommending that the Smoke Free Policy for all new tenants take effect on January 1, 2015. Staff are recommending the January 1, 2015 effective date for this policy in order to allow DSB staff the opportunity to communicate these changes to current tenants and applicants on the DSB waiting list. This will also allow an opportunity to provide information, education and organize local organizations who provide Smoking Cessation Programs.

Current residents who smoke will be grandfathered in their current units for the duration of their tenancy and all residents will be informed of this phased-in approach so that they will understand that smoking may continue in some units.

Integrated Services Staff will educate residents and applicants alike of the transition to smoke free buildings to ensure that full understanding of the change.