

January 2017 - Sharing Resident Input Results

Jefferson County Public Health (JCPH) was invited by the Jefferson County Housing Authority (JCHA) to help residents prepare for the smoke/vapor-free housing policy which went into effect on November 1, 2016*. JCPH gathered information and input from residents to identify their needs which will help guide how to best support them in complying with the policy, improving overall well-being and engaging in healthier community connections. Information was collected from residents living in seven JCHA multiunit housing properties between July and December of 2016. This information was collected through the following methods:

- 1) Surveys distributed before (128 residents responded) and after (107 residents responded) the smoke/vapor-free policy went into effect
- 2) Questionnaires that collected participant feedback after resident sessions and workshops (approx. 154 resident contacts at these sessions and workshops)
- 3) Informal resident discussion sessions and Freedom from Smoking participants (approx. 50 resident contacts)
- 4) Confidential interviews conducted with residents who requested to be interviewed (8 residents interviewed)

All input provided by residents who smoke/vape, as well as those who don't, is very informative and useful. In addition to input from residents, JCPH assessed the levels of smoke particulate in indoor and outdoor common areas of all the properties. JCPH has summarized the highlights of the data collected in the attached document.

Things to note while reviewing the results and highlights:

- Individual-level identity and survey input/information is confidential and protected.
- JCPH grouped the results of the seven JCHA properties, rather than reporting results by individual housing properties.
- The attached document only reports a portion of the data; additional information will be available at: www.JeffcoSmokeFreeHousing.com

We would like to thank everyone who participated in this input process. The feedback will help ensure the success of the smoke and vapor-free policy.

Questions?

- For questions about the project or the results, please contact Donna Viverette at JCPH dviveret@jeffco.us or 303-275-7555.
- For questions about the policy, please contact JCHA at 303-422-8600.

****Note about JCHA's Smoke/Vapor-Free Policy:*** *The smoke/vapor-free policy that went into effect on November 1, 2016 was a result of the administrative decision of JCHA. Similar policies have already been implemented by many other affordable housing providers and public housing authorities in Colorado and across the nation. In Colorado, more than half of all public housing authority properties have these policies in place. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) may be requiring that all public housing authorities implement smoke-free policies by approximately early August, 2018.*

Smoke/Vapor-Free Policies, Well-Being & Multiunit Housing

2016 Jefferson County Housing Authority (JCHA) Resident Input & Survey Highlights



Resident Views on the Health Effects of Secondhand Smoke Exposure

Before the Smoke-Free Policy:

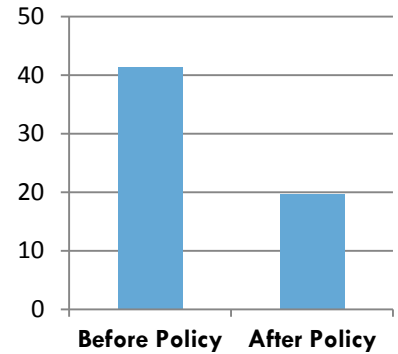
41.3% of residents said that exposure to secondhand smoke is affecting the health or comfort of their household.

“Smoke gets into the bathroom through our vent, and my wife has COPD.”

After the Smoke-Free Policy:

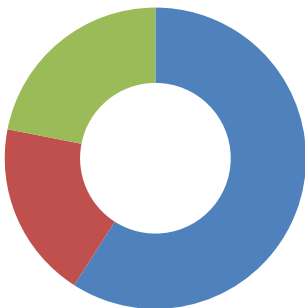
19.6% of residents said that exposure to secondhand smoke is affecting the health or comfort of their household.

“Better health for tenants, children or adults.”



Resident Views on the Smoke-Free Policy

Among residents who completed a follow-up survey:



- 59%** said the policy has had either a positive or somewhat positive effect on their household.
- 21.9%** said the policy has had a neutral effect on their household.
- 19%** said the policy has had a somewhat negative or negative effect on their household.

Before the Smoke-Free Policy:

“I would love a smoke-free policy. My neighbors smoke right outside our windows, and I don't want my 5-month-old breathing that.”

“I'm disabled and smoke. There are times that I'm not able to go outside, or even worse, have to walk off the property.”

After the Smoke-Free Policy:

“My family and I really appreciate this policy!”

“It's a violation of my rights.”

Assessment of Hazardous Smoke Particulate Levels

Approximately one month before the policy went into effect, an air quality monitoring device was used to measure smoke particulate outside units and in common areas. **For all seven JCHA properties** the air quality in these areas was found to be **unhealthy due to high smoke particulate levels**. Future monitoring is planned to help us compare smoke particulate levels following the policy change and during different climate conditions.



Resident Input About Complying with the Smoke-Free Policy & Personal Tobacco Use

Before the Smoke-Free Policy:

18.9% of residents who completed a survey reported that they were concerned about not being able to smoke and/or vape inside their apartment.

After the Smoke-Free Policy:

11.4% of survey respondents reported a concern about not being able to smoke/vape inside their apartment.

Additional Information:

- **8 out of 10** who attended the policy information session reported greater understanding of the smoke-free policy.
- **21.1%** of all residents who completed the pre-survey reported that they or another household member smoked/vaped in their apartment one or more times a day.

Getting help to cut back or quit:

➔ **13.5%** of residents who smoked or vaped reported on the post-survey that they have quit smoking or vaping since the policy went into effect.

➔ Among those who attended the Freedom from Smoking sessions, all reported reducing tobacco use to some extent. Several residents reported reducing to less than a pack a day from previous use of up to two packs a day.

In addition, **37.5%** of participants made at least one quit attempt during the program, with some expressing intent to continue working on quitting for good.

“ I’m someone who smokes, and this policy has been a good thing. I have cut back from 2 packs a day to less than 10 cigarettes a day. ”

~Anonymous Resident

General Life Experiences/Health & Well-Being

- More than **75%** of survey respondents reported that they are happy with their living situation at JCHA.
- When asked about what residents liked about their JCHA property, they reported the following:



Affordable Rent: 83%

Manager/Staff: 51.9%

Relationship with Neighbors: 48.1%

- About **75%** of respondents rated their general health as good to excellent.
- About **80%** of respondents said they agree that it is important to have a strong sense of community in their housing community, though about **35%** stated that they do not know many of their neighbors.
- More than **30%** of respondents reported having been homeless.
- **94.1%** of residents who completed the post survey said that they are either very hopeful or somewhat hopeful about what the future holds for them and their family.

Feedback from Residents who Attended Workshops & Sessions: Benefits to Participation

- **54.2%** of residents reported being much more confident identifying barriers to communication.
- **64%** of residents reported being much more confident engaging in communication that was effective.
- **87.5%** of residents reported that having sense of community is important to health and well-being.
 - Residents want to build community by having a greater number of activities and communal spaces.

Reasons for Feeling Welcome in the Community:

“Management and neighbors are very friendly and helpful. The community feels safe and very well-maintained.”

“My manager and neighbors make sure I'm okay.”

Reasons for Feeling Unwelcome in the Community:

“Need for more input [such as a] Resident's Council.”

“I am just unacquainted with my neighbors. I do participate in groups should those opportunities present themselves.”

Additional Information:

Having a Sense of Community is Important:

- **83.3%** of residents reported yes: sense of community promotes feeling of safety
- **79.2%** of residents reported yes: sense of community promotes happiness
- **70.8%** of residents reported yes: sense of community promotes emotional well-being
- **70.8%** of residents reported yes: sense of community lessens feelings of loneliness
- **62.5%** of residents reported yes: sense of community promotes physical well-being



Understanding the Policy and Its Impact:



- ✓ **100%** of residents answered correctly regarding where smoking is not allowed under the smoke-free policy.
- ✓ **66.7%** of residents answered correctly regarding whether residents must quit smoking under the smoke-free policy. *(The policy does not require that residents quit.)*
- ✓ **94.7%** of residents reported true: these types of policies are proven to reduce exposure to secondhand smoke.

Increasing Understanding and Reducing Tensions:

Some residents participated in sessions to increase understanding and reduce tensions between those who support the policy and those who are challenged by it. Those who participated reported a **60%** improvement related to feelings of tension/conflict after the sessions and a **16%** increase in support for the policy:

Before the Sessions -
Reported feelings of no tension/conflict: **13.3%**



After the Sessions -
Reported feelings of no tension/conflict: **21.4%**

Pre-Survey -
Support the policy: **40%**



Post-Survey -
Support the policy: **46.4%**

This information has been compiled and presented by Jefferson County Public Health as part of a project to support residents and staff at JCHA with adapting to the smoke and vapor-free housing policy effective November 1, 2016. This document includes highlights from confidential resident pre and post-survey findings, input sessions, workshops and interviews. For additional information about the project or the information presented in this document, please contact Donna Viverette at Jefferson County Public Health dviveret@jeffco.us or 303-275-7555.

