



CITY OF RIVERSIDE

# SMOKE-FREE HOUSING



## GENERAL QUESTIONS



### What is a smoke free multi-unit housing ordinance?

Smoke-free multi-unit housing policies are local laws and ordinances that regulate smoking in all residential units with shared walls, most typically rental units in apartment buildings. The City of Riverside recently adopted its own smoke free multi-unit housing ordinance which is in effect now.



### Why is it needed?

Per the California Department of Public Health, secondhand smoke is toxic and can travel through vents, pipes, windows and small cracks in drywall, and plaster between adjoining units. Smoke can also be absorbed into carpets, drapes, furniture, clothes and toys. The harmful chemicals found in smoke can be present in the air for months after exposure. Because of this, the separation of smoking from non-smoking residences or units does not eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke. The only way to completely prevent exposure to secondhand smoke in apartments/multi-unit housing is by implementing a smoke-free policy for all units.



### Who does it apply to?

The smoke free multi-unit housing ordinance (Riverside Municipal Code 6.27) applies to all multi-family housing with 2 or more dwelling units within the City of Riverside excluding condominiums, townhomes, hotels/motels, accessory dwelling units with a detached unit on a single-family zoned property, and mobile homes.



### When does it take effect?

The law took effect on July 28, 2022.



### Does it apply to my existing lease/rental agreement?

No. This law shall be in force prior to the effective date of a new lease, or of an amendment that extends the term or renegotiates the terms. All new leases moving forward must include the smoke free provisions.



### Who should I call to make a complaint?



(951) 826-5311  
RiversideCA.gov/311

#### Code Enforcement Division

(951) 826-5633  
Monday – Friday  
7 A.M. – 5 P.M.



### Where can I get additional information?

- **Code Enforcement Division: (951) 826-5633**  
Monday through Friday between 7 A.M. and 5 P.M.
- **The actual ordinance can be found by visiting the City of Riverside Municipal Code Section 6.27 at:**  
[Library.Municode.com/ca/riverside/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](http://Library.Municode.com/ca/riverside/codes/code_of_ordinances)
- **[RUHealth.org/public-health/tobacco-control-project](http://RUHealth.org/public-health/tobacco-control-project)**

## TENANTS



### What if my neighbor is smoking?

If your neighbor is smoking in a designated non-smoking area, please contact your property manager or landlord to report this.



### What if I don't comply?

Your landlord can take private civil action to enforce the terms of your lease. In addition, the City does have the ability to issue administrative citations for between \$100-\$500 per violation.

## OWNERS/MANAGERS



### What do I need to do as a property owner/manager?

If you own or manage a multi-family housing development such as an apartment building, triplexes, duplexes, etc., The law obligates you to designate this property as smoke free. You may designate an outdoor smoking area and you must post "no smoking" signs throughout the property. In addition, you are required to include non-smoking lease terms and a copy of this law with all new leases and all existing leases at the time they are amended, extended, or renegotiated.



### Can I designate a smoking area?

Yes. This designated smoking area must not be in an enclosed area located at least 25' from any enclosed areas, play area, swimming pool or other recreation area, be no more than 25% of the total outdoor area, have a clearly marked perimeter with signs posted in a conspicuous place, and not overlap with any other areas designated as non-smoking.



### Where do I need to place signs?

"No Smoking" or "Smoke Free" signs shall be conspicuously posted throughout the property. Signage required by this section shall be prominently displayed, shall clearly recite the phrase "No Smoking" and/or use the international no-smoking symbol and shall cite the appropriate section of the City of Riverside Municipal Code. (RMC 6.27) Such signs shall be posted not less than five feet nor more than eight feet above the floor and shall be of sufficient number and location to cause the message of the signs to be clearly visible and readable.



### What if my tenant is smoking?

Any Person, including a legal entity, organization, or a government agency, acting for the interests of itself, its members, or the general public, may bring a civil action against any person violating the provisions of this Chapter. You may enforce the terms of your lease.



### What if I don't comply?

The City is authorized to enforce this chapter via any remedies available in Title 1.17 of the Riverside Municipal Code including, but not limited to, administrative citations, daily civil penalties and the filing of infraction and misdemeanor complaints with the Superior Court.



For more information, contact the  
Code Enforcement Division at  
(951) 826-5633 or visit

[RiversideCA.gov/Code](https://www.RiversideCA.gov/Code)