

# HOUSING NEWS YOU CAN USE

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2018

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MAHRO Housing  
Committee

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- Smoke Free Rule
- HOTMA Bytes
- 2018 Harold Panter Award

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### TENANT INFO:

- Smoke Free Benefits
- Hurricane Season Disaster Preparedness

## Smoke-Free Rule NO "BUTTS" ABOUT IT...

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's rule to restrict smoking in public housing went into effect on February 3, 2017. The rule requires public housing agencies (PHAs) administering public housing to adopt a smoke-free policy by July 30, 2018.

The policy must prohibit the use of "prohibited tobacco products" in all indoor areas, including individual living units, common areas, administrative office buildings, and outdoor areas within 25 feet of those areas. The smoke-free policy must be included in the applicable PHA plans and tenant leases.

Enforcement of the PHA's smoke-free policy is the responsibility of the local PHA.

The rule and accompanying documents, such as Notice PIH-2017-03, include suggestions for compliance and enforcement. The rule does not grandfather existing smoke-free policies that do not meet the minimum HUD requirements.

"Prohibited tobacco products," are defined as both "waterpipes (hookahs)" and "items that involve the ignition and burning of tobacco leaves, such as (but not limited to) cigarettes, cigars, and pipes." While the rule does not include electronic cigarettes (e-cigarettes) or other electronic smoking devices, PHAs can choose to prohibit the use of e-cigarettes in their smoke-free policies.

## HOTMA BYTES

### Three of the Five Immediately Effective Provisions Apply to the HCV Program

#### Section 102(d). Reasonable Accommodation Payment Standards

- PHAs may establish, without HUD approval, a payment standard or up to 120% of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) as a reasonable accommodation for a person with a disability.

#### Section 107. Establishment of Fair Market Rent

- Changes how HUD publishes FMRs and changes the process for public input into FMRs
- When the FMR decreases, PHAs may choose to continue to use the existing payment standard for as long as the family continues to receive voucher assistance in that unit.

#### Section 110. Family Unification Program for Children Aging Out of Foster Care

- Increases the length of term that a FUP-eligible youth may receive assistance from 18 months to 36 months.
- Expands the eligibility requirements to those aged 18 to 24 that are homeless or at risk of being homeless and for those that left foster care at age 16 or older, or those that are within 90 days of leaving foster care.

## 2018 Harold Panter Award

The Harold Panter Award is MAHRO's Maintenance Employee of the Year award. This award applauds excellence in the ranks of the maintenance department of PHA's within the State of Mississippi. This award is sponsored by the Maintenance Advisory Committee, Co-Chaired by Bobby Collins and Ray Jackson. The winner of this year's award is **Adolf Phillips** of Columbus Housing Authority. The award was presented during the MAHRO Annual Conference breakfast at Beau Rivage in Biloxi on August 17.





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## HUD'S SMOKE FREE RULE WENT INTO EFFECT JULY 30, 2018



### How Does Smoke free Housing Benefit Housing Managers and Protect Residents?

There are proven benefits of smoke free housing for landlords, managers and their residents including:

**Improved safety.** Smoke free housing reduces fires caused by smoking. It is estimated that smoking causes more than 100,000 fires each year nationwide, resulting in more than 500 deaths and nearly a half a billion dollars in direct property damage.

**Cost Savings.** HUD's smoke free rule will reduce damage and maintenance costs associated with smoking. According to CDC, HUD's national smoke free policy will save public housing agencies \$153 million every year, including \$43 million in renovation of smoking-permitted units, \$16 million in smoking-related fire losses, and \$94 million in secondhand smoke-related health care expenditures.

**Improved Health.** The home is a major source of secondhand smoke exposure, especially for children. Eliminating smoking in indoor spaces is the only way to fully protect nonsmokers from exposure to secondhand smoke in these settings. More than four in five U.S. households have adopted smoke free home rules. However, even when they adopt such a rule, residents of multiunit housing can still be exposed to secondhand smoke that seeps into their units from other units and common areas.

## Disaster Preparedness— HURRICANE SEASON

The hurricane season officially began on June 1, 2018, and will end on November 30, 2018.

Because of the very active hurricane season this year, it is important to share information to help you in the event that you are involved in a hurricane or other storms resulting from hurricane activity near your area.

We've included a food and water checklist to help you be better prepared in the event of emergency.

### FOOD AND WATER CHECKLIST

#### **WATER**

- \* Store water in plastic containers such as soft drink bottles. Avoid using containers that will decompose or break, such as milk cartons or glass bottles. A normally active person needs to drink at least two quarts of water each day. Hot environments and intense physical activity can double the amount needed. Children, nursing mothers, and ill people will need more.
- \* Store one gallon of water per person per day.
- \* Keep at least a 3-day supply of water per person.



#### **FOOD**

Store at least a 3-day supply of non-perishable food. Select foods that require no refrigeration, preparation or cooking, and little or no water. If you must heat food, pack a can of sterno. Select food items that are compact and lightweight. Include a selection of the following foods in your disaster supplies kit:

- \* Ready to eat canned meats, fruits, and vegetables.
- \* Canned juices
- \* Staples (salt, pepper, sugar, spices)
- \* High energy foods
- \* Vitamins
- \* Food for infants