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## FEDERAL PROPOSAL MOVES AMERICAN HOMES IN A SMOKE-FREE DIRECTION

*Four out of five non-smokers would prefer a smoke-free building policy*

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**Sanford, Fla.** – Floridians living in standardized public housing may be breathing easier soon, as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Secretary Julian Castro has introduced a smoke-free policy in HUD-affiliated public housing authorities nationwide.

The Bureau of Tobacco Free Florida (BTFF), the state’s comprehensive tobacco prevention and cessation program, has been working to educate public and private housing managers about the benefits of smoke-free policies for over three years and is encouraged by this development.

The bureau’s list of multiunit properties that have enacted voluntary smoke-free policies has grown to more than 1,000 properties since tracking began in 2010. Public housing units have also been making the change.

“Secondhand smoke exposure poses serious health threats to children and adults,” said Dr. Swannie Jett, Health Officer for DOH-Seminole. “For residents of multiunit housing, secondhand smoke can be a major concern.”

Benefits of smoke-free buildings include:

- Better health. Smoke-free air laws decrease secondhand smoke exposure among nonsmokers, reduce heart attack and asthma hospitalizations and encourage smokers to quit.<sup>1</sup>
- Increased safety. Smoke-free policies reduce fire risks for residents, owners and property managers.<sup>2</sup>
- Decreased secondhand smoke exposure. Secondhand smoke can travel from other units through doorways, cracks in walls, electrical lines, plumbing and ventilation systems.<sup>3,4</sup>

Smokers residing in HUD-affiliated public housing should be aware that it is difficult but not impossible to quit smoking. In fact, 63.5 percent of adults who have ever smoked have quit, and there are more former smokers in Florida than current smokers.<sup>5</sup> Having a comprehensive quit plan increases the success rate. Tobacco Free Florida offers 3 Ways to Quit, which are free and easy to access:

- CALL: Call Tobacco Free Florida at 1-877-U-CAN-NOW to speak with a Quit Coach® who will help you assess your addiction and help you create a personalized quit plan.
- CLICK: Tobacco Free Florida’s online cessation tool can be accessed at [tobaccofreeflorida.com/webcoach](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/webcoach).
- COME IN: In person help is available with the help of Area Health Education Centers, find one near you at [tobaccofreeflorida.com/ahec](http://tobaccofreeflorida.com/ahec)

The Seminole County Housing Authority is located on 662 Academy Place, Oviedo, Florida. Business hours are Monday through Thursday from 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Call 407-365-3621 for more information.

### **About the Florida Department of Health**

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Healthy Homes Manual: Smoke-Free Policies in Multiunit Housing. 2011. [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/Healthy\\_Homes\\_Manual\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/Healthy_Homes_Manual_WEB.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Healthy Homes Manual: Smoke-Free Policies in Multiunit Housing. 2011. [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/Healthy\\_Homes\\_Manual\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/Healthy_Homes_Manual_WEB.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> Pizacani, B et al. Moving Multiunit Housing Providers Toward Adoption of Smoke-Free Policies. *Prev Chronic Dis.* 2011;8(1). [http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2011/jan/10\\_0015.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2011/jan/10_0015.htm)

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Healthy Homes Manual: Smoke-Free Policies in Multiunit Housing. 2011. [http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/Healthy\\_Homes\\_Manual\\_WEB.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/healthyhomes/Healthy_Homes_Manual_WEB.pdf)

<sup>1</sup> Tobacco Free Florida <http://www.tobaccofreeflorida.com/fact-database/>