

From the Office of: _____

Date: _____

To Whom It May Concern,

It has come to my attention that my patient, _____, and their family live in your building where residents are currently smoking tobacco products, such as cigarettes, cigars or hookah, inside their apartments. Tobacco smoke from neighboring units can travel through walls, floors, ceilings, vents and electrical ducts. Breathing in secondhand smoke is a threat to everyone's health. Making all units in your building smoke-free would help my patient, their family and everyone who lives and works in your building stay healthy.

As of August 28, 2018, all residential buildings with three or more units must create a smoking policy and share it with current and future tenants as required by local law 147.* While this policy does not require your building to be smoke-free, it is the healthiest option for all tenants, employees and visitors.

There is no safe level of secondhand smoke exposure. Adults exposed to secondhand smoke have higher risks of health problems such as stroke, heart disease, respiratory disease and lung cancer. Children exposed to secondhand smoke have higher risks of asthma attacks, sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), and respiratory and ear infections. The home is the main place both children and adults are exposed to secondhand smoke. The only way to protect yourself and your tenants from secondhand smoke is to make your building completely smoke-free.

You can make your building smoke-free by amending residential unit leases and by-laws to include a provision banning smoking in individual units, on balconies and in courtyards. Existing tenants must be notified of the change.

If your building is already smoke-free, I applaud you for taking this step to protect residents' health. To make it easier to enforce your policy, the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene provides tools, educational resources and signage. Please visit nyc.gov/health and search for **smoke-free housing** for more information.

Respectfully,

*Buildings must exempt rent-stabilized or rent-controlled units where the resident does not agree to the policy. However, terms can be added to a new lease for a rent-regulated unit if a new tenant moves in.