



South Dakota Department of Health

Multi-Unit Housing Policy Evaluation Guide

The attached guide and rubric serve as an internal scoring tool for housing complexes to evaluate their existing tobacco-free policies. The resource closely mirrors tools referenced by South Dakota State University's 2015 policy evaluation guide¹ and follows close consideration provided by the Centers for Disease Control². The overall policy score was determined by taking the sum of all sections and dividing by 5, with 5 being the maximum score given to a policy.

To access the South Dakota Department of Health's recommended tobacco-free policies, please visit <https://quittobaccosd.com/resources/advocacy-tools/policy-support-materials>.

For more information or permission to use this attached guide, please contact Hilary Larsen (Hilary.Larsen@state.sd.us).

¹ <https://goodandhealthysd.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/HealthcareModelTFPolicyAssessmentTool.pdf>

² https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/stateandcommunity/tobacco-control/pdfs/evaluation_toolkit.pdf

Tobacco-Free MUH Policy Evaluation Guide

Complex Name: _____ Date: _____ Scorer: _____ OVERALL: _____/20

Section A. Product Coverage		
A1. E-cigarette/vapes? YES or NO	A2. Synthetic nicotine? YES or NO	A3. Tobacco waste? YES or NO
A4. Traditional tobacco exceptions? YES or NO	A5. Cessation product exceptions? YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Section B. Facilities		
B1. All indoor units and private balconies? YES or NO	B2. Common areas and amenities? YES or NO	B3. Outdoor grounds and parking lots? YES or NO
B4. 25-foot buffer zones enforced? YES or NO	B5. Applies to tenants, guests, staff, and contractors? YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Section C. Consequences		
C1. Enforcement procedures defined? YES or NO	C2. Tiered consequences defined? YES or NO	C3. Landlord takes reasonable enforcement steps? YES or NO
C4. Referral to SD Quitline, or another appropriate cessation tool? YES or NO	C5. Cultural exemptions (traditional tobacco?) YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Section D. Communication/Implementation		
D1. General communication of policy? YES or NO	D2. Signage about policy? YES or NO	D3. Policy included in orientation or staff materials? YES or NO
D4. Designates individual/office responsible for policy? YES or NO	D5. Revised within past five (5) years? YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Section E. Other Considerations – NO POINTS ASSIGNED		
E1. Does policy acknowledge limitations in enforcement? YES or NO	E2. Are tenants encouraged to report violations? YES or NO	E3. Does the policy address tenant-to-tenant rights or complaints? YES or NO

STRENGTHS

WEAKNESSES

SECTION SCORING SPECIFICS & EXPLANATIONS

Section A: Product Coverage

Section A. Product Coverage					
A1. E-cigarette/vapes?	YES or NO	A2. Synthetic nicotine?	YES or NO	A3. Tobacco waste?	YES or NO
A4. Traditional tobacco exceptions?	YES or NO	A5. Cessation product exceptions?	YES or NO		
					SECTION: ____ / 5

Rationale:

This section assesses the comprehensiveness of the policy in addressing various tobacco and nicotine products. A strong multi-unit housing (MUH) smoke-free policy should regulate both combustible and non-combustible products and define appropriate exemptions. This prevents enforcement gaps and ensures alignment with community health goals.

Instructions:

For each product category, indicate **YES** if the policy explicitly includes it and **NO** if it does not.

- **A1. E-cigarette/vapes:** Does the policy regulate e-cigarettes and vaping devices?
- **A2. Synthetic nicotine:** Does the policy cover synthetic/analog nicotine used in products like pouches or lozenges?
- **A3. Tobacco waste:** Does the policy cover tobacco waste, such as cigarette butts or disposed vape devices?
- **A4. Traditional tobacco exceptions:** Does the policy make exceptions for specific traditional tobacco products (e.g., ceremonial or cultural use)?
- **A5. Cessation product exceptions:** Does the policy exclude FDA-approved cessation products (e.g., nicotine patches, gum, lozenges) from restrictions?

Each "YES" answer earns **1 point**, with a total possible score of **5 points**.

Section B: Facilities

Section B. Facilities		
B1. All indoor units and private balconies? YES or NO	B2. Common areas and amenities? YES or NO	B3. Outdoor grounds and parking lots? YES or NO
B4. 25-foot buffer zones enforced? YES or NO	B5. Applies to tenants, guests, staff, and contractors? YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Rationale:

This section evaluates the breadth of the policy across the housing environment. A strong policy applies not only to individual units but also to shared and outdoor spaces. It should apply universally to tenants, guests, staff, and contractors to ensure consistency and fairness. Buffer zones help prevent smoke drift into homes and public areas.

Instructions:

Review the policy and determine whether it includes each of the following elements. Mark **"YES"** if the policy explicitly includes the measure and **"NO"** if it does not.

- **B1. All indoor units and private balconies:** Are smoke-free rules extended to units, patios, decks, and balconies?
- **B2. Common areas and amenities:** Are all shared spaces — including hallways, elevators, laundry rooms, etc. — covered?
- **B3. Outdoor grounds and parking lots:** Does the policy prohibit smoking on the premises, including recreational and entry areas?
- **B4. 25-foot buffer zones enforced:** Does the policy restrict smoking within a set distance (e.g., 25 feet) from building entrances and windows?
- **B5. Applies to tenants, guests, staff, and contractors:** Is the policy enforced across all groups on the property?

Each "YES" response earns **1 point**, for a maximum of **5 points** in this section.

Section C: Consequences

Section C. Consequences		
C1. Enforcement procedures defined? YES or NO	C2. Tiered consequences defined? YES or NO	C3. Landlord takes reasonable enforcement steps? YES or NO
C4. Referral to SD Quitline, or another appropriate cessation tool? YES or NO	C5. Cultural exemptions (traditional tobacco?) YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Rationale:

This section assesses whether the policy is enforceable and supportive. Effective policies describe enforcement mechanisms, including progressive consequences, and acknowledge the role of landlords and tenants. Providing cessation resources and honoring cultural practices demonstrates a health-first, equity-focused approach.

Instructions:

Review the policy and determine whether it includes each of the following elements. Mark "YES" if the policy explicitly includes the measure and "NO" if it does not.

- **C1. Enforcement procedures defined:** Are specific steps listed for how the policy is monitored or reported?
- **C2. Tiered consequences listed:** Are there multiple levels of enforcement (e.g., verbal warning, written notice, eviction notice)?
- **C3. Landlord responsibility acknowledged:** Does the policy clarify what actions landlords must take when a violation is reported?
- **C4. Referral to cessation resources:** Are cessation resources mentioned or offered to residents?
- **C5. Cultural exemptions addressed:** Is the ceremonial use of traditional tobacco clearly exempted under defined circumstances?

Each "YES" response earns **1 point**, for a maximum of **5 points** in this section.

Section D: Communication/Implementation

Section D. Communication/Implementation		
D1. Policy shared at lease signing or renewal? YES or NO	D2. No-smoking signage posted visibly? YES or NO	D3. Written notice of updates provided? YES or NO
D4. Tenants required to inform guests? YES or NO	D5. Revised within past five (5) years? YES or NO	
SECTION: ____ / 5		

Rationale:

Clear communication supports successful implementation. This section assesses whether tenants are informed of the policy at critical touchpoints, like move-in or policy changes, and whether signage is used to increase compliance. Strong policies also encourage tenant accountability and routine policy review.

Instructions:

Review the policy and determine whether it includes each of the following elements. Mark **"YES"** if the policy explicitly includes the measure and **"NO"** if it does not.

- **D1. Shared at lease signing/renewal:** Is the smoke-free addendum reviewed during lease agreements?
- **D2. Signage posted visibly:** Are no-smoking signs placed in strategic indoor/outdoor locations?
- **D3. Written notice of updates:** Are tenants notified of policy changes in writing (email or printed copy)?
- **D4. Guests informed by tenants:** Are tenants responsible for ensuring guest compliance?
- **D5. Revised within past 5 years:** Has the policy been updated recently to reflect best practices?

Each "YES" response earns **1 point**, for a maximum of **5 points** in this section.

Section E: Other Considerations – NO POINTS ASSIGNED

Section E. Other Considerations – NO POINTS ASSIGNED		
E1. Does policy acknowledge limitations in enforcement? YES or NO	E2. Are tenants encouraged to report violations? YES or NO	E3. Does the policy address tenant-to-tenant rights or complaints? YES or NO

Rationale:

These supplemental components reflect transparency, realistic enforcement expectations, and tenant empowerment. Acknowledging the limits of landlord enforcement, encouraging reporting, and offering tenant-to-tenant remedies (e.g., civil complaints) can enhance the strength and fairness of the policy.

Instructions:

Mark YES or NO for each item based on whether it is mentioned in the policy. This section does not receive points but may inform policy enhancement discussions.