



Tobacco Dependence Treatment

Tips & Tools for Managing Cravings in Smokefree Housing



Tobacco in this document refers specifically to the use of manufactured, commercial tobacco products, and not to the sacred, medicinal, and traditional use of tobacco by American Indians and other groups.

Tools for Residents Not Ready to Quit Smoking

Does a smokefree policy mean that I cannot live in my building?

No, a smokefree building does not mean that people who smoke cannot live in the building, or that people who smoke must quit. It simply means that people cannot smoke or vape inside the building or in other areas specified in the policy, such as on balconies, patios, or certain distances from the front door of the building.

Does this mean I have to quit?

No, it does not mean you have to quit.. There are resources available to help manage cravings and urges. Although you may not be completely ready to quit you may be looking for somewhere to start. If you have questions, you can go to AlaskaQuitline.com for FREE information and support that can help you where you're at.

How To Get Support:

- **Call or text someone**—whether to distract yourself from smoking or seek out support.
- **Surround yourself with people** you trust that have you and your health in their best interest.
- **Focus on people** who can help you follow the policy.
- **Grow your social circle** to include people who do not use tobacco.
- **Be supportive** of others in their efforts to quit.

Did You Know?

The Alaska Smokefree Workplace Law was passed in 2018. It includes common areas in apartments or multi-family dwellings and outdoors within 20 feet of an entrance, open window or the enclosed air intake vent of a heating or ventilation system.



How To Fight Cravings:



Do hands-on projects—by busying your hands and mind, you may become distracted from the urge to smoke a cigarette.



Keep your mouth busy—choose crunchy and satisfying foods. Chew on sugarless gum, try hard candy, or munch on raw carrots, celery, nuts, or sunflower seeds.



Know your triggers—Are there certain triggers that make you want to vape or smoke indoors? Triggers are individual to everyone, but some common triggers can include: drinking coffee, life stressors, playing online video games, seeing smoke / vape products on social media, among others. Do your best to avoid these triggers or replace them with something more enjoyable in your daily routine.



Stay active—healthy activities, getting fresh air, and being physically active will help make you feel better and distract you from a cigarette craving. If you're feeling anxious at home, try squats, deep knee bends, push-ups, running in place, or walking up and down a set of stairs. If physical activity doesn't interest you, try needlework, woodwork or journaling. Try doing productive chores for distraction, such as vacuuming or filing paperwork.



Breathe—take slow, deep breaths when you feel a craving coming on. Repeat several times until you begin to feel relaxed.



Use nicotine replacement therapy—even if you are not ready to quit, this can help control cravings and urges. Examples include nicotine patches, gum, and lozenges.

Be Mindful Of Your Environment:



Know where smoking is and is not allowed on your property—be sure you are aware of the specifics of your building’s smokefree policy. If you are still working towards quitting smoking or vaping, it is important to still comply with your building’s policy. Do something fun that distracts you from your cravings and at a place where you know you won’t be able to grab a cigarette.

Be prepared for cravings—think of fun ideas or places to go that can distract you from your cravings and won’t encourage you to use tobacco. Thinking through these ideas and writing them down ahead of time will help you work through a craving when it comes.

Remove triggers for cravings—such as removing any ashtrays, cigarettes or lighters from your home. Try changing your daily routine if you find certain things trigger you at different times of the day.

Plan ahead for cravings—cravings are inevitable, but you can be prepared for them! Have nicotine replacement therapy on hand to help you through your cravings. Talk to your doctor about medications that may be right for you or contact the Alaska Quitline for help.

Stock your house with things to fight cravings—buy word puzzles, Sudoku, adult coloring books, and satisfying snacks. You can also cut down drinking straws to cigarette size to provide that oral fixation that a cigarette provides.