

Press Release

July 30, 2018 FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE CONTACT:

Dr. Sharon Harris 516- 676-2008

safeglencove@yahoo.com

**Tobacco Action Coalition of LI, Glen Cove Housing Authority and SAFE Collaborate to Institute Smoke Free Living**

After extensive research and vetting out the data on the benefits of Smoke-Free Multi-Unit Housing, Housing and Urban Development (HUD) promulgated its final ruling on February 3, 2017. This rule requires each Public Housing Agency (PHA) administering public housing to implement a Smoke-Free policy. Specifically, no later than 18 months from the effective date of the rule, each PHA must implement a “smoke-free” policy banning the use of prohibited tobacco products in all public housing living units, indoor common areas in public housing, and in PHA administrative office buildings. The smoke-free policy must also extend to all outdoor areas up to 25 feet from the public housing and administrative office buildings. This rule improves indoor air quality in the housing; benefits the health of public housing residents, visitors, and PHA staff; reduces the risk of catastrophic fires; and lowers overall maintenance costs. As further discussed in this rule, such a policy is expected to improve indoor air quality in public housing; benefit the health of public housing residents, visitors, and PHA staff; reduce the risk of catastrophic fires; and lower overall maintenance costs.

Once again in Executive Director Eric Wingate’s pro-active efforts to protect the welfare of his residents, employees and avoid unnecessary property damage related to fires and drifting smoke he formalized his policy two months ahead of the target date, just In time for World No Tobacco Day. Each year the World Health Organization (WHO) brings attention to the impact of tobacco on the public’s health on a global nature and focuses on themes to motivate activism. With the support of his Community partners in the creation of a Smoke-Free Pilot several years ago for Butler Houses, Mr. Wingate worked with Dr. Sharon Harris- Executive Director of SAFE, Inc. and Carol Meschkow-Manager for the Tobacco Action Coalition of LI (TAC) in preparing for the roll-out. TAC provided free Signage to communicate the policy that was immediately posted. They also supplied signage for Butler Houses and the Housing Authority’s (HA) prior policy on Tobacco Free Grounds at all of their youth recreational facilities on the property.

According to Mr. Wingate, besides the obvious health benefits and tenant’s requests for Smoke Free Housing, there are many business reasons that are a catalyst for this change as well. Smoke Free Housing lowers maintenance costs and improves value retention, reduces risk of fires, significantly lessens tenants conflicts due to drifting and second-hand smoke, reduces potential legal liability from second-hand smoke, and when following HUD guidelines helps to earn LEED Certification.

Ms. Meschkow is an active member of the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition and has partnered on many environmental strategies throughout the Glen Cove Community. TAC is one of 25

community partnerships funded by the New York State Tobacco Control Program advancing tobacco free communities. The Coalition has been successful working with property owners and managers, helping them to adopt smoke-free housing policies and tobacco free outdoor bans. The growing trend for smoke free living across the state is one that local leaders and Property Managers are becoming more and more aware of the need to supply this type of Housing. Mr. Wingate has a long-standing productive history of working with Dr. Harris and the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition on substance abuse outreach, prevention, intervention and education to HA residents for over ten years. Mr. Wingate is in full support of maintaining a healthy environment for residents and believes in prevention efforts that seek to protect youth initiation to smoking and other illicit substances.

“Collaborations of this nature are necessary to provide a safety net for our community’s”, according to Dr. Harris. “Our agency has been working with all stake holders in our City to create and encourage these collaborative partnerships to promote a substance free community”, she continued.

“I have had the pleasure of working with Ms. Meschkow, and Dr. Harris and I believe together we have made a very positive stride towards tobacco awareness and smoke-free polices. The recently enacted policy is a direct reflection of the success of the partnership between TAC, SAFE, Inc. and the Housing Authority in taking proactive steps to affect the health and well-being of our residents, and I look forward to our continued collaboration” said Executive Director-Wingate.

Smoking remains the number one cause of preventable death and disease responsible for more than 28,000 deaths in NY from smoking related illness.

To learn more about Smoke Free Living, please visit: [www.smokefreehousingny.org](http://www.smokefreehousingny.org). For Quit Help please contact the NYS Quit Line at 1866 NYS Quits.

For more information about the SAFE Glen Cove Coalition visit SAFE at: [www.safeglencove.org](http://www.safeglencove.org) or Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/safeglencovecoalition>.