



HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER (SECTION 8) PROGRAM HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) GUIDELINES

Tenant (Section 8 participant) and owner/agent must be present at initial move-in inspections and follow-up inspections on failed units.

All utilities (electricity, gas, water) must be in service prior to initial (move-in) inspection. Establishing utility service for the initial inspection is the landlord's responsibility.

These guidelines represent the minimum Housing Quality Standards that a unit must meet in order to pass inspection.

LIVING ROOM

1. Electrical
 - There must be at least two electrical receptacles with plates or one receptacle and one permanently installed light fixture with cover.
2. Windows
 - There must be at least one window that opens and can be locked.
 - Windows and frames must be free from severe deterioration and broken window panes.
3. Security
 - Single cylinder deadbolt locks can only be used in conjunction with passage or entry locks on exterior doors.
 - Doors, jambs, thresholds and weather-stripping should be in good condition.
4. Ceiling and Walls
 - Ceiling and walls must be free of deterioration, holes, and peeling paint. Must be painted before tenant moves into unit.
5. Flooring
 - Floor should be free of deterioration such as buckling, sagging and waviness.
 - Floor surface should be free of missing portions of tile or vinyl.
 - Carpet should be installed with carpet tack strips and appropriate metal floor strips.
 - Carpet should be free of potential tripping hazards.
 - Dry rotted and heavily soiled carpet should be replaced.
 - Floor molding is required for all vinyl rug floors.





KITCHEN

1. Appliances

- The stove/refrigerator must be present when the unit is inspected if the landlord is providing appliances.
- The Housing Authority will allow the stove/refrigerator to be placed in the unit after inspection if the tenant is providing appliances and certifies that they are working in accordance with Housing Quality Standards.
- Gas pilot lights must be in proper working order.
- Gas cutoff valve is required for gas stoves.
- Stove hood vent is required above stove, eighteen inch is the minimum height hood vent should be installed from the stove. Vented or vent-less stove hoods are acceptable.
- Stove top burners and oven must be in working condition, with all appropriate knobs.
- Refrigerator must be cooling properly with all shelving, crispers and gaskets intact.

2. Cabinets and Drawers

- Cabinets and drawers must be cleaned out.
- Cabinet doors, drawers and bottoms must be intact, with knobs and handles attached.
- Cabinet tops must be in good condition and appropriately covered with Formica or ceramic surface.

3. Kitchen Sink

- Faucet must be secure to sink, have handles, sink stopper and be free of leaks.
- Drain pipes must be free of leaks and clogged drain.

4. Electrical

- There must be at least one electrical receptacle and plate and one permanently installed light fixture with cover.
- Electrical receptacle located within six feet of the sink must be (GFCI) ground fault circuit interrupter of GFCI protected. GFCI protected receptacles should be labeled.

5. Ceiling and Walls

- Ceiling and walls must be free of deterioration, holes, and peeling paint. Must be painted before tenant moves into unit.

6. Flooring

- Flooring must be of a vinyl, tile or ceramic nature.
- Flooring should be free of deterioration such as buckling, sagging and waviness.
- Floor molding is required for vinyl rug floors.





BATHROOM

1. Ventilation/Heater
 - There must be a window with lock that opens, or a working exhaust fan.
 - Electrical heaters already installed in bathroom should be in working condition.
2. Lavatory
 - Lavatory must be mounted securely to wall.
 - Vanity cabinet must be stable, with intact bottom and cabinet door.
 - Faucet must be secure to lavatory, have handles, sink stopper and be free of leaks.
 - Drain must be free of leaks and clogs.
3. Toilet
 - Toilet must be secured to floor.
 - Toilet seat must be in good condition and not soiled or stained.
 - Toilet must flush properly with no leaks or clogged drain.
4. Bathtub
 - Bathtub faucet must be secure to bathtub, have handles, sink stopper and be free of leaks.
 - Drain must be free of leaks and clogs.
 - Ceramic tiles and/or shower stall enclosure should be intact and secure to surface.
 - Shower stall should be made of materials impervious to water damage.
5. Electrical
 - Bathroom receptacle must be (GFI) ground fault interrupter or (GFI) protected. GFI protected receptacles should be labeled.
 - There must be a ceiling or wall type light fixture with cover.
6. Ceiling and Walls
 - Ceiling and walls must be free of deterioration, holes, and peeling paint. Must be painted before tenant moves into unit.
7. Flooring
 - Floor must be of a vinyl, tile or ceramic type.
 - Floor should be free of deterioration such as buckling, sagging and waviness.
 - Floor molding is required for vinyl rug floors.
8. Door Locks
 - Privacy locks should be installed on bathroom doors.
9. Fixtures
 - Toilet paper holder and towel rack is required in bathroom.





BEDROOM

1. Electrical
 - There must be at least two electrical receptacles with plates or one receptacle with plate and one permanently installed light fixture with cover.
2. Windows
 - There must be at least one window that opens and can be locked.
 - Windows and frames must be free from severe deterioration and broken window panes.
3. Security
 - Bedroom and closet doors are required.
 - Bedroom doors should have privacy locks and closet doors passage locks.
 - Closets should have clothes rods.
 - Burglar bars are not allowed on all bedroom windows. There must be one means of exit and egress in all bedrooms.
4. Flooring
 - Floors should be free of deterioration such as buckling, sagging and waviness.
 - Floor surfaces should be free of missing portions of tile or vinyl.
 - Carpet should be free of tripping hazards with appropriate carpet tack strips and metal floor strips installed.
 - Dry rotted and heavily soiled carpet should be replaced.
 - Floor molding is required for rug type vinyl flooring.
5. Ceilings and Walls
 - Ceiling and walls should be free of deterioration, holes, peeling paint and painted before tenant moves into unit.
 - Bedrooms must have a floor area of not less than seventy square feet.
 - The minimum bedroom ceiling height must not be less than seven feet, six inches, unless the room is under a sloping roof. Bedrooms under a sloping roof must slope to no lower than five feet.
 - Bedrooms should have a closet.

FLOORS

- All wood floors must be sanded to a smooth surface and sealed. Any loose or warped boards must be secured and made level. If they cannot be leveled, they must be replaced.
- All floors must be in a finished state. Raw wood and unsealed concrete is not permitted.
- All floors should have some type of baseboard, trim or sealing for a “finished look.” Vinyl baseboards are permitted.
- Carpets should be shampooed before unit is inspected.
- Flooring should be free of deterioration such as buckling, sagging and waviness.





WINDOWS

- All windows that were designed to open/close must function properly, must be weathertight and lockable. Missing or broken window panes may not be replaced with Plexi-glass.
- If window security bars or security screens are present on emergency exit windows, they must be equipped with a quick release system or single cylinder deadbolt lock.
- The owner is responsible for ensuring that the family is instructed on the use of the quick release.
- Blinds or drapes present in unit must be in good condition.

SINK

- All sinks and commode water lines must have an operable shut off valve, unless faucets are wall mounted.
- All sinks must have a gas trap (P-trap) installed.
- All sinks must have a functioning stopper.

HEATING AND PLUMBING

1. Heating Systems

- Heating systems must directly or indirectly be capable of maintaining an interior temperature of at least 68 degrees Fahrenheit within three feet of the floor in each room, between October 1 and May 1.
- Unvented gas heaters are not approved by the Section 8 Program.
- All gas heaters must be vented to the outside of unit.
- The Housing Authority may require gas heating units be serviced by a licensed, bonded, heating technician, and a copy of service invoice provided for our records. Periodically servicing gas heating units can help eliminate potentially serious problems.

2. Water Heaters

- Water heaters must have a temperature and pressure relief valve and a discharge line.
- Gas water heater must have a gas cut off valve.
- Gas water heater must be vented properly, with sufficient combustion air provision for ventilation.

3. Sewer Connection

- Sewer and drain lines must have appropriate sewer caps and clean outs.
- Sewer and drain lines should be free from leaks and be vented properly.





PEST CONTROL

1. Evidence of Infestation
 - Spray for pest control if there are signs of infestation.
 - Close any means of entry by rodents, both inside and outside of unit.

2. Bed bugs
 - If a tenant reports a bed bug infestation, the tenant must provide documentation from a pest control company verifying the infestation.
 - If the lease includes a bed bug policy, then the Housing Authority will defer to the lease regarding who is responsible for treatment of the infestation.
 - If the lease does not include a bed bug policy, then the Housing Authority will decide on a case-by-case basis as to who is responsible for treatment of the infestation.
 - The responsible party (tenant or landlord) must provide written verification that the infestation has been successfully remediated.
 - Housing Authority staff will not enter a unit for any reason while there is an active bed bug infestation.

TRASH

1. Garbage and Debris
 - Grounds and common areas should be free from trash and garbage.

2. Refuse Disposal
 - Adequately covered facilities, including trash cans or dumpsters, are required according to local codes.
 - Tenant or landlord may be responsible for trash service, depending on services provided under the lease agreement.

INTERIOR STAIRS, HALLWAYS, SITE CONDITION

1. Stairs and Hallways
 - Replace any loose or broken steps.
 - Hand rail is required on extended section of stairs of four or more steps.
 - Railing is required for landing on townhouses.
 - Smoke alarms are required in hallways and on both levels of townhouse.

2. Site and Neighborhood Condition
 - Repair or remove dilapidated shed or garage with potential of structural collapse.
 - No open sewer lines in proximity to unit.





BUILDING EXTERIOR

- Handrail is required for four or more steps.
- Porch railing is required on porches thirty inches or more above the ground.
- No peeling, cracking, scaling, chipping or loose paint up to five feet from the ground, exceeding ten square feet of a surface area.
- Landlord will be required to repaint all surfaces cited for peeling paint with two coats of non-lead paint or otherwise suitable cover. An extension will be granted for a severe weather-related item.
- Roof, soffit and fascia must be free of leaks or extensive decay.
- Screens are required on all windows. One screen per window and the screens should fit correctly as designed for the window.

MISCELLANEOUS

1. Electrical and Plumbing
 - The entire electrical and plumbing system must be free of hazards and must meet local codes.
2. Fire Extinguisher
 - A 2A10BC fire extinguisher is required in all units. Five pounds is the minimum size for the fire extinguisher.
3. Carbon Monoxide Detector
 - All units with gas must have a carbon monoxide detector installed on each level of the home.
4. Screen Doors and Storm Doors
 - When present, screen doors and storm doors should be in good condition and have handle and door closure. Screen doors and storm doors are not required.
5. Whirlpool and Jacuzzi Tubs
 - All whirlpool/Jacuzzi bathtubs should have a dedicated electric circuit protected by a ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI).
6. Swimming Pools
 - All above-ground pools and in-ground pools should be functional. If the pool is not in working condition it should be filled in with dirt or repaired to working status. No hard cover or soft cover will be accepted.
 - A fence with lock on gate should be located around the pool area.
7. Interior Doors and Interior Trim
 - Interior doors and interior trim should be painted before tenant moves into unit.





EMERGENCY REPAIR ITEMS

The following items are to be considered of an emergency nature and are to be corrected by the owner or tenant within 24 hours of notice by the Inspector.

- Any condition that jeopardizes the security of the unit
- Major plumbing leaks or flooding, waterlogged ceiling or floor in imminent danger of falling
- Natural or LP gas or fuel oil leaks
 - A fuel storage vessel, fluid line, valve, or connection that supplies fuel to a HVAC unit is leaking or a strong odor is detected with potential for explosion or fire or that results in a health risk if inhaled
- Any electrical problem or condition that could result in shock or fire
 - A light fixture is readily accessible, is not securely mounted to the ceiling or wall, and electrical connection or wires are exposed
 - A light fixture is hanging by its wires
 - A light fixture has a missing or broken bulb, and the open socket is readily accessible to the tenant during the day-to-day use of the unit
 - A receptacle (outlet) or switch is missing or broken and electrical connections or wires are exposed
 - An open circuit breaker position is not appropriately blanked off in a panel board, main panel board, or other electrical box that contains circuit breakers or fuses
 - A cover is missing from any electrical device box, panel box, switch gear box, control panel, etc., and there are exposed electrical connections
 - Any nicks, abrasions, or fraying of the insulation that exposes conducting wire
 - Exposed bare wires or electrical connections
 - Any condition that results in openings in electrical panels or electrical control device enclosures
 - Water leaking or ponding near any electrical device
 - Any condition that poses a serious risk of electrocution or fire and poses an immediate life-threatening condition
- Absence of a working heating system when outside temperature is below 60 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Utilities not in service, including no running hot water
- Conditions that present the imminent possibility of injury
- Obstacles that prevent safe entrance or exit from the unit
 - Any components that affect the function of the fire escape are missing or damaged





- Stored items or other barriers that restrict or prevent the use of the fire escape in the event of an emergency
- The building's emergency exit is blocked or impeded, thus limiting the ability of occupants to exit in a fire or other emergency
- Absence of a functioning toilet in the unit
- Inoperable or missing smoke detectors
- Missing or inoperable carbon monoxide detector
- Missing, damaged, discharged, overcharged, or expired fire extinguisher (where required)
- Gas/oil-fired water heater or heating, ventilation, or cooling system with missing, damaged, improper, or misaligned chimney venting
 - The chimney or venting system on a fuel-fired water heater is misaligned, negatively pitched, or damaged, which may cause improper or dangerous venting or gases
 - A gas dryer vent is missing, damaged, or is visually determined to be inoperable, or the dryer exhaust is not vented to the outside
 - A fuel-fired space heater is not properly vented or lacks available combustion air
 - A non-vented space heater is present
 - Safety devices on a fuel-fired space heater are missing or damaged
 - The chimney or venting system on a fuel-fired heating, ventilation, or cooling system is misaligned, negatively pitched, or damaged, which may cause improper or dangerous venting of gas
- Deteriorating paint as defined at 24 CFR 35.110 in a unit built before 1978 that is to be occupied by a family with a child under six years of age if it would prevent the family from moving into the unit

The PHA may give a short extension (not more than 48 additional hours) whenever the owner or tenant cannot be notified or it is impossible to repair within the 24-hour period.

In those cases where there is leaking gas or potential of a fire within the notice period and the owner or tenant cannot be notified or it is impossible to repair, proper authorities will be notified by the PHA.

If an owner fails to correct life-threatening conditions as required by the PHA, the PHA will enforce the HQS in accordance with HUD requirements. If a family fails to correct a family-caused life-threatening condition as required by the PHA, the PHA will enforce the family obligations.

The Housing Authority operates the HCV Program in accordance with HUD regulations and its own Administrative Plan.





HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

	COMMONLY OVERLOOKED ITEMS	PASS	FAIL
1	Smoke alarms are <u>missing</u> or <u>will not</u> work when tested. Smoke alarms must be mounted on the ceiling at least 4 inches from the wall or on a wall with top of the detector not less than 4 inches and the bottom not more than 12 inches below the ceiling.		
2	If unit has gas, carbon monoxide detector installed on every level.		
3	Egress <u>windows</u> must be open-able from the inside without the need for keys, tools or have special knowledge and used as an exit. Locks and/or deadbolt locks must have a “thumb latch” that can be turned from the inside. This prohibits the blocking of lone egress window in a bedroom with bars, an A/C unit or furniture.		
4	Egress <u>doors</u> and security doors must be open-able from the inside without the need for keys, tools or have special knowledge and used as an exit. Locks and/or deadbolt locks must have a “thumb latch” that can be turned from the inside. This prohibits the blocking of any egress door(s) with furniture or appliances.		
5	Missing weather stripping on exterior doors or the door does not close properly. Any loose door hardware (knobs, locks, hinges, door sweeps or other associated hardware) or damaged (holes, vandalized, deteriorated, peeling separated surfaces, etc.) door surfaces, includes all interior, exterior, storm doors and security gates.		
6	Windows that do not open, will not stay open, missing window locks or you have cracked/broken glass. Latch and eye hooks are not acceptable as a replacement for a missing or broken lock.		
7	Disturbed paint surfaces (peeling, chipping, cracking, flaking and chalking) regardless of amount or location. Includes interior and exterior. Lead paint safety hazards on units built prior to 1978.		
8	The presence of mold or mildew. Includes interior and exterior.		
9	Un-vented open flame gas space heaters present. ODS approved space heaters can NOT be installed in bedrooms or bathrooms. No working heat source present in unit or inadequate heat for the unit. Furnace or heater vent flue pipes must extend vertically 24 inches above roof line of the closest roof.		
10	A/C units not functioning properly or leaking water inside unit while in operation (includes Central and Window Units).		
11	Hot water heater pressure relief valve drain tube must be extended to within 6 inches of the floor. Gas water heater vent or flue pipes must extend vertically 24 inches above roof line of the closest roof.		
12	Ovens not functioning or stove burners not lighting properly,. This also includes missing knobs, burners, unlit pilot lights, damaged burner trays, excessive grease buildup or doors not closing properly.		





	COMMONLY OVERLOOKED ITEMS	PASS	FAIL
13	Refrigerator, dishwasher, garbage disposal or range hood not functioning properly.		
14	Bathroom vanity or kitchen sink cabinets are loose from the wall. Leaking pipes, includes loose or missing faucet handles or spigots. You see holes or gaps around plumbing pipes at the wall inside the cabinets.		
15	Toilet not flushing properly or toilet is not bolted or anchored to the floor.		
16	GFCI outlet safety features not functioning properly. Outlet does not trip and/or de-energize when tested. (Kitchen or Bathroom). Outlets in light fixtures/vanity cabinets near the sink or tub must be GFCI protected.		
17	Exposed electrical wiring (switches, outlets, breaker boxes/fuse panels – missing inner covers or open breaker/fuse slots) this includes outlets and switches that are loose or hanging inside or outside the wall.		
18	Damages or missing outlet covers/light switch covers or damaged light fixtures.		
19	Holes in ceilings or walls, water stained or damaged ceilings or walls.		
20	Trip or slip hazards associated with loose or damaged floor coverings. Includes carpet or tile edging.		
21	Proper stair rails are required if you have 4 or more risers (interior and exterior) regardless of height of rise. Handrails must be continuous without interruption and extend from top step to bottom step. Includes loose or broken stair rails and step/stair treads.		
22	Exterior tripping and safety hazards, un-even walking surfaces (sidewalks, driveways, patios, etc.) loose materials, holes, sharp objects or edges, damaged fences and gates, or other similar hazards.		
23	Yards have garbage or debris (includes un-maintained or no- licensed automobiles) or grass needs mowing.		
24	Infestation (rodents, vermin, cockroach, insects, etc.) or poor tenant housekeeping.		

