

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

GUIDELINES

The following is intended as a guide only. The Housing Choice Voucher Program Guidebook, Chapter 10, (50 pages) can be viewed/downloaded from HUD's web page accessible through FirstGov.gov.

GENERAL

- The previous occupant of the unit must be moved out and the unit ready for new move-in prior to an inspection.
- There must be a living room.
- There must be a kitchen area with; a) a sink with hot and cold running water, b) space for storage, preparation and serving, c) disposal facilities, d) a clean and working stove/oven (tenant can supply), and e) a clean and working refrigerator (tenant can supply).
- There must be a bathroom with a) a door for privacy, b) an indoor toilet, a bathtub and/or shower and a fixed basin (both with hot and cold running water). c) ventilation provided by a screened window or an electric exhaust fan.
- There must be one sleeping room for each two persons with a permanently installed closet. The living room can be used for a sleeping room to satisfy the occupancy limits, but will not be counted as a bedroom when comparing to similar units for rental amount approval.
- There must be at least one window (or skylight) in each sleeping room to provide outside illumination.
- There must be a finished floor covering (no bare concrete or wood subfloors) in safe, clean and presentable condition.
- The unit must be structurally sound with no severe defects. There should be no holes in the walls. The roof should be free of leaks and any gutters and downspouts should be in good condition and secure.
- The owner must inform the tenant if the unit was constructed prior to 1978 and of potential lead-based paint hazards and contamination as per Federal regulations.
- The unit must be free of infestation by roaches, rodents and other vermin or insects. Documentation of professional extermination should be available for inspection.
- Mobile homes must be properly placed and tied down in high wind areas.
- There cannot be chipped or peeling paint anywhere on the interior or exterior of the unit.

SECURITY, ENTRANCES & EXITS

- All windows (in any room) must be lockable, in good repair and must operate as designed. Window coverings are not required.
- All exterior doors must be secure, lockable and have an adequate weather seal.
- All exterior door and window locks must be openable by hand (must not require a key to exit).
- Access to the unit must not be solely through another unit or other private property.

PLUMBING

- The water system must provide safe, drinkable water free of serious levels of contamination (including rust).
- There must be an approved sewer or septic system free from back-ups.
- There must be no serious leaks in any of the plumbing systems.
- The hot water heater must be equipped with a properly installed Temperature and Pressure Relief system. A handout showing approved installations is available at the Housing Authority Inspections Unit.

HEATING & VENTILATION

- There must be an source of heat capable of providing adequate heat to the entire residence. Unvented gas heaters or any type of portable heaters are not acceptable.
- There must be adequate ventilation by means of a screened window in each room or a working cooling system.

ELECTRICAL

- Each room must have at least two electrical outlets with covers (or one outlet and one switched light fixture).
- Kitchens and bathrooms must have one wall or ceiling mount light fixture and at least one electrical outlet with cover.
- Exterior electrical outlets and switches must have weather resistant covers.

EXTERIOR

- The approach(s) to the unit must be free of trip hazards and the yard should be
- free of large holes or other hazards (i.e. rotted, leaning fences).
- Foundations, stairs, rails and porches must be sound and safe. A handrail is required where there are four or more continuous steps.
- The site and neighborhood must not be subject to serious environmental problems (i.e. trash accumulation, hazardous buildings, sewage hazards, etc.)
- There must be a space to store garbage (covered tightly) until pick-up.
- Front yards must have appropriate landscaping.

SMOKE DETECTORS

- All units must have at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each level of the unit. Smoke detectors must be testable, or they must be replaced.
- If the unit is occupied by a person with profound hearing loss, there must be a detector designed for hearing-impaired persons installed in that person's sleeping room and it must be wired in tandem with another detector installed in a common area of the unit.

POOLS

Pools filled for use;

- An automatic alarm must be in place on any door that opens directly from the unit into the pool area (can be battery or hardwired).
- Pools must be fenced from the street area.
- Fences **should** be of a type that is essentially free of hand or footholds for climbing by children under the age of five, and must have no gaps or voids greater than 4 inches (do not fail chain link, if in good repair).
- Gates to the pool area must be self-closing and self-latching and open away from the pool area.
 - A) Latches on the exterior of the gate must be no lower than 60 inches above the ground.
 - B) Latches on the interior of the gate, if lower than 60 inches, must be surrounded by a barrier at least 18 inches in all directions to prevent reaching through.

Pools empty or not in use;

- The pool must be fenced separately **and locked**.
- The fence should be constructed as described above.
- An unused pool must be kept from having standing water for prolonged periods.

ALL REPAIRS, PAINTING, CLEANING AND YARD CARE MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE INSPECTION DATE OR THE UNIT WILL NOT PASS INSPECTION.

Note: Local, state and national fire, safety and building codes are much more comprehensive and strict than HUD Housing Quality Standards and are not the standard we enforce. However, under HUD regulations, any condition found to be hazardous by our Inspectors will require correction regardless of the absence of a specific mention in the Housing Quality Standards.