

# INSPECTION CHECKLIST

The checklist below is a tool for owners to prepare their unit for the Section 8 inspection. It is not intended to represent every item inspected nor every possible deficiency.

The items on this checklist must be working or completed prior to the inspection.

All utilities must be connected before an inspection can be conducted.

Note: The Johnstown Housing Authority conducts all inspections in accordance with the International Property Maintenance Code.

## **Utilities**

- All landlord provided appliances must be in place at the time of the inspection.
- All utilities (water, electricity, and gas where applicable) should be on at the time of the inspection.
- All gas appliances with manual pilot light must have pilots lit at the time of the inspection.
- An approvable public or private water supply must serve the unit, which is sanitary and free from contamination.

## **Street Numbers**

- Each unit shall have a street number displayed in a position easily observed from the street. All numbers shall be in Arabic numerals at least 3" high and ½" stroke.

## **Occupancy**

- Unit to be inspected must be either vacant or occupied by the Section 8 client applying for that unit.

## **Space and Security**

- The unit must have a minimum of a living room, kitchen area, and bathroom.
- The unit must contain at least one sleeping or living/sleeping room for each two persons.
- Bedrooms shall have an operable entrance door (efficiency apartments are exempt). Bathrooms shall have an operable door.
- Bedrooms shall have at least 70 square feet of floor area, with the smallest wall being at least 7 feet in length. Third floor bedrooms are not permitted unless there is an approved fire escape system.
- The unit's windows which are accessible from the outside (less than 6 feet off the ground), such as basement, first-floor, and fire escape windows, must be lockable (e.g., window units with sash pins or sash locks, and combination windows with latches). Security bars are allowed. However, if they are installed on bedroom windows and/or exit doors they must be designed to allow emergency egress and must be equipped with a quick release system. The owner is responsible for ensuring that the family is instructed on the use of the quick release system.

The unit's exterior doors (i.e., those that allow access to or from the unit) must lock properly, and be compliant with current local Property Code requirements regarding security devices for residential tenancies. Striker plates must align with locks and all hardware must be securely attached. If gaps allow for air infiltration, weather-stripping should be applied.

### **Bathroom**

- The bathroom must be located in a separate room and have a flush toilet.
- The unit must have a fixed basin with a sink trap, and a shower or bathtub, all with hot and cold running water. Drain stoppers must be present and operable.
- All sinks and commode water lines must have shutoff valves, unless faucets are wall mounted.
- All worn or cracked toilet seats and tank lids must be replaced, and toilet tank lid must fit properly.
- The toilet facilities must utilize an approvable public or private disposal system, including a locally approvable septic system

### **Kitchen**

- The unit must have a cooking stove or range and refrigerator of appropriate size for the unit (i.e., family) all in proper operating condition. Stoves, ovens, and ranges must be in working condition with all control knobs and handles. Pilots must light when burners and oven are turned on. The refrigerator gasket must be intact, fit snugly, and have no cracks. The kickplate must be secured properly.
- The unit must have a kitchen sink in proper operating condition with a sink trap and hot and cold running water, which drains into an approvable public or private wastewater system. Drain stoppers must be present and operable.
- The unit must provide space for the storage, preparation, and serving of food.
- There must be facilities and services for the sanitary disposal of food waste and refuse, including temporary storage facilities where necessary (i.e., garbage containers).

### **Windows**

- Vertically opening windows must stay up and open without the use of props.
- Windows designed to open should be in working condition.
- Window panes must not be broken or cracked.
- Window sashes must be in good condition, solid and intact, and properly fitted to the window frame.
- Windows must be weather-stripped as needed to ensure a weather-tight seal.
- Window screens are not required. Where window screens are present, they must be in good condition (no tears or holes).

## **Doors**

- All exterior doors must be weather-tight to avoid any air or water infiltration, be lockable, have no holes, have all trim intact, and have a threshold.
- All interior doors must have no holes, have all trim intact, and be openable without the use of a key.

## **Thermal Environment (Heating and Cooling System)**

- The unit must contain a safe heating system (and safe cooling system, where present), which is in proper operating condition and can provide adequate heat (and cooling, if applicable), either directly or indirectly, to each room used for living in order to assure a healthy living environment appropriate to the climate. The heating system must be capable of maintaining an interior temperature of 65 degrees Fahrenheit all year. Portable electric room heaters or kitchen stoves with built-in heating units are not acceptable as a primary source of heat. UL or AGA space heaters are allowed as auxiliary type heating only and are not to be used in bedrooms or sleeping areas. Air conditioning is not required but if provided must be in proper operating condition.
- Hot water heaters must have a pressure relief valve and discharge line that extends to within 6 inches of the floor or to the outside. Discharge tubing must be galvanized steel, copper or CPVC piping, not PVC. There should be no exposed wires. Flammable materials should not be stored near the hot water heater. Gas water heaters must be properly vented.
- The unit must not contain any unvented room heaters, which burn gas, oil, or kerosene. A working radiator would be acceptable.

## **Illumination and Electricity**

- There must be at least one window in the living room and in each sleeping room.
- The kitchen area and the bathroom must have a permanent ceiling or wall type light fixture in working condition, and at least one electrical outlet in working condition (outlets located within medicine cabinets do not count toward this requirement).
- The living room and each bedroom must have at least two electrical outlets in operating condition. Permanently installed overhead or wall-mounted light fixtures may count as one of the required electrical outlets.
- All other rooms used for living require a means of natural or artificial illumination such as a light fixture, a wall outlet to serve a lamp, a window in the room, or adequate light from an adjacent room.
- Lights are required to have light shades if they were designed to have them.
- Each electrical outlet must be permanently installed in the baseboard, wall, or floor. No extension cords may be used for outlets.
- Table or floor lamps, ceiling lamps plugged into a socket, or an extension cord plugged into another plug cannot be counted as an outlet for HQS purposes.
- The main electrical service must be at least 60 amps.

- All receptacles within six feet of a water source shall have ground fault current interrupter (GFCI) protection. All outdoor receptacles located not more than 6'6" above ground level and readily accessible shall have GFCI protection. Receptacles which are located specifically for appliances such as refrigerators and freezers are exempt from GFCI protection.
- Electrical hazards of any kind, either inside or outside the unit would receive a fail rating.

### **Structure and Materials**

- Interior ceilings, walls, and floors must not have any serious defects such as severe bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, severe buckling, missing parts, or other serious damage. Plaster or drywall must not be sagging, severely cracked, or otherwise damaged. Paint must not be peeling or chipped.
- The floors must also not have any major movement under walking stress, or tripping hazards presented by the permanent floor coverings. Tile floors must not be cracked; carpeted floors must not be frayed. All wood floors must be sanded to a smooth surface and sealed. Any loose or warped boards must be resecured and made level or replaced. All floors must be in a finished state. Raw wood or unsealed concrete is not permitted. All floors should have some type of baseshoe, trim, or sealing for a "finished look". Vinyl baseshoe is permitted.
- The roof must be structurally sound and weather tight, with proper drainage away from the unit and walkways. Gutters and downspouts are not required, but if present, must operate as designed. The roof and gutters must be clear of all vegetation. Exterior plant growth (weeds, grass, etc.) cannot exceed 8" in height.
- The exterior wall structure and surfaces must not have any serious defects such as serious leaning, buckling, sagging, large holes, unfastened and falling components, or defects that would result in air infiltration or vermin infestation. Paint must not be peeling or chipped.
- The condition and equipment of interior and exterior stairways, halls, porches, walkways, etc. must not present a danger of tripping and falling. Examples of dangerous conditions include, but are not limited to, broken or missing steps and loose boards.
- Stairways with four or more steps must have a handrail that is securely supported and runs the length of the stairway.
- Railings are required for decks, porches or steps that are more than 30 inches from the ground. Railings must be at least 36" high.
- Manufactured homes must be securely anchored by tie down devices, which distribute and transfer the loads imposed by the unit to appropriate ground anchors so as to resist wind overturning and sliding.

### **Interior Air Quality**

- The unit must be free from dangerous levels of air pollution from carbon monoxide, sewer gas, fuel gas, dust, and other harmful pollutants.
- The unit must have adequate air circulation.
- Bathrooms must have a window that opens properly or a permanently installed exhaust fan.
- Any room used for sleeping must have at least one window that opens.

### **Lead-Based Paint**

A dwelling unit constructed before 1978 that is occupied by a family that includes a child under the age of six years must include a visual inspection for defective paint surfaces. Defective paint surface is defined as a surface on which the paint is cracking, scaling, chipping, peeling or loose. If defective paint surfaces are found, such surfaces must be treated in accordance with state and EPA requirements.

### **Access**

The unit must have direct access for the tenant to enter and exit, without the unauthorized use of other private properties.

The building must provide an alternate means of exit in case of fire (fire escapes are required for living spaces above the second floor).

Entry/exits must not be "blocked" by debris, stored items, non-working locks, or doors that have been nailed shut or otherwise obstructed.

### **Site and Neighborhood**

The site and neighborhood must be reasonably free of serious conditions, which would endanger the health and safety of residents.

### **Infestation**

The unit and its equipment must be free of serious vermin and rodent infestation.

### **Smoke Detectors**

The unit must have at least one battery operated or hardwired smoke detector that is in proper operating condition on each level of the unit, including basements but excluding crawl spaces and unfinished attics. There must also be a smoke detector in each room used for sleeping.

### **Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

An approved carbon monoxide detector shall be installed on each living level, including basements, in units which have fuel-fired appliances. These detectors shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's installation instructions.

### **Fire Extinguishers**

Each property shall have a minimum of one (1) Class A:B:C multipurpose fire extinguisher to be firmly attached to the structure in a location accessible to the tenant(s). There shall be at least one (1) functioning and operable fire extinguisher located on each level of occupancy.