

# Housing Quality Standards Checklist

This checklist is provided as a courtesy and is not all-inclusive. It is provided to give you an idea of the items that an Inspector will check for during an inspection.

## Access to Unit

The tenant must have direct access to his/her unit. Units, which can only be accessed by passing through another dwelling unit, will not pass an HQS inspection.

## Appliances

- Appliances must be in good working order with no missing parts such as knobs, drip pans, oven handles, or fridge/oven shelves.
- All stove burners and the oven must work
- Any gas oven or burner that requires a match to light due to soil, grease or need of repair will not pass.
- The stove cook top, range hood filter, venting system and areas surrounding the oven shall be clean and free from grease.
- The exhaust fan must work if there is no operable window. It is recommended that the exhaust fan have a cover.
- A refrigerator does not require a kick plate at the bottom.
- The owner or the tenant may provide the refrigerator. It must work, be an adequate size relative to the needs of the family, and maintain a temperature low enough so that food does not spoil over a reasonable period of time (including some capability to store frozen goods).
- Any owner-supplied appliance in the unit at initial inspection shall be maintained in proper working order throughout the first year of lease. At subsequent inspections, any appliances not in proper working order (and not required by HQS) can remain in the unit provided they do not impose a health or safety hazard. In such instances, they will not be rated 'FAIL', however the contract rent may be adjusted accordingly. Examples of appliances not required by HQS are air conditioners, dishwashers and garbage disposals.
- A dishwasher must have a bottom panel to pass and HQS inspection.
- A microwave oven may be substituted for a tenant supplied oven and stove or range. A microwave oven may be substituted for an owner supplied oven and stove or range if the tenant agrees and microwave ovens are supplied instead of oven and stove or range to both subsidized and unsubsidized tenants in the building or premises.

## Bathroom(s)

- There must be at least one bathroom present in the dwelling unit for the exclusive use of the occupant with a working toilet, sink, tub or shower.
- A shower stall requires either a shower door or curtain to prevent the tenant from slipping on a wet floor. A curtain is recommended for a shower/tub combination to keep water off the floor. The tenant supplies the shower rod and curtain. Sliding shower doors require a guide at the bottom to prevent swinging.
- All worn and cracked toilet seats or tank lids that present a safety hazard must be replaced.

## Bedroom(s)

- Bedrooms in basement, attics, and garages are not allowed unless they meet local code requirements, have adequate ventilation, emergency exit capability and have a smoke detector.
- Rooms used as a sleeping area (den, living room, family room, dining room, etc) will not be counted as a bedroom for purposes of higher contract rent.
- At this time, permanent built-in closets are not required by HQS.
- If a closet is present, the owner must provide a clothes pole.
- At this time, a bedroom door is not required by HQS.
- A bedroom area must have a floor area of not less than 70 square feet, ceiling height of not less than 7' 6", and width not less than 7 ft.

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## Ceilings and Walls

- Exterior walls must be weather tight. Holes large enough to cause the unit not to be weather tight will be rated as 'FAIL'. Gaps around pipes must be appropriately filled to prevent entrance by pests.
- Interior walls must be in reasonably good condition; most cracks and doorknob holes will be rated 'NOTABLE'. The tenant is responsible for damages to the unit or premises caused by a household member or guest beyond normal wear and tear.
- Painted walls and ceiling shall be reasonably clean and free from mildew and fungus.
- Doorstops are recommended to protect walls (rated 'NOTABLE' on the Inspection Summary).

## Doors

- Knobs should be operational and all sliding doors must be on track.
- At this time, closet doors are not required by HQS.
- Closet doors that present a hazardous condition shall be repaired, replaced or removed.
- Exterior doors (including the door from the garage to the living area) must be weather tight, must be sound, have a doorknob and a single cylinder deadbolt. A hollow core exterior door in deteriorating condition shall be replaced with a solid core exterior door. Bathrooms require a door and a doorknob. At this time, bedrooms do not require a door.

## Electrical

- Minimum HQS requirements are:
  - The kitchen requires at least one working outlet and one working permanently installed ceiling or wall light.
  - The bathroom requires one permanently installed light fixture. HQS does not require an electrical outlet.
  - A Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) is a safety device designed to protect against shock when a faulty electrical appliance allows current to leak to the ground. You are not required to install them; however, if present the GFCI must work as designed.
  - A bedroom (and most other rooms) requires either two working outlets or one working outlet and one working permanently installed light fixture.
  - All outlets and light switches must have a cover plate, non-hazardous cracks are acceptable.
  - All receptacles must be free of cracks or chips.
  - All electrical hazards must be eliminated like exposed wiring, extension cords which run under rugs or other floor coverings, a short in the light switch, a broken cord plug, etc.

## Exhaust/Venting

- The kitchen and bathroom(s) must have either an operable window or exhaust fan to clear moisture and/or possible gas/sewer fumes. No gas water heaters are allowed in bedrooms or other living areas unless properly enclosed and vented to code to supply combustion air and the enclosure has a door. The dwelling unit must be free from dangerous levels of air pollution from carbon monoxide, sewer gas, fuel gas, dust and other harmful pollutants. Poor air quality due to pets or housekeeping will be rated 'NOTABLE'.

## Exterior

- The roof must be in reasonably good condition with no leaks.
- Gutters and downspouts should be sound and free from hazards.
- Concrete driveways, sidewalks and patios should not have large cracks or uneven surfaces. Uneven surfaces are a tripping hazard. A gradual slope from the lower to the higher section, which effectively eliminates the tripping hazard, would normally be an acceptable remedy.
- House numbers must be clearly visible from the street. An apartment number/letter must be mounted on or near the front door. Numbers/letters, which are too small, same color as the unit, covered by bushes, etc will not pass.
- It is recommended that vent screens should have no holes, be secure and intact. Vents must not be blocked. The crawl space entrance shall be covered.

## Fences/Gates

- Fences must not have any hazardous conditions. Any portion of the fence that is designated by the Inspector as a hazardous condition must be repaired, replaced or removed. A hazardous condition endangers the health or safety of

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the tenant. For example: protruding nails near a walkway, severely leaning sections, broken cross supports that would cause the fence to fall or collapse or possible missing boards say if it allowed entrance of a neighbor dog. An adequate size prop is an acceptable repair for a leaning post or section. The prop must be secured at the top and the bottom must not present a tripping hazard.

- Gates must be reasonably good condition and should not drag. A latching mechanism is optional.

## Fireplace

- Opening must have a screen or glass covering. It may be provided by the owner or tenant.

## Floors & Carpets

- Must be free of any tripping hazards such as raised edges or open seams. No exposed tack strips. No ceramic tiles with sharp edges. Soft areas around a toilet or along a tub or shower with a rebound greater than ½ inch will be rated as a 'FAIL'. A rebound less than ½ inch will receive a 'NOTABLE' rating by the inspector. Living areas must have a standard floor and covering, bare or painted concrete is not acceptable. Poor repairs will not be rated 'PASS' like torn seam repaired with tape over the tear.

## Garage

- A non-working automatic door opener will be rated 'NOTABLE'. Hazardous conditions such as oil puddles or a pan of oil on the floor, a car on jacks, old batteries or a garage filled floor to ceiling with no egress available for emergencies will be rated a 'FAIL'.

## Garbage or Debris

- Whether inside or outside, any amount of garbage or debris that is designated by the inspector as a hazardous condition must be removed. A hazardous condition would endanger the health or safety of the tenant. For example: items around a gas water heater, items in front of a window or door that prevents emergency exit, hazardous material such as old batteries or containers of car oil, or items that could attract pests such as old tires, old appliances, inoperative vehicles that the Inspector designates as a blight or trash.

## Lighting

- All public hallways, stairs, exit ways must have adequate lighting at all times.

## Mobile Homes

- All HQS requirements that apply to rental housing apply to the manufactured home/space.
- A manufactured home must be placed on the site in a stable manner and be free from hazards such as sliding or wind damage.
- Any manufactured home placed on a site that has hazardous conditions such as sliding or high winds must be securely anchored by a tie down device which distributes and transfers the loads imposed by the unit to appropriate ground anchors so as to resist wind overturning and sliding.
- The utility pedestals (water, sewer and electric hook-ups/connections) must be accessible at all times to facilitate any needed repairs or for any emergencies.

## Modifications to Unit

- All modifications or adaptations to a unit, including those due to a disability, must meet all applicable HQS and building codes.

## Paint

- Lead from paint, paint chips, and dust is especially harmful to young children and pregnant women. Units built before 1978 with any child who is less than 6 years of age who resides in OR is expected to reside in such housing must have all interior and exterior paint surfaces free of cracking, chipping, or peeling paint. We are unable to enter into a contract with units where defective paint still exists. Defective paint must be corrected prior to an inspection.

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## Pests

- The unit must be free from infestation of roaches or other vermin. The owner is responsible even if the infestation is caused by the family's living habits. However, if such infestations are serious and/or repeated, it may be considered a lease violation and the may evict. The HA may terminate the family's participation in the program on that basis.

## Pet(s)

- Tenants must have written permission from the owner to have pets of any type on the premises. Dogs must be leashed during the inspection. Excessive amounts of urine or feces in the unit or in the yard will result in a tenant responsible fail item.

## Plumbing

- Check all pipes, sinks, tubs and toilets for leaks or stoppages. Flush toilets must be in proper operating condition and be stable. Loose or missing anchor bolts that cause the toilet to move or rock will be rated 'FAIL'. 'P' traps must contain water to protect the tenant from gas or sewer fumes.

## Security

- All doors and windows that are accessible from the outside must have locks that work.
- Window security bars must be equipped with a quick release and require no special knowledge or skill to operate and meet local code.
- All exterior doors (including the door from the garage to the living area) must be sound, have a doorknob and have a deadbolt lock.
- NO DOUBLE CYLINDER DEADBOLT LOCKS WILL BE ALLOWED ON ANY DWELLING UNIT DOOR OR GATE. NO EXCEPTIONS.
- Side garage doors must be reasonably sound and have a lock.
- At this time, bedroom and bathroom doors do not require a lock.

## Site & Neighborhood Conditions

- The site and immediate neighborhood must be free from conditions which would seriously or continuously endanger the tenants health and safety as determined by the HA and/or local government agencies.

## Smoke Detectors

- Units must have at least one detector (battery or hardwire) on each level, including basements. None are required in and unfinished attic. They must be operational and installed correctly as follows: on wall, placed between 4" to 12" from ceiling; on ceiling, placed more than 4" from wall; do not place in kitchen or near bathroom; place in hallway adjacent to bedroom. A basement, attic or garage converted to a bedroom must also have a smoke detector.

## Hearing Impaired

- If the units occupied by hearing-impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system, designed for hearing impaired persons, in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person.

## Space Heat

- A wood stove or a portable electric heater as primary source of heat in a unit is not acceptable. No unvented fuel burning space heaters! A heating facility must be capable of maintaining a room temperature of 70 degrees at a point 3 feet above the floor in all habitable rooms, directly or indirectly.
- Furnace filters must be clean at the time of inspection.
- For annual inspections, gas wall heater pilot lights need not be lit during the summer months from April 15th through October 15th.
- No heat when the outside temperature is below 50 degrees and the temperature inside the unit is below 68 degrees will be considered an emergency requiring correction within 24 hours of notice by inspector.

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## Stairways

- Handrails are required on sections of four or more steps. Handrails and stairs must be secure.
- A balcony or porch 30 inches or more above the ground requires railing around it.

## Storage

- A tenant may use the garage or shed to store personal effects unless the amount or type of material stores presents a health or safety hazard. Owners may not store work related or personal belongings in the subsidized unit, attached garage, attached shed or on the driveway. The tenant must have full access to all rooms of the dwelling unit. If the owner and tenant enter into a written agreement, a detached garage or shed may be used by the owner to store non-hazardous materials, tools or equipment used to maintain the property. The detached shed or garage must be locked to prevent entry by all parties except the owner.

## Utilities

- Electricity and gas service MUST BE ON! However, for an annual inspection, gas wall heater pilot lights need not be lit during the summer months from April 15 through October 15. Tenants who have allowed their gas and/or electricity to be turned off for non-payment may expect termination of eligibility from the Housing Choice Voucher program. One utility meter may not serve two dwelling units unless the owner pays the utility bill. The owner is responsible for payment of water, sewer and trash for City units. For units located in the County, the owner is responsible for water and sewer, with trash negotiable with the tenant.

## Vehicles

- Inoperative (non-tagged or non-running) vehicles stored in the garage on the premises, or on the parking area of the property must be removed if designated a blight to the neighborhood and/or presents a health or safety hazard.

## Pools, Spas and Hot Tubs

- The standards below apply to private residence or apartment community pools:
- An empty pool is hazardous. It must either be filled with water, backfilled with dirt or surrounded by a fence adequate in height and construction.
- The water shall be kept clean at all times during the primary months of use, April 15th – October 15th. Discolored water during the remainder of the year will be noted 'NOTABLE'.
- Ladders, decks and diving boards shall be stable and in reasonably good condition.
- At this time, no additional fence around a filled pool is required by HQS.
- The owner and the tenant should provide to the HA a copy of any written agreement for a pool, spa or hot tub.

## Water Heater

- Whether gas or electric, a water heater must have the following. A temperature pressure release (TPR) valve (no pop up type). A DISCHARGE PIPE of galvanized steel; hard drawn copper piping and fittings; C-PVC (PVC is not allowed); or listed relief valve drain tube with fittings which will not reduce the internal bore of the pipe or tubing (straight lengths as opposed to coils). The discharge pipe shall extend from the valve downward to not less than 6 inches or more than 2 feet above the floor or ground OR extend to the exterior. The discharge pipe must be the same size as the TPR valve outlet, example  $\frac{3}{4}$ ". No valve, restriction or reducer coupling of any type should be installed between the TPR and the tank or in the discharge pipe.

## Gas Water Heater Requirements

- No gas water heaters are allowed in bedrooms or other living areas unless properly enclosed; vented to code to supply combustion air and the enclosure has a door. Gas water heater closet doors must be in reasonably good condition, with tight hinges, and vented with two screened openings of equal size. Do not store flammable vapors and liquids, or combustible materials such as newspapers, rags or mops near the water heater. Storage of any items in the gas heater closet is not allowed. Do not install any insulation blanket to the bottom of the water heater or allow it to sag, restricting the combustion of air. There must be a 6" clearance around the vent connector from the combustible material.

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## **Gas Water Heater Recommended Corrections**

- Elevate water heater 18" above the floor when located in a residential garage.

## **Electric water heater Requirements**

- Water heater closet doors must be in reasonably good condition, with tight hinges. Storage of any items in the heater closet is not allowed unless the heater was designed and listed or approved for installation adjacent to combustible materials.

## **Windows**

- Windows must be weather tight. No broken panes, large cracks or missing glass. The outside pane of a double pane window may be removed to remedy a crack or a broken pane. Small corner cracks may be corrected with silicone.
- Dry rot on a windowsill is a 'NOTABLE' item unless it affects the integrity of the window to the extent that it becomes a safety hazard, i.e. – the windowpane becomes loose.
- A bedroom must have a least one operable window.
- Units that have not been provided air conditioning or evaporative cooler will be required to have screens on at least one exterior window per room at the time of the move-in inspection.
- A large piece of furniture, which covers the only bedroom window, will fail the HQS inspection. Emergency escape must be provided.

## **Yard Maintenance**

- Front, side or backyards shall not be allowed to become dry and overgrown. No dry weeds, grass, trees or bushes that present a hazardous condition. Such conditions will be rated 'FAIL'.
- Overgrown green grass, trees or bushes will be rated as a 'NOTABLE' item unless the Inspector deems any or all to be a hazardous condition.
- The ground shall be free of any hazardous debris. A hazardous condition would endanger the health or safety of the tenant.
- The HA recommends that the owner and the tenant enter into a written agreement regarding yard maintenance and submit a copy to the HA for the tenants file.