

WHAT IS AN HQS INSPECTION?

HQS are the minimum health and safety standards allowed by the HUD to ensure that assisted housing units are DECENT, SAFE, AND SANITARY. The housing authority is required to perform an HQS inspection of Section 8 assisted units before a participant enters into a HAP contract with an owner, and at least once a year after that.

WHAT ARE THE VARIOUS TYPES OF INSPECTIONS?

- Initial Inspection: Conducted before a HAP contract is executed.
- Annual Inspection: Conducted at least once annually.
- Complaint/Emergency Inspection: Conducted at the request of a tenant or owner to determine whether failure items exist in the unit.
- Re-Inspection: Conducted to confirm that a failure that is considered emergency, tenant or owner's responsibility to fix, or that was identified in a vacancy unit has been corrected.
- Quality Control Inspection: Conducted by the inspector to confirm that the dwelling continues to meet HQS standards.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROVIDING ACCESS TO THE UNIT FOR AN INSPECTION? For initial inspections of a vacant unit, the owner is responsible for providing access to the unit; failure to do so may result in the cancellation of their Request for Tenancy Approval (RTA). For an occupied unit, the tenant is responsible for providing access to the unit.

HOW DO INSPECTORS DECIDE TO "PASS OR FAIL" A UNIT?

The inspector uses the HUD Inspection Checklist, which is used as a guideline to determine if the unit meets HQS Standards. One single failure item on the checklist will result in a failed inspection. The inspector must determine whether it was owner or tenant-caused and whether it is an emergency fail. The inspector will note the inspection result and provide details of all failure items.



COMMON HQS FAILED ITEMS

- Non-functional smoke detectors
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates
- Railings not present where required
- Peeling exterior and interior paint
- Trip hazards caused by installed floor coverings (carpets/vinyl)
- Cracked or broken window panes
- Inoperable burners on stoves or inoperable range hoods
- Missing burner control knobs
- Inoperable bathroom fan/no ventilation
- Leaking faucets or plumbing
- No temperature/pressure relief valve on water heaters

CASWELL COUNTY SECTION 8 MINIMUM HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

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205 E. Church Street
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Minimum Housing Quality Standards

SANITARY FACILITIES

A Flushable toilet in a separate room, a fixed basin with hot and cold running water and a shower or tub with running hot or cold water that will drain into an approved public or private system, and all in proper operating condition.

FOOD PREPARATION AND REFUSE DISPOSAL

Shall contain a cooking stove or range, a refrigerator or appropriate size for the unit, a kitchen sink with hot and cold running water that will drain into an approved public or private system, adequate space for storage, preparation and serving, adequate facilities for temporary storage when necessary. All facilities must be in proper operating condition.

SPACE AND SECURITY

A living room, kitchen area and bathroom shall be present and shall contain at least one sleeping room or living/sleeping room of appropriate size for each two persons. Exterior doors and windows accessible from outside the dwelling shall be lockable.

THERMAL ENVIRONMENT

Safe heating and or cooling facilities which are in proper operating condition and can provide adequate heat and/or cooling to each room in the dwelling unit appropriate for the climate to assure a healthy living environment. Unvented room heaters which burn gas, oil, or kerosene are unacceptable.

ILLUMINATION AND ELECTRICITY

Living and sleeping rooms shall include at least one window. A ceiling or wall type light fixture shall be present and working in bathroom and kitchen area. At least two electric outlets, one of which may be an overhead light shall be present and operable in the living area, kitchen area and each bedroom area.

Structure and materials

Ceiling, walls, and floors shall not have and serious defects such as severe bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, severe buckling or noticeable movement under walking stress, missing parts or other serious damage. The roof structure shall be firm and the roof shall be weather tight. The exterior wall structure and exterior wall surface shall not have any serious defects such as serious leaning, buckling, sagging, cracks, or holes, loose siding, or other serious damage. The condition and equipment of interior and exterior stairways, halls, porches, walkways, etc. shall be such as not to present danger of tripping or falling. Elevators shall be securely maintained in safe and operating condition. In the case of a mobile home, the home shall 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.

INTERIOR AIR QUALITY

The dwelling unit shall be free of pollutants in the air level which threaten the health of the occupants, such as carbon monoxide, sewer gas, fuel gas, dust, and other harmful air pollutants. Air circulation shall be adequate throughout the unit. Bathroom areas shall have at least one operable window or other adequate exhaust ventilation.

WATER SUPPLY

The unit shall be served by an approved public or private sanitary water supply.

ACCESS

The dwelling unit shall be usable and capable if being maintained without unauthorized use of other private properties. The building shall provide and alternate means of egress in case of fire (such as fire stairs or egress through windows).



SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

The site and neighborhood shall not be subject to serious adverse environmental conditions, natural or manmade, such as dangerous walks, steps, instability, flooding, poor drainage, septic tank back ups, sewage hazards or mudslide,; abnormal air pollution, smoke or dust; excessive noise, vibration or vehicular traffic; excessive accumulations of trash; vermin or rodent infestation; or fire hazards.

SANITARY CONDITIONS

The units and its equipment shall be free of vermin and rodent infestation.

LEAD BASED PAINT

The dwelling unit shall be in compliance with HUD lead based paint regulations, 24 CFR, Part 35, issued pursuant to the Lead Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act 43 USC 4801, and the owner shall provide a certification that the dwelling is in accordance with such HUD regulations. If the property was constructed before 1950, the family upon occupancy shall have been furnished the notice required by HUD lead based paint regulations and procedures regarding the hazards of Lead based paint poisoning, the symptoms and treatment of lead poisoning and the precautions to be taken against lead poisoning.