

Housing Quality Standard (HQS) Inspections

All Housing Choice Voucher Program units must meet HUD Housing Quality Standards to establish the minimum criteria for the health and safety of program participants. RI Housing is required by HUD regulations to inspect each unit to ensure that it is “safe, decent and sanitary”. Prior to move-in and biennially units must meet the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) before the unit is placed under Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract.

If a unit fails the initial inspection for a non-threatening matter, the family may proceed with move in. The property owner must correct the failed item(s) within 30 days to begin receiving housing assistance payments (HAP).

The most common HQS failed items are:

- Non-functional smoke detectors
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates
- Lose or missing railings where required
- Peeling interior or exterior paint
- Trip hazards caused by installed floor coverings (carpet/vinyl)
- Cracked or broken windowpanes
- Inoperable burners on stove or range hoods
- Missing burner knobs
- Inoperable bathroom fan/no ventilation
- Leaking faucets or plumbing
- No temperature/pressure relieve valve on water heaters

RI Housing recommend property owners conduct pre-inspections prior to the scheduled inspection. **All utilities must be connected before an inspection can be conducted.** The checklist below is a tool for property owners to prepare their unit for an HQS inspection. Having the unit move-in ready at the time of inspection will prevent delays in processing housing assistance payments (HAP).

A helpful guide to prepare the unit for inspection			Yes or No
Kitchen	1.	Sink- is there hot and cold water, proper drainage and no leaks?	
	2.	Are all cabinets properly installed/secured, working and with no exposed nails?	
	3.	Must provide space for the storage, preparation and serving of food.	
	4.	Must have at least 1 permanent working light fixture and 1 outlet	
	5.	Must have a cooking stove or range and refrigerator of appropriate size of unit (i.e. family)	
	6.	Stove, oven and ranges must be in working condition with all control knobs and handles properly installed	
	7.	Refrigerator seal must be intact, fit snugly and have no cracks.	
	8.	Is the refrigerator free of leaks? And cooling properly?	
	9.	Is the dishwasher properly working/ draining with no leaks?	
Bathroom	10.	Must be located in a separate room and have a flush toilet.	
	11.	Is the toilet properly secured to the floor with no leaks or gaps?	
	11.	Does sink and bathtub/shower have running hot and cold water, proper drainage, and no leaks?	
	12.	Are all bathtub, sink knobs, faucets and shower head present and working properly?	
	13.	Must have proper ventilation (mechanical fan or openable window)	
	14.	Must have 1 working light fixture and 1 outlet	

Bedroom	15.	Must have at least 1 window	
	16.	Must have at least 1 closet	
	17.	Must have 2 outlets or 1 outlet and a permanent light fixture	
Space and Security	18.	Does the unit have a minimum of a living room, kitchen area and bathroom?	
	19.	Does each living space have two forms of egress (i.e. door & window)	
	20.	Are all windows free of cracked, broken or missing glass pane?	
	21.	Are all windows designed to open and close working properly? Does the window stay up when open? Must have working locks.	
	22.	Are all the windows and exterior doors weather-tight?	
	23.	Is there free and clear access to all exits?	
	24.	Are all doors leading to exterior solid?	
	25.	Are all door leading to exterior properly locking?	
Electrical	26.	Are all light fixtures, switches and outlets properly working?	
	27.	Are all outlets installed and wired properly? (GFCI reset properly?)	
	28.	Are all outlets, light switches, junction boxes and breaker boxes properly covered? (no cracked, loose, missing or broken covers)	
	29.	Are all electrical wires properly protected in conduit?	
	30.	Is the breaker box cover panel present and properly installed (Secured)?	
Structure	31.	Are all walls and ceilings free of water leaks, large holes, cracks or peeling paint? (Indications of a leak are discolorations or stains on the ceiling)	
	32.	Are floors free of tripping hazards from loose/uneven flooring or covering?	
	33.	Are floors free of weak spots?	
	34.	Is the roof sound and weather tight? (no bulging, missing shingles, exposed holes)	
	35.	Are all exterior surfaces free of any holes, peeling paint, deteriorated wood or loose bricks/mortar?	
	36.	Are all gutters and downspouts properly installed?	
	37.	Are hand rails present and properly installed? (required when there are 4 or more consecutive steps)	
	38.	Are stairs free of any loose, broken or missing steps or risers?	
	39.	Is there proper illumination at stairways and hallways?	
	40.	Are there secure railings on porches and balconies?	
Utilities	41.	All utilities (water, electricity, and gas) must be on before inspection is scheduled.	
Health and Safety	42.	Is there a working smoke detector on each floor, including the basement and walk up attics? (multifamily units must have a working smoke detector in each bedroom and outside in a common area)	
	43.	Is the unit free of any evidence of infestation?	
	44.	The unit must contain a safe heating system that can provide adequate heat to each room used for living.	
	45.	All plumbing fixtures must have P-traps to prevent sewer gas from leaking into the unit	
Lead-Based Paint	46.	A dwelling unit constructed prior to 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. <i>Defective paint surfaces are defined as a surface on which the paint is cracking, scaling, chipping, peeling or loose. If defective paint surfaces are found, such surface must be treated.</i>	
Unit must be vacant for all initial inspections			

This brief listing is for the purposes of information only is not intended as a complete listing. Check HUD and local codes for other requirements.