



# Town of Union Housing Choice Voucher Program Pre-Rental Housing Quality Standards Inspection Information

The following information is provided as a general guide as to what the Town's inspector will look for when conducting an initial Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection. While this is not a complete list, it does cover many of the most common conditions that will result in a failed HQS inspection.

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- ✓ If possible, the previous tenant and all their belongings should be out of the unit.
  - ✓ The utilities (water, gas, electric) must be turned on.
  - ✓ Plumbing, heating, and electrical systems must be in safe working order. A leak under the sink or an exposed electrical outlet or switch will fail the unit.
  - ✓ The unit must be broom clean and ready for occupancy.
  - ✓ The kitchen must have a clean, washable, food preparation area of adequate size for the family.
  - ✓ There must be a clean, working stove and refrigerator (regardless of who is providing them).
  - ✓ The bathroom must have a window that can be opened, a gravity vent, or a properly installed mechanical exhaust fan.
  - ✓ The floors in the kitchen and bathrooms must be of an easily washable and waterproof material.
  - ✓ Bedrooms require complete doors that can be completely closed.
  - ✓ Minimum size for a bedroom is 70 square feet with at least one wall 7 feet in length. The living room and each bedroom must have adequate light, ventilation, and adequate space for the intended number of occupants.
  - ✓ Chipping, peeling, flaking, chalking, or cracking paint (interior or exterior) will fail the unit.
  - ✓ In addition to meeting fire egress requirements, windows must not be broken, must fit properly and be operable. First floor windows require locks.
  - ✓ Smoke detectors are required as follows:
    1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms; and
    2. In each room used for sleeping purposes; and
    3. In each story within a dwelling unit, not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwelling units with split-levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.
  - ✓ The front door and any other entry doors must fit properly and lock securely.
  - ✓ The exterior of the dwelling unit must be in good condition.
  - ✓ Missing sections of siding and/or shingles, unstable porches, decks, accessory buildings, or any condition creating a health or safety hazard will result in failure.
  - ✓ Garbage and debris must be removed from the property.
  - ✓ Stairs exceeding three steps require a handrail.
  - ✓ Basement (cellar) living space will fail if windows do not provide adequate light, ventilation, or secondary means of egress in case of fire.
  - ✓ The hot water tank must have a pressure relief valve installed with piping to within six inches of the floor.
  - ✓ For purposes of rent determination, a room designated as a bedroom must have a closet (or other permanent area for storage of clothing) and offer privacy in the form of surrounding walls and a door. The closet requirement can be met if the landlord supplies a portable wardrobe.
  - ✓ Light fixtures must have globes or a lens covering the bulbs. Bare bulb fixtures are not permitted.