



**A Practical Guide to the Housing Maintenance Code**  
**Checklist for Tenants, Landlords, & Homeowners to Identify Possible Problems**

*Looking Outside: Is your home...weather-tight?...rodent proof?...well maintained?*

**EXTERIOR**

**General**

- No holes or large cracks in foundation
- Soffit, fascia, and siding in good repair
- Exterior surfaces protected from elements
- House numbers visible from public street - 4 inches tall, ½ inch wide, contrasting color
- No peeling, flaking or chipped paint on any exterior surface
- Shingles in good repair; trees must be trimmed back from roof
- Roof free of leaks
- A/C coil, gas line, electrical line penetrations, etc., all caulked
- Gutters/downspouts in good condition and free of debris
- Chimney tuck pointing/mortar in good repair
- Porch and deck in good repair and up to code (guard railings, decking, supports, stairs, etc.)
- Handrails required at four (4) or more risers
- Garages and sheds are in good repair and no peeling paint
- Garage door opener has direct electrical connection (i.e., no extension cord)
- Garage door provided and in good repair
- Electrical outlets/lights/junction boxes have covers
- Grass and weeds cut and maintained
- Surface graded for drainage away from foundation
- No litter in yard
- No parking on grass
- No abandoned vehicles, car parts, tires, vehicle batteries, construction debris, etc.
- No more than 4 vehicles parked/stored outside garage
- No non-residential type vehicles
- Fencing must be in good repair
- Exterior dryer vents are clean
- Maintain window wells free from debris
- All wires a minimum of 10 feet above grade

## **Garbage and Recycling**

- Must have trash service
- Must be kept in approved containers with tight fitting lids
- Lids must be closed
- Containers must not overflow
- Containers must not be placed outside the buildable portion of the property
- Appliances for removal must have the doors removed

*Looking Inside: Is your home clean, safe, and well maintained?*

## **INTERIOR**

### **Walls and Ceilings**

- Clean and in good repair
- No loose wallpaper
- No cracks or loose plaster
- No peeling paint
- No holes

### **Floors**

- Clean and in good repair
- Structurally sound
- No torn floor covering
- Carpets secure to floor and in good repair

### **Electrical/Lighting**

- Good repair
- Electrical outlets/switches/junction boxes must have covers
- Cable and phone lines must have covers
- All major appliances must have direct electrical connections - extension cords and outlet adapters are not approved
- Recommend GFCI in bathrooms
- Electrical service must be grounded
- Water meters must be grounded
- Light covers in place
- Service panels must have approved covers
- No open holes in service panels
- All circuits/fuses must be labeled
- All open wires must be capped

## Windows

- Clean and in good repair
- No broken or cracked glass
- Tight fitting screens on all openable windows with no holes or tears
- Working hardware
- Weather tight
- Open and close easily
- Top sash does not come down when window is unlocked or opened
- Does not fall closed after opening
- Locks required on all first floor and lower level windows
- Window sills clean of debris
- No peeling, flaking or chipped paint – recommend NOT painting windows
- Window cranks must be in place and operable
- Proper window dimensions:
  - Sill height not more than 44" above floor
  - Openable area not less than 5.7 square feet (may be reduced depending on age of home)
  - Opening height not less than 24"
  - Opening width not less than 20"
  - Egress wells must be 3 feet wide by 3 feet long
  - Egress ladders required if well is deeper than 44"

## Doors

- Clean and in good repair
- Doors tightly secure when closed
- Tight fitting
- Must have latch-type deadbolt locks with a throw lock of not less than 1 inch on exterior doors - keyed deadbolts are not allowed
- Door closers for screen doors

## Stairways

- Guardrails are required on open-side stairways. No gaps greater than 4 inches.
- Guardrails must be a minimum of 36 inches high with spaces no greater than 4 inches
- Handrails are required when there are more than 4 risers
- Handrail minimum height is 34 inches and 1 ½ inches from wall
- Guardrail and handrail must be in good repair and firmly attached
- All stairs must be in good repair and secure
- Stairs must have a minimum rise of 8 inches and a maximum run of 9 inches
- Handrails must be placed a minimum of 34 inches and a maximum of 38 inches above the top of the step

## Plumbing

- Good repair
- Must have hot (minimum of 110<sup>0</sup>F) and cold running water
- No water leaks in plumbing drains, supply lines, or faucets
- Water heaters must have temperature/pressure relief valve
- Water heaters must have overflow spill pipe within 18" of floor
- Plumbing must be directly connected to sanitary sewer
- All plumbing drains must be rigid; flexible is not approved
- Sump pump drains must be discharged to yard area, not to sewer
- Toilets must have an anti-siphon ballcock inside the tank
- All fixtures must be hard plumbed, except condensate line and washing machine

## Ventilation/Heat/Gas

- All dryers must be vented with rigid or flexible aluminum material
- Flues must have a firestop where it penetrates the floor or wall
- Flues must not have any uncovered holes or be badly rusted and be securely attached
- Bathrooms with showers/tub must have an openable window or mechanical ventilation
- Must provide heat at a minimum of 68<sup>0</sup> F
- All gas lines must be of approved materials and an operable shut-off valve must be present
- Unused gas lines must be properly capped
- All vent covers must be secure and operable

## Fire

- Smoke alarms are required inside every bedroom, each corridor outside every bedroom, and a minimum of one detector per level
- The top of the smoke alarms mounted on walls must be mounted a minimum of 4 inches and a maximum of 12 inches from ceiling and if mounted on ceilings, must be mounted a minimum of 4 inches from walls
- Carbon monoxide alarms are required within 10 feet of all sleeping rooms
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms must be testable
- Smoke and carbon monoxide alarms can be battery powered
- All sleeping rooms must have an egress to the outside (window or door)

## General

- All appliances (stove, refrigerator, furnace, water heater, etc.) must be in good repair
- Floor drains must not be clogged and water must be in the trap
- Each bedroom shall have an area of not less than 70 square feet. Where more than two people occupy a room used for sleeping purposes, the required floor area shall be increased at the rate of 50 square feet for each occupant in excess of two.
- Guardrails are required on open-sided stairways. No gaps greater than 4 inches.

**Note: List not intended to be all inclusive.**