

# **HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS**

## **GENERAL**

1. Each unit must have a minimum of a living room, kitchen, and bathroom.
2. Each unit must have its own separate entrance with a lockable key door.
3. All windows that can be reached from the ground require a lock, including basement windows. If windows are accessible by a roof, porch, or fire escape the window must be lockable, storm windows are acceptable as long as they lock properly.
4. Bedrooms require at least one window. If the window was designed to be operable it must open. Cracked window panes must be replaced. Windows must be reasonably weather tight.
5. Ceilings, walls and floors must not have any serious defects such as bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, buckling or other serious damage.
6. Each unit must contain one proper working smoke detector on each level of the dwelling. Attics that tenants have access to or that house a furnace require one also. For large complexes, laundry areas and common hallways must have one also.
7. Each unit that has an appliance that may emit carbon monoxide must have a carbon monoxide detector on the lowest level of the unit that has a bedroom per NYS law.
8. If the unit is occupied by a hearing – impaired person, smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors must have an alarm system as specified by the National Fire Protection Agency.
9. Any common area's such as hallways, stairs, and porches should be kept clean and maintained. Each unit on the third floor and above must have an alternate means of fire escape.
10. All light fixtures, exterior and interior must have globes and no open sockets.
11. Each unit must be free of severe infestation (roaches, ants, mice, rats, fleas, bed bugs), etc.
12. Stairways, porches, balconies and decks, must be free of severe structural defects, (broken steps, loose treads or boards). All stairs with (4) or more steps must have a hand rail. The landing is considered a step (example 3 steps and a landing) requires a handrail. Basements and attics that the tenant has access to must have a hand rail. Decks/Porches more than 30 inches off ground requires a safety rail.
13. The unit exterior and interior must be kept free of large piles of trash & garbage, discarded furniture, and other debris.

## **SAFETY HAZARDS**

1. Un-vented room heaters that burn gas, oil, or kerosene are NOT PERMITTED.
2. Unvented heaters that are equipped with a unique safety pilot system called an oxygen depletion sensor (ODS) ARE PERMITTED.
3. Improper fuel storage is a fire hazard.
4. Combustible materials around the furnace and hot water tank are a fire hazard.

## **LEAD-BASED PAINT**

1. Our goal is to reduce lead exposure to children under six years of age.
2. There should not be deteriorated paint visible at the time of the initial inspection in housing where children under the age of six years will live (interior or exterior).
3. Annual inspection of all painted surfaces, window wells, troughs, friction impact surfaces and the exterior including all out buildings, fences, etc will be inspected on a yearly basis until the child or children are of the age of six. If deteriorated paint is found to be above de minimus levels (20 sq. ft. exterior/2sq. ft. interior) paint testing will be done. The area must be stabilized and repainted and the completed owner certification form received before the unit can pass HQS Inspection.

## **LIVING ROOM**

1. Must have a minimum of one window or a means of artificial illumination.
2. Must have at least two electrical outlets (overhead or wall fixture may count as one).

## **KITCHEN**

1. Each unit must have a stove and refrigerator in proper working order. (These items are to be supplied either by the owner or the tenant). If the stove is gas there must be a shut off on the line. Microwaves can be used in place of a stove if the tenant agrees that this is adequate for their needs.
2. Sink with "gas trap" must be in proper working order with hot and cold running water.
3. Must provide space for storage, preparation, and serving of food.
4. Must have at least two electrical outlets and an overhead or wall light.
5. If a range hood is present it must be in proper working condition.
6. Dishwasher and garbage disposal must work properly or be removed.

## **BATHROOM**

1. Must be located in a separate room.
2. Must have a toilet, sink, tub or shower in proper working order.
3. Must have an operable window to the exterior or a ventilation fan.
4. Must have at least one permanent light fixture (Wall or Ceiling).

## **BEDROOMS**

1. There must be at least one bedroom for every two persons.
2. Must have at least two electrical outlets (overhead or wall light fixture may count as one).
3. Must have at least one window. If designed to be operable, it must open and remain open unassisted.
4. Must have a permanent source of heat or an adequate indirect source.
5. It is recommended that every bedroom have a door for fire safety reasons.

## **BASEMENT**

1. Electrical wiring must meet National Electrical Code Standards.
2. Hot water heaters must have a discharge line off the pressure relief valve and must be properly vented. If located in a living area it must be shielded.
3. Heating unit should have proper maintenance, which shall include, but is not limited to: yearly servicing, filter replacement, chimney cleaning, etc.
4. Must have a smoke detector located near the furnace and hot water tank.
5. Must not be filled with debris.

## **ATTIC**

1. Must have a smoke detector and hand railing if the tenant has access.
2. If no access is allowed it must be pad locked off.

## **EXTERIOR**

1. Exterior and foundation of unit must be structurally sound with no major defects such as serious leaning, buckling, sagging, large holes or cracks.
2. Roof must be structurally sound. If gutters are present, they must be secured and functional. (But not required)