

OWNER'S MANUAL

SECTION 8 HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHER PROGRAM

HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

City of Des Moines, Housing Services Department
2309 Euclid
Des Moines, IA 50310
515-323-8950

Revised December, 2018

This manual is intended for property owners, managers and others responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of dwelling units participating in the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Programs.

The purpose of the manual is to provide information concerning Housing Quality Standards required for all such units.

The manual is essentially an abbreviated version of the inspection checklist requirements used by the housing inspectors and should be used to properly prepare the unit for entry and annual inspections as required by the Department of Housing Services.

The basic rules of thumb are:

1. All components and systems in the dwelling unit should perform and function as designed, and;
2. Safe, decent and sanitary conditions must be maintained, and;
3. Gas, electric and water must be on whether tenant or owner supplied. Separate meters for each tenant are required - unless owner supplied.

Keeping these rules of thumb in mind and adhering to the requirements and explanations on the following pages, the inspection process can be a relatively painless procedure for all involved.

The Department of Housing Services requirements do not alleviate the property owner(s) responsibility for compliance with other local housing or occupancy codes or regulations. Where City housing code inspections are required, the City's Certificate of Inspection must be current and so demonstrated before a Housing Assistance Payment and Assisted Lease Agreement can be executed by the Department to either begin or continue participation in the program. The unit and/or building must continue to be in compliance with both City Codes and Housing Quality Standards. If, in the opinion of the Department of Housing Services, there is a conflict between Housing Quality Standards and the City Housing Code, the more stringent standards shall apply.

Remember, the owner is ultimately responsible for maintaining the unit in compliance with Housing Quality Standards, assuring prompt repairs and facilitating entry to units for inspections. Any repairs required should be accomplished in a workmanlike manner and within the PHA specified time frame.

Tenant failure to allow entry for re-inspections could lead to termination.

Tenant/Owner Violations/Responsibilities:

NOTE: Marginal units (i.e., those that are likely to fall below HQS within one-year) should not be approved.

Owner Violations – are deficiencies that the landlord is responsible to correct.

Comments: are conditions that are not serious enough to fail the unit, but are reviewed when establishing contract rents, annual rent adjustments and processing claims for damages.

Abatement: occurs when Housing Assistance Payments are stopped; if landlord required repairs are not completed.

Tenant Violations – are deficiencies that the tenant is responsible for having corrected. Tenant should contact the property owner to discuss how to correct the violations.

Comments: are conditions that are not serious enough to fail the unit but are reviewed in establishing contract rents, annual rent adjustments and claims for damage.

Termination: occurs when tenant loses their rental subsidy through Section 8 Housing Assistance payments program and is responsible for the full contract rent.

LIVING ROOM

Living Room – must be present

Note: If the unit is an efficiency apartment, consider the living room present.

Electricity – power must be on for the inspection.

In order to qualify, the outlets must be present and properly installed in the baseboard or wall. Outlets are not acceptable on floors. Does not count a single duplex receptacle as two outlets.

There must be two outlets in the room, or one outlet plus a permanently installed ceiling or wall light fixture.

Both the outlets and/or the light must be working.

Do not count any of the following items or fixtures as outlets/fixtures: tables or floor lamps (these are not permanent light fixtures); ceiling lamps plugged into socket; extension cords.

Electrical Hazards – must not be present

Examples of electrical hazards: broken wiring, non-insulated wiring, frayed wiring, improper types of wiring, connections or insulation, wires lying or located near standing water or other unsafe places, light fixture hanging from electric wiring without other firm support or fixture, missing cover plates on switches or outlets, cracked outlets, outlets filled with paint, exposed electrical box connections, overloaded circuits evidenced by frequently “blown” fuses, etc.

Romex and similar wiring within four (4) feet of walking surfaces must be protected. (i.e., covered or in hard conduit)

Security – All doors and windows accessible to outside must be lockable.

“Accessible to outside” means: doors open to the outside or to a common public hall, windows with sills less than 6’ off the ground or accessible from the ground; windows or doors leading onto a fire escape, porch or other outside place that can be reached from the ground.

“Lockable” means: the window or door has a properly working lock, or the window is not designed to be opened. Locks must be securely attached.

Window Condition – Must have at least one window to outside.

All windows should work as designed (i.e. stay open when raised, etc.)

All openable windows to be properly screened.

If the dwelling unit is designed to include storm windows, all inserts must be in place. The windows in the room (including windows in doors), that have severe or moderate deterioration is unacceptable.

Severe Deterioration means: that the window no longer has the capacity to keep out the wind and the rain or is a cutting hazard. Examples are missing or broken-out panes; dangerously loose cracked panes; windows that will not close; windows that when closed do not form a reasonably tight seal; loose panes.

Moderate Deterioration means: windows that are reasonably weather-tight, but show evidence of aging, abuse or lack of repair. Examples are: splintered sill, signs of some minor rotting in the window frame or the window itself; window panes loose because of missing window putty.

Ceiling Condition – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

“Unsound or hazardous” means the presence of such defects that either a potential exists for structural collapse or that unkeyed plaster or holes are present. The condition includes: bulging or buckling holes; missing parts; falling or in danger of failing loose surface materials.

Extremely dirty conditions may also constitute a fail rating.

Wall Condition – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

“Unsound or hazardous” includes: defects such that the structural safety of the building is threatened; buckling, bulging or leaning; damaged or loose structural members; holes; air filtration.

Extremely dirty conditions may also constitute a fail rating.

Floor Condition – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

“Unsound or hazardous” means the present of such defects that a potential exists for structural collapse or other threats to safety (e.g. tripping) or that cracks or holes allow drafts from below the floor. The condition includes: buckling or major movements under walking stress; damaged or missing parts.

Extremely dirty conditions may also constitute a fail rating.

Lead Paint

A visual assessment of deteriorated paint will be conducted at the time of inspection if the unit was built prior to 1978 and children under the age of 6 will be occupying the unit. This requirement applies to all painted surfaces (building components) all interior and exterior surfaces of the unit and any components associated with the unit (i.e., apartment building, common halls, playground equipment, common areas).

Examples of surfaces to receive a visual assessment for deteriorated paint include:

Interior: walls, floors, ceiling, built in cabinets (sink bases), baseboards, doors, door frames, window systems including mullions, sills, or frames, and any other painted building component within the unit/building or associated with the unit,

Exterior: Siding, fascia, soffits, trim, handrails, steps, foundation walls, fencing, and any other painted building component associated to the unit (i.e., detached garage, playground equipment)

Deteriorated paint includes: any painted surfaces that are peeling, chipping, chalking, cracking, damaged or otherwise separated from the substrate. All scraped paint that falls on the floor, ground, shrubs, bushes, etc. must be removed prior to painting or covering. Deteriorated paint will be visually assessed and designated by the level of paint deterioration found by the inspector.

Above de minimis level: all deteriorated paint surfaces more than 2 sq. ft. in any interior room or space, or more than 10% of the total surface area of an

interior type of component with a small surface area (i.e., window sills, baseboards, and trim), or more than 20 sq. ft. on the building exterior. The deteriorated paint must be stabilized (corrected) in accordance with lead safe work practice requirements set by HUD and clearance testing is required. If owner of a unit is required to correct any deteriorated paint above de minimis levels, the owner must submit a Lead Based Paint Owner Certification and the workers performing the repairs must be trained and certified in lead safe work practices and provide a copy of certification prior to re-inspection.

Below de minimis level: If deteriorated paint surface is less than 2 sq. ft. or less than 10% of the component, only stabilization is required. Stabilization means removal of deteriorated paint, repair of substrate, and application of a new protective coating or paint. Clearance testing is not required if deteriorated paint is found to be below de minimis levels.

KITCHEN

Kitchen Area – Must be present.

Note: A kitchen is an area used for preparation of meals. It may be either a separate room or an area of a larger room (for example, a kitchen area in an efficiency apartment).

Electricity, Electrical Hazards, Security and Window Condition

Same as explanations for “Living Room” with the following modification:

Note: The requirement is that at least one outlet and one permanent light fixture are present and working.

Note: Floor mounted outlets are not acceptable in kitchen.

Note: The absence of a window does not fail these items in the kitchen.

Note: Electricity must be turned on.

Stove or Range with Oven

If owner supplies cannot pass until in unit and checked by inspector

Both an oven and a stove or range with top burners must be present and working as designed. Hot plates are not acceptable substitutes for these facilities. A microwave oven is acceptable if the tenant agrees. An oven is not working if it will not heat up. To be working a stove or range must have all burners working and knobs to turn them off and on. The burners must light from the pilot if so designed. Extremely dirty conditions may also constitute a fail rating.

Refrigerator

If owner supplied cannot pass until in unit and checked by inspector.

A refrigerator is not working if it will not maintain a temperature low enough to keep food from spoiling over a period of time. If the refrigerator is present and working but defects exist, they may fail. Possible defects may include: missing interior shelving; dented or scratched interior or exterior surfaces; deterioration of

door seal; loose or missing door handle. Extremely dirty conditions may also constitute a fail rating.

Sink

Water must be on.

A permanently attached kitchen sink must be present in the kitchen area. A sink in a bathroom or a portable basin will not satisfy this requirement. A sink is not working unless it has running hot and cold water from the faucets and a properly connected and properly working drain (with a “gas trap”). If a working sink has defects, they may fail. Possible defects may include: dripping faucet; marked, dented, or scratched surface; slow drain; missing or broken drain stopper.

See supplemental page for tenant supplied appliances.

Space for Storage and Preparation of Food

Some space must be available for storage and preparation of food. If there is not built-in space for food storage and preparation, a table used for food preparation and a portable storage cabinet will satisfy the requirement. If there is not room for a table and portable cabinet, it would fail. Possible defects include: marked, dented, or scratched surfaces; broken shelving or cabinet doors; broken drawers or cabinet hardware; limited size relative to family needs. Extremely dirty conditions may also constitute a fail rating.

Walls, Ceilings, and Floor Condition and Lead Paint

Same as Living Room.

BATHROOM

Bathroom - Must be present.

Most units have easily identifiable bathrooms (i.e. separate room with toilet, washbasin, and tub or shower). In some cases, however, you will encounter units with scattered bathroom facilities (i.e. toilet, washbasin and tub or shower located in separate parts of the unit). At a minimum there must be an enclosure around the toilet. Explanation for these items is the same as that provided for: “Living Room” with the following modifications:

Electricity – Note: the requirement is that at least one permanent light fixture is present and working.

Electrical Hazards

Note: In addition to the previously mentioned hazards, outlets, within the bathroom or adjacent to and serving the bathroom shall be retrofitted with ground fault circuit interrupter (G. F. C. I.) outlets where feasible. Floor mounted outlets are not acceptable in bathrooms.

Window Condition – Must be Openable

Note: the absence of a window does not fail this item in the bathroom if the requirements for ventilation (see below) are met.

Walls, Ceiling and Floor Conditions and Lead Paint

Same as Living Room

Flush Toilet in Enclosed Room in Unit

The toilet must be contained within the dwelling and be available for the exclusive use of the occupants of the unit (i.e. outhouses or facilities shared by occupants of other dwelling units are not acceptable). It must allow for privacy. Not working means: the toilet is not connected to water supply; it is not connected to a sewer drain; it is clogged; the mechanism does not function properly when water is turned on or loose from floor. Types of defects: constant running; chipped or broken porcelain; slow draining, leaks.

Fixed Wash Basin or Lavatory in Unit

The wash basin must be permanently installed (i.e. a portable wash basin does not satisfy the requirement). Also, a kitchen sink used to pass the requirements for kitchen facilities cannot also serve as the bathroom wash basin. The wash basin may be located separate from the other bathroom facilities (e.g. in a hallway). Not working means: the wash basin is not connected to a system that will deliver hot and cold running water; it is not connected to a properly operating drain; the connection (or vents or traps) are faulty to the extent that leakage of water or escape of sewer gases occurs. If the wash basin is “present and working” but has the following types of defects: insufficient water pressure; dripping faucets; leaks; cracked or chipped porcelain; slow drain; absent or broken support rod for shower curtain.

Ventilation

Must be present by means of an openable window or a working vent system. Working vent systems include: ventilation shafts (non-mechanical vents) and electric fans. Electric vent fans must function when switch is turned on. Exhaust vents must be vented to the outside: attic and crawlspace.

BEDROOMS (OR ANY OTHER ROOM USED FOR SLEEPING))

Electricity and Electrical Hazards, Security

Same as Living Room.

Window Condition

Same as living room except that in bedrooms or any other room used for sleeping, if the windows are designed to be opened at least one (1) window must be openable unless the unit is already in compliance with city rental codes that have been adopted to include the International Property Code and the International Fire Code.

Rooms that do not meet proper egress requirements will not be allowed to be used as sleeping rooms.

If window security bars or security screens are present on emergency exit window(s), they must be equipped with a quick release system. The owner is responsible for ensuring that the family is instructed on the use of the quick release system.

Walls, Ceiling, and Floor Conditions and Lead Paint

Same as Living Room.

Basement Bedrooms

Besides the other requirements for bedrooms, basement areas used for sleeping purposes must meet the following requirements:

- 1.) The interior must have finished walls, ceiling and floor impervious to leakage of ground or surface water and provide complete separation from the furnace, water heater, laundry equipment, etc.
- 2.) A clear ceiling height of six and one-half (6 ½) feet above the floor must be maintained.
- 3.) There must be a second means of egress via a window or door which opens directly to the exterior and which is openable from the inside without the use of separate tools.
- 4.) Must follow the same criteria as all other bedrooms on design, flooring, walls, ceilings, heat, electric, etc.

Smoke Detectors

Smoke detectors must be installed close to all bedrooms and at all levels including the basement ceiling or where otherwise required by the Housing Authority for tenant safety. Smoke detectors should be checked periodically to assure proper functioning. Non-working smoke detectors are considered a twenty-four (24) hour Notice to Cure.

Design, Flooring, Walls, Ceilings

Must have been originally designed to be a bedroom or remodeled to now be a bedroom. All floors, walls, ceilings must be free from hazardous defects such as buckling, bulging, leaning, damaged or loose structural member; large holes or any holes regardless of size that allow significant draft to enter unit. Floors must be carpet, hardwood, tile, or vinyl. Walls must be painted block, paneling, or drywall. Ceiling must be drywall, block tile, or plaster. Electric – room must have two (2) wall plugs or one wall plug and one ceiling light. Window – at least one openable window with screen and all windows to function as designed.

Heating – indirect heating is acceptable.

Pass with Comment – Possible fails

Floors that are basically sound but have some non-hazardous defects, including; heavily worn or damaged floor surface (for example, scratches or gouges in surface, missing portions of tile or linoleum, previous water damage). If there is a floor covering, also note the condition especially if badly worn or soiled.
(could fail)

Walls that are basically sound but have some non-hazardous defects, including small holes; cracks; loose or missing parts; unpainted surfaces; peeling paint.
(could fail)

Ceilings that are basically sound but have some non-hazardous defects, including small holes or cracks; missing or broken ceiling tiles; water stains; soiled surfaces; unpainted surfaces; peeling paint. (could fail)

Additions – Remodeling of unit for added bedroom must be designed as bedroom as mentioned above but also must include heat register. Bedroom must also have privacy.

OTHER ROOMS USED FOR LIVING

Other rooms used for living include dining rooms, family rooms, finished basement areas, halls and stairway, etc.

Electricity/Illumination

Other rooms used for living must have a means of natural or artificial illumination present. Examples are: a light fixture, a wall outlet to serve a lamp, a window in the room or adequate light from another adjacent room.

Electrical Hazards, Security

Same as Living Room.

Window Condition

Windows are not required to be present if illumination requirements are otherwise met; however, if windows are present, they shall meet the requirements as in living room. Windows designed to open must operate.

Walls, Ceiling, and Floor Condition and Lead Paint

Same as Living Room

SECONDARY ROOMS (ROOMS NOT USED FOR LIVING)

Secondary rooms (rooms not used for living) will be inspected to determine conditions regarding electrical hazards; security window condition (if windows are present) walls, ceilings, floors, and lead paint.

Building Exterior

Condition of Foundation – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

“Unsound or hazardous” means: stairs, porches, balconies, or decks with structural collapse. There are holes or other defects that may result in air or water infiltration (in most cases exterior defects will be reflected in equally serious surface defects within the unit, i.e. buckling, water damage); the gutters, downspouts and soffits (area under the eaves) show decay and have allowed the entry of significant air or water into the interior of the structure. Gutters and downspouts are not required to pass. However, if gutter and downspouts are present they must function as designed.

Condition of Stairs, Rails, and Porches – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

“Unsound or hazardous” means: stairs, porches, balconies, or decks with structural defects; or broken, rotting or missing steps; or absence of a handrail when there are extended lengths of steps (i.e. four or more consecutive steps); or absence of or insecure railings around a porch or balcony which are 30 inches or more above the ground. Stairs must have equal rises and runs. No rise should exceed eight to nine (8” – 9”) inches.

Condition of Roof and Gutters – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

“Unsound or hazardous” means: the roof has defects such as buckling, sagging indicating the potential of structural collapse. There are holes or other defects that may result in air or water infiltration (in most cases exterior defects will be reflected in equally serious surface defects within the unit, i.e. buckling, water damage); the gutters, downspouts and soffits (area under the eaves) show decay and have allowed the entry of significant air or water into the interior of the structure. Gutters and downspouts are not required to pass. However, if gutter and downspouts are present they must function as designed.

Condition of Exterior Surfaces – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

See definition above for roof.

Lead Paint: Exterior Surfaces

Exterior surfaces include: walls, stairs, decks, porches, railings, windows and doors, soffits, fascia, etc. See discussion of Lead Paint (interior surfaces) for Living Room for explanation of regulations for treatment or covering of surfaces not in compliance.

Other Exterior Items

Exterior doors must be sound and weathertight.

Screens must be present for all openable windows and exterior doors, and screens for exterior storm doors if so designed. Storm and screen doors must also have operating self-closing devices installed. Storm windows must be present and working as designed. Enclosed porches with multiple windows must have at least two openable windows with screens for cross ventilation.

Plumbing

This refers to the distribution of water and gas and the elimination of waste and sewage in the dwelling unit. These systems must be properly installed and maintained in a safe, sanitary, and leak free condition. Plumbing fixtures required for the dwelling unit are specified elsewhere in the manual (Refer to Individual Room Requirements). All fixtures must be supplied with hot and cold running water as required and be connected to an approved sewer system. Gas traps must be present to prevent the escape of sewer gas into the dwelling. The gas and water must be in service for the dwelling to pass. Each dwelling unit must have separate meters unless service is paid by owner.

Water Heaters

There shall be some means of producing hot water for the dwelling. Water heaters must be installed and maintained in safe operating condition. Gas water heaters may not be in bedrooms or other living areas where safety hazards or their potential exist. Other unsafe conditions are as explained for heating equipment (See next page). All water heaters must have a properly installed and labeled temperature-pressure relief valve and a discharge line directing and discharge toward the floor.

Heating

Adequacy and Safety of Heating Equipment

The dwelling unit must have adequate heat during the cold months of the year. Important Note: The Department of Housing Services has the final responsibility of determining adequate heat. The heating equipment must be installed and maintained in safe operating conditions (See supplemental page for the Department of Housing Services' furnace certification policy). Examples of unsafe heating equipment or conditions: un-vented room heaters, accumulation of creosote or soot in a chimney, an improper flue or chimney, lack of manual gas shut-off valve, lack of proper combustion air, improper heat distribution, improper gas piping or detectable gas odors, proximity of combustible materials around system, missing or deteriorated parts or components, any condition with the potential for fire, explosion or escape of toxic fumes or gases into the living area, etc. Each dwelling unit must have separate meter unless service is provided by owner.

Cooling and Ventilation

The dwelling unit must have adequate windows or other openings to assure cross ventilation or a safe and working cooling system.

Electrical

This refers to the supply and distribution of electrical power for the dwelling unit and/or building. This system must be properly installed and grounded and maintained in safe working condition. Outlet and lighting requirements are specified elsewhere in the manual (refer to individual room or area requirement).

Examples of electrical hazards can be found under Living Room. These must not be present anywhere in or around the dwelling. This is to include and garages or out-buildings which may be present. The service panel must be properly grounded. This includes a grounding jumper wire around the water meter. All components of the electrical system must be firmly attached to the structure and/or properly supported. Each dwelling unit must have separate meter unless service is provided by owner.

General Health and Safety

Access to Unit – Must not be through another unit. “Through another unit” means that access to the unit is only possible by means of passage through another dwelling unit.

Emergency Exits - Must be acceptable and remain accessible.

Acceptable emergency exit means that the building must have an alternative means of exist in case of fire that meets local or state regulations; however, the dwelling must not serve as a part of the emergency exit path for other units in a multi-family situation.

The use of double key dead bolt locks on doors used for egress is prohibited.

Important Note: The Housing Authority has the final responsibility for deciding whether the type of emergency exit is acceptable.

Evidence of Infestation – Must not be present.

Presence of rats or infestation by mice or vermin (such as roaches, snakes, or wasps) is evidenced by: rat or mice holes; droppings, runs; numerous settings of poison, etc.

Ventilation

The storage of combustible, hazardous and/or flammable material and equipment is prohibited inside dwelling units (including basements)

All gas dryers must be properly vented to the exterior of the unit and/or building

Garbage and Debris – Must not accumulate

Accumulation means: piles of trash and garbage, discarded furniture and other debris (not temporarily stored awaiting removal). This may occur inside the unit, in common areas or outside. Also old batteries, refrigerators, etc. that may present a safety hazard.

Refuse Disposal – There must be adequate covered facilities

“Adequate covered facilities” includes: trash cans with covers, garbage chutes, “dumpsters” (i.e. large scale refuse boxes with lids), and trash bags (if approvable by local public agency). “Approvable by local public agency” means that the local Health and Sanitation Department (city, town, or county) approves the type of facility in use.

Stairs and Common Halls – Must not be unsound or hazardous.

Any deterioration shall fail if they present a risk of tripping or falling. A handrail is required on extended sections of stairs (i.e. four or more consecutive steps.) A railing is required on unprotected heights such as around stairwells. Stairs must have equal risers and runs. No riser should exceed eight to nine (8"-9") inches. Appropriate fire safety equipment and/or devices (i.e. smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, etc.) shall be present in common areas.

Smoke Detectors - to be installed at all levels including basements. (New construction requires smoke detectors in each bedroom on all levels).

Smoke detectors must be installed close to all bedrooms or where otherwise required by Housing Authority for tenant safety. Smoke detectors should be checked periodically to assure proper functioning.

Fire Extinguishers Must Have Current Certification Tag

Elevators Must Have Posted Inspection Certification

Site and Neighborhood Conditions – Must not seriously and continuously endanger the health and safety of the tenants. Examples of conditions that would “seriously and continuously endanger the health and safety of the residents” are:

- Other buildings or conditions on, or near the property, that pose hazards
- Evidence of flooding or major drainage problems
- Evidence of mud slides or large land settlement or collapse
- Proximity to open sewage or ditches
- Unprotected height over thirty (30) inches
- Fire hazards
- Abnormal air pollution or smoke which continues throughout the year and is determined to seriously endanger health
- Continuous or excessive vibration of vehicular traffic
- Abandoned/inoperable unlicensed vehicles
- Tall, un-mowed grass (on site)
- Dead trees and/or branches
- Badly rutted or un-surfaced driveways or parking areas
- Unlicensed vehicles

The following Housing standards violations will be considered emergency violations and will require immediate attention:

- Any condition that jeopardizes the security of the unit
- Major plumbing leaks or flooding, waterlogged ceiling or floor in imminent danger of falling

Natural or LP gas or fuel oil leaks
Any electrical problem or condition that could result in shock or fire
Absence of a working heating system when outside temperature is below 60 degrees Fahrenheit.
Utilities not in service, including no running hot water
Conditions that present the imminent possibility of injury
Obstacles that prevent safe entrance or exit from the unit
Absence of a functioning toilet in the unit
Inoperable smoke detectors (units must have at least one working smoke detector at each level of unit)
Missing or non-functioning range (microwave acceptable substitution-tenant preference) or refrigerator
Sewer backup
Disconnected exhaust vents for water heater or heating equipment
Any structural collapse
Presence of hazardous chemicals
Obvious fire hazards

IF EMERGENCY VIOLATIONS ARE CITED Property owners will be notified by telephone, if possible, and by using over night express mail or by providing a copy of the inspection report at the time of inspection. Failure of the property owner to complete repairs in a timely fashion will result in abatement and/or termination of the Housing Assistance payments contract.

Upon notification to Department of Housing Services, the family/owner will be notified that utilities must be reconnected within 24 hours. Upon re-inspection, the family/owner will be notified of termination of assistance if utilities are not reconnected. Family/owner supplied appliances would be handled the same. If family responsibility; the property owner would be notified that a lease violation notice should be served. An extension for re-inspections for the family could be granted upon proof of diligent effort.

If the inspection of the dwelling unit reflects tenant damage to the unit, the family will be notified of the corrective action required. If they fail to correct the violation(s) upon re-inspection, termination of assistance will begin. This will require, in some cases, notification to both the owner and the family and will require the inspectors to assign responsibility for the correction of the violation. Staff will recommend that the owner serve a notice to cure for lease violations.

Relocation Inspections

Effective November 1, 1997 families requesting to move to another dwelling unit and continuing their rental assistance will be required to correct any Housing Quality Standard violations that are their responsibility, prior to our approval of their relocation and continued assistance.

If the family is requesting the relocation at their annual re-certification, the annual inspection will be reviewed to ensure any violations have been corrected prior to our approval or processing of their relocation request. Tenant and owners will not be allowed to cancel annual inspections if they are relocating. DMMHA is required to inspect each unit at least once every 365 days; therefore, canceling the annual inspection is prohibited.

Furnace Certification Policy

All fuel burning furnaces, boilers, and other central heating equipment may be required to be certified on entry into the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program at the discretion of the inspection department or upon request by the Department of Housing Services.

The written certification should be signed by a qualified licensed service technician and indicate that at the time of service the equipment is safe and operating properly.

A copy of the invoice or receipt of the service work is sufficient for this purpose if signed by the technician.

It is imperative that you designate the address and tenant the furnace certification belongs to.

IF REQUESTED - THE REQUIRED CERTIFICATION MUST BE RECEIVED BY DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING SERVICES BEFORE THE FILE WILL BE PROCESSED.

Quality Control Inspections

HUD requires a HA supervisor or other qualified person to conduct quality control inspections of a sample of units to ensure that each inspector is conducting accurate and complete inspections and that there is consistency in application of HQS.

The units sampled must include only units that have been inspected within the preceding 3 months. The selected sample will include:

1. Each type of inspection (initial and annual)
2. Inspections completed by each inspector
3. Units from a cross-section of neighborhoods