

# GETTING YOUR UNIT READY FOR INSPECTION

## HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS)

Before making payments to an owner on behalf of a tenant, the Housing Authority (HA) must determine if the unit meets HUD'S minimum HQS. HUD'S HQS health and safety standards are used nationwide to make sure all assisted units meet minimum health and safety requirements. This pre-inspection checklist and the booklet called "A Good Place to Live" explains the general items of a unit that must be inspected for compliance with HQS. Any additional HA or local standards are listed on the pre-inspection checklist.

## PRE-UNIT INSPECTION

Try to correct any HQS violations before the initial inspection. This will prevent delays in the beginning of the family's rental assistance. If the family is already in the unit, go over the checklist with them to make sure the unit meets minimum requirements.

## INITIAL INSPECTION OF THE UNIT

The initial inspection of the unit will be set up with the family if they already live in the unit. The initial inspection for a vacant unit will be set up with the owner. If an owner has questions before or after the initial inspection, discuss them with the inspector. The longer an owner participates with the Section 8 program, the more they learn about HQS and will know how to prepare for future inspections.

## MAKING REPAIRS

Should the unit not pass the initial inspection, the owner and tenant are notified by mail of any fail items and given a reasonable time period (within 30 days) to make the repairs. Call the inspectors to schedule a follow-up inspection when the repairs are completed. Please keep in mind that the HA is not responsible for any payments prior to the unit passing inspection. The family is responsible for the full monthly rent.

## AREAS THAT ARE INSPECTED

1. Living Room
2. Kitchen
3. Bathroom
4. Other Rooms Used for Living
5. Secondary Rooms (Not Used For Living)
6. Building Exterior
7. Heating and Plumbing

## Inspection Ratings

1. **PASS** means the item meets the minimum requirement.
2. **INCONCLUSIVE** means that inspectors need more information to make a decision. (Example: A stove and refrigerator are not in the kitchen during the initial inspection or the utilities have not been turned on, inconclusive is marked until the appliance are seen or verification that the utilities are in service.)
3. **FAIL** means the item did not meet the minimum HUD requirement and must be brought up to the standard prior to the tenant receiving rental assistance. Fail items must be corrected and verified prior to executing the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Contract.

## PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

### LIVING ROOM

- Is there a living room?
- Are there at least two working outlets OR one working outlet and one working light fixture?
- Is the room free from electrical hazards?
- Are all windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?
- Is there at least one window, and are all windows free of signs of severe deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free from hazardous defects?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?

### KITCHEN

- Is there a kitchen?
- Are there at least one working outlet and one working permanently installed light fixture? Electrical outlets within 3 feet of a water source (sink bowl or faucets) must be replaced with a GFI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter). The GFI must be installed, tested and work properly.
- Is the kitchen free from electrical hazards?
- Are all windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?
- Are all windows free of signs of deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free of hazardous defects?
- Is the refrigerator that works and maintains a temperature low enough so that food does not spoil over a reasonable period of time?

- Is there a kitchen sink that works with hot and cold running water?
- Is there space to store, prepare, and serve food?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?
- Is there a working oven, and a stove (or range) with top burners that work? If no oven and stove (or range) are present, is there a microwave oven and, if microwave is owner supplied, do other tenants have microwaves instead of an oven and stove (or range)?

### Bathroom

- Is there a bathroom?
- Is there at least one permanently installed light fixture?
- Is the bathroom free from electrical hazards? Electrical outlets within 3 feet of a water source (sink bowl or faucets) must be replaced with a GFI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter). The GFI must be installed, tested and work properly.
- Are all the windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable? There must be a working lock for privacy on the bathroom door (i.e., lockset, hook & eye, slide bolt, etc.).
- Are all windows free of signs of deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free from hazardous defects?
- Is there a working toilet in the unit for the exclusive private use of the tenant?
- Is there a working, permanently installed wash basin with hot and cold running water in the unit?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?
- Are there openable windows OR a working vent system?

(cont.)

## OTHER ROOMS USED FOR LIVING & HALLS

- If used as a bedroom, are there at least two working outlets OR one working outlet and one working, permanently installed light fixture? If not used as a room for sleeping, is there a means of illumination?
- Are the windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?
- If used as a bedroom, is there at least one window? Are all windows free of signs of deterioration or missing or broken window panes?
- Are the walls, ceilings and floors in good condition and free from hazardous defects?
- Are painted surfaces free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?
- Is there a working smoke detector on each level? Do the smoke detectors meet the requirements of the National Fire Protection Act of 1974?
- In units occupied by the hearing impaired, is there an alarm system connected to the smoke detector?

## ALL SECONDARY ROOMS (Rooms not used for living, such as a laundry room)

- Is the room free of electrical hazards?
- Are the windows and doors that are accessible from the outside lockable?

## BUILDING EXTERIOR

- Is the foundation sound and free from hazards?
- Are all exterior stairs, rails and porches sound and free from hazards?
- Are the roof, gutters and downspouts sound and free from hazards?
- Are exterior surfaces sound and free from hazards?
- Is the chimney free from hazards?
- Was the building built prior to 1978? Are painted surfaces (ex. doors, porch floors & ceilings, stairs, decks, window sills and railing) free of defective, chipping and peeling paint?
- If the unit is a manufactured home, is it properly placed and all four corners tied down?

## EATING & PLUMBING

- Is the heating and plumbing capable of providing adequate heat (either directly or indirectly) to all rooms used for living?
- Is the unit free from unvented fuel burning space heaters or any other types of unsafe heating conditions?
- Does the unit have adequate ventilation and cooling by means of openable windows OR a working cooling system?
- Is the hot water heater located, equipped and installed in a safe manner? The discharge line located on both the hot water tank and a boiler must be extended to within 3" to 6" from the floor. DO NOT use a reducer when extending the discharge line.
- Is the unit served by an approved public or private sanitary water supply? A private water supply (i.e. well) must be tested by a public agency and determined safe for drinking.
- Is plumbing free from major leaks or corrosion that causes serious and persistent levels of rust or contamination of drinking water?
- Is plumbing connected to an approved public or private disposal system, and is it free from sewer back-up?

## GENERAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

- Can the unit be entered without having to go through another unit?
- Is there an alternative fire exit from this building that is not blocked and meets local or state regulations and an acceptable exit?
- Is the unit free from rats or severe infestation by mice or vermin?

- Is the unit free from heavy accumulation of garbage or debris inside and outside?
- Are there adequate covered facilities for temporary storage and disposal of food wastes, and are they approvable by a local agency?
- Are interior stairs and common halls free from hazards to the occupant because of loose, broken, or misleading steps on stairways; absent or insecure railings; inadequate lighting; or other hazards?
- Do all elevators have a current inspection certificate?
- Is the unit free from abnormally high levels of air pollution from vehicular exhaust? Is the site and immediate neighborhood free from conditions which would seriously and continuously endanger the health or safety of the residents?

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS & MOST COMMON FAIL REASONS

- Are tenant-supplied utilities separately metered?
- Non functioning smoke detectors on every floor, especially near the bedrooms and in the basement. Don't forget to check the batteries!
- Missing or cracked electrical outlet cover plates
- Railings not present where required. Install handrails on any extended length of stairs (i.e., generally four or more steps, around any porches, balconies, or decks which are 30 inches or more above the ground.
- Peeling exterior and interior paint. NO loose and or peeling wall paper. NO loose or bulging plaster.
- Tripping hazards caused by permanently installed floor coverings (carpet/vinyl). Torn or frayed linoleum or carpeting must be removed or replaced.
- Cracked or broken window panes. Windows must operate as designed. Broken or missing sash ropes must be repaired. Cracked panes must be replaced. Window locks are required on all windows.
- Missing stove burner control knobs. Operable stove and refrigerator must be present in the unit with no missing parts.
- No ventilation in bathroom (no fan or operable window).
- Leaking faucets plumbing.
- No temperature or pressure relief valve on water heater.
- The flue from the hot water tank must be located above the furnace flue. Both the hot water flue and the furnace flue must have a 1/4" rise per foot. The flues must be properly sealed where entering the chimney.
- The discharge line located on both the hot water tank and a boiler must be extended to within 3" to 6" from the floor.
- DO NOT use a reducer when extending the discharge line.
- Electrical outlets within 3 feet of a water source (sink bowl or faucets) must be replaced with a GFI (Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter). The GFI must be installed, tested and work properly.
- Oil tanks must be filled and vented on the outside.
- House numbers must be visible and letters must be properly marked. Properly label multiple doorbells.

# PROTECTION AT EVERY LEVEL OF YOUR HOME IS A MUST

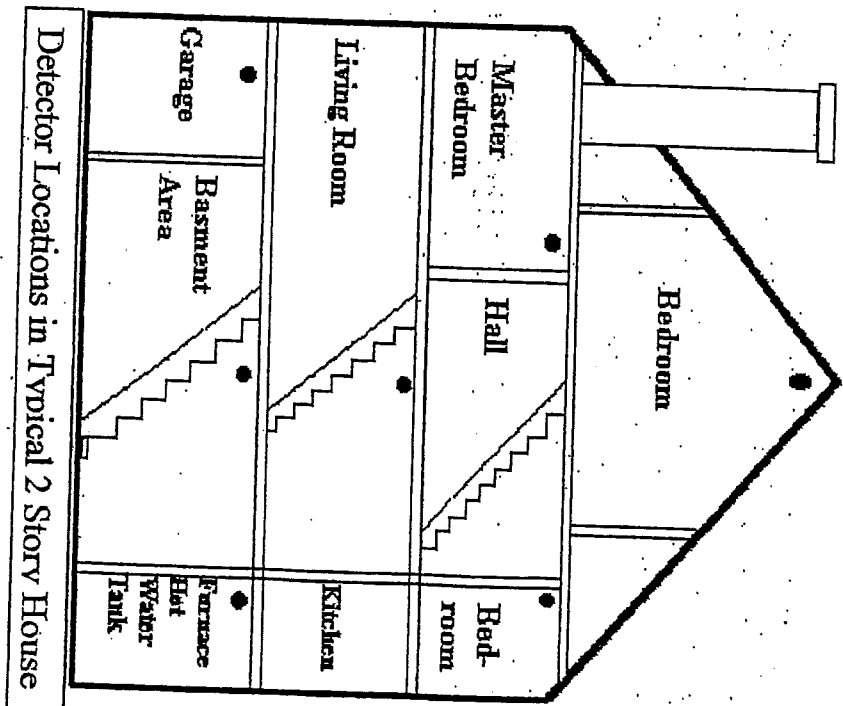
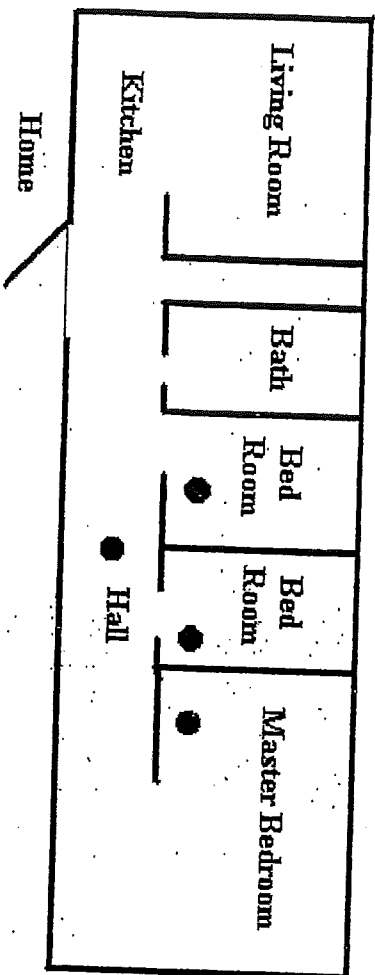
1. SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE LOCATED ON CEILING AREA
2. SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE SECURELY FASTENED TO THE CEILING WITH SCREWS.
3. SMOKE DETECTORS MUST BE LOCATED AT LEAST 12 INCHES AWAY FROM ANY WALL.

*1 Carbon monoxide detector is needed per household.*

Battery Operated Smoke Detectors Apply to Detached Single Family Dwelling Units Only

## Where To Locate Smoke Detectors For Your Family's Life-Safety Protection

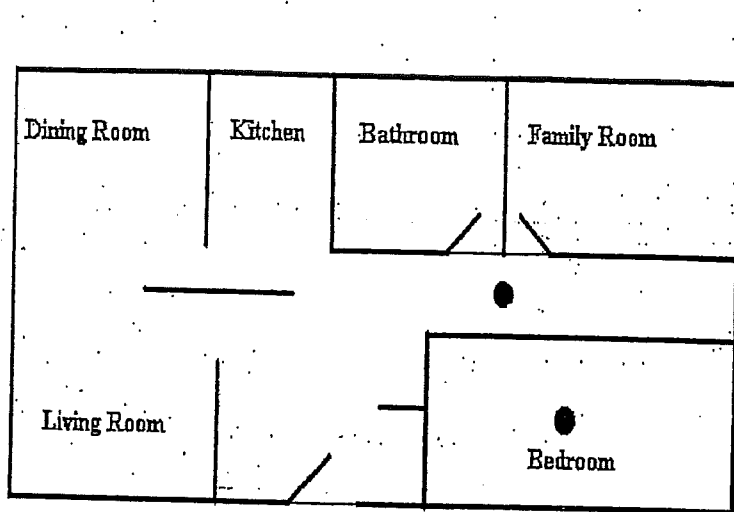
Detectors shall be located at every level of a home: First floor, second floor, basement, attic if it is furnished, at the highest point of fall stairwells, and in every separate sleeping area. Regardless of whether family members smoke in bed or do not smoke in bed or sleep with the door closed or opened, detectors shall be located inside their bedrooms and outside in common hallways. If hallways are over 40 feet in length, detectors shall be located at each end of the hallway.



● = Designates One Smoke Detector

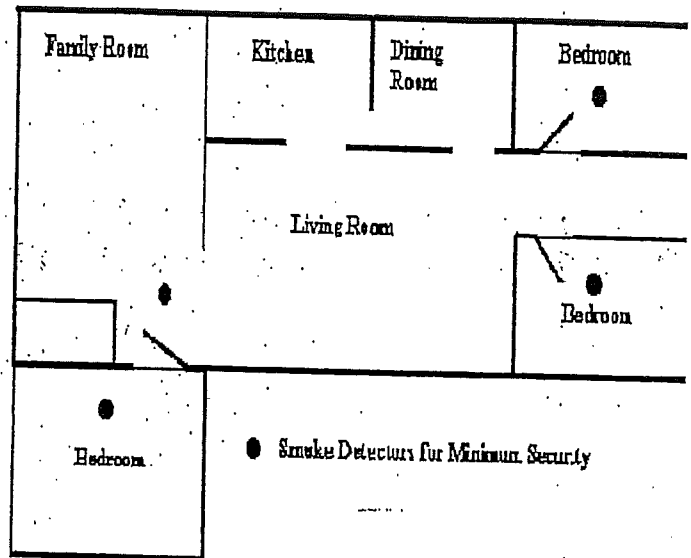
## Where To Locate Smoke Detectors For Your Family's Life Safety Protection

Detectors shall be located at every level of a home: first floor, second floor, basement, attic if it is furnished, at the highest point of all stairwells, and in every separate sleeping area. Regardless of whether family members smoke in bed or do not smoke in bed or sleep with the door closed or open, detectors shall be located inside their bedrooms as outside in common hallways are over 40 feet in length, detectors shall be located at each end of the hallway.



● = Smoke Detectors For Minimum Security

Figure 1: Smoke Detector Locations  
For Single-Floor Residence With Only  
One Sleeping Area



● = Smoke Detectors For Minimum Security

Figure 2: Smoke Detector Locations  
For Single-Floor Residence With More  
Than One Sleeping Area

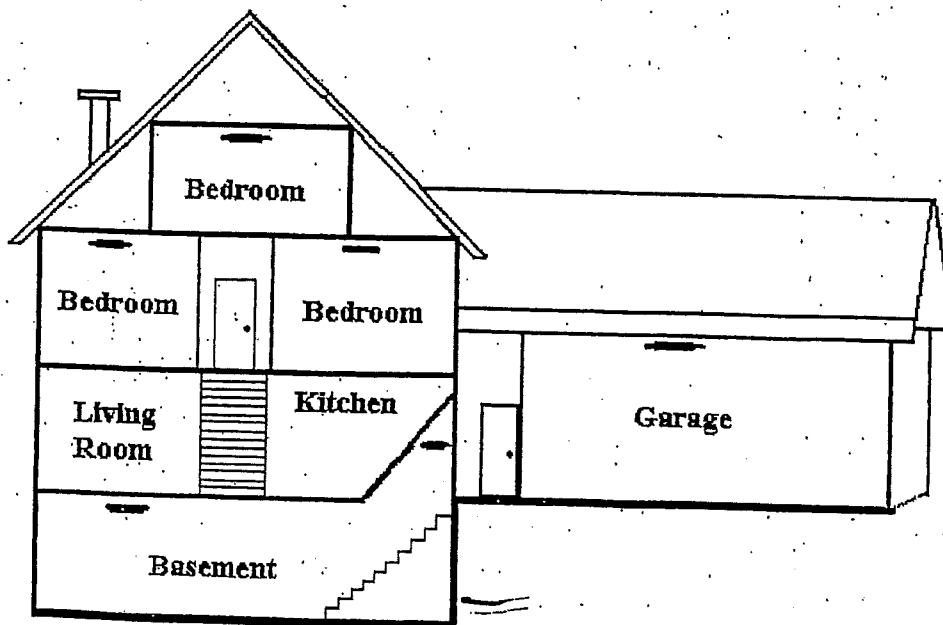


Figure 3: Smoke  
Detector Locations For A  
Multi-Floor Residence

● = Smoke Detectors for  
Minimum Security