

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT

NSPIRE

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE PHYSICAL INSPECTION OF REAL ESTATE



Readiness Checklist

Each unit rented to a Housing Choice Voucher holder must pass an NSPIRE inspection. This checklist is a tool for owners to prepare their unit for an NSPIRE inspection. This checklist also highlights some of the COMMON violations found during unit inspections. **For a full list of NSPIRE Standards-** <https://www.hud.gov/reac/nspire-standards>

- Utilities (water, gas, electric) must be turned on for the completion of the inspection.
- No chipping or peeling paint inside or outside the unit.
- The stove must be clean and in working order and secure. Hood Vent Required.
- The refrigerator must be clean and be in working order with a good door seal.
- There must be a permanently installed working heating/cooling system.
- Hot and cold running water in the kitchen and bathroom(s).
- There must be a shower or bathtub that works.
- There must be a flush toilet that works, is securely mounted, and does not leak.
- The bathroom must have either an outside window or an exhaust fan vented to the outside.
- There must not be any plumbing leaks.
- There must not be any plugged drains (check for slow drains).
- All plumbing fixtures must have P-traps to prevent sewer gas from leaking into the unit.
- All ground floor windows, and exterior doors shall open and close as designed and must have working locks. Double keyed dead bolts are not permitted.
- Interior doors need a Privacy Lock or Passage Lock.
- Each living space must have two means of fire egress (i.e. door & window)
- All electrical outlets/switches must have cover plates and be in good working condition.
- All ground fault circuit interrupters (GFCIs) must work properly. 6 Ft. from water source.
- There must not be any missing, broken, or cracked windows.
- Bedrooms must have a working window or door for egress. The window must stay open on its own.
- The water heater tank must have a temperature pressure relief valve with downward discharge pipe made of galvanized steel or copper tubing that is between six inches to eight inches from the floor or directed outside the unit (no PVC). CPVC is acceptable.
- The floor covering cannot be painted torn or holes that can cause someone to trip.
- If there are stairs and railings, they must be secure.
- Four or more exterior stairs must have handrails 34 inches to 38 inches from the ground.
- Doors, jambs, thresholds and weather-stripping should be in good condition. Split door jambs must be replaced.
- Walk offs or porches 30 inches above grade must have guard rails 36 inches from the ground.
- 4-5 Lb. Fire Extinguisher
- All units with a gas fired appliance/water heater and garage must have a Carbon Monoxide Detector. CO Detectors are to be in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping rooms.
- All security bars and windows must have a quick release mechanism. All window locks need to be original style lock.

NSPIRE EXTERIOR CHECKLIST

24-Hour Repair Items Are Marked with: [24-Hour]

1. Site Conditions

- Walkways and driveways are clear of major cracks, trip hazards, and obstructions.
- Parking lots have no severe potholes or unsafe surfaces.
- Trash collection areas are clean and have no excessive debris or overflowing containers.
- Drainage systems (gutters, downspouts, culverts) are functional and not causing erosion.

2. Building Exterior (Structure & Materials)

- No major foundation issues (e.g., cracks, leaning walls).
- Exterior walls, siding, and masonry are in good repair — no holes or major damage.
- Roof structure is intact and free from major leaks or missing components.
- Gutters and downspouts are attached and draining properly.

3. Windows and Doors

- All exterior doors open, close, and lock properly.
- No broken or missing windows.
- No windows with broken/missing glazing or security bars that prevent egress.

4. Lighting (Exterior)

- [24-Hour] All required exterior lighting (e.g., walkways, entries, parking areas) is working at night. Especially critical for safety and security.
- Fixtures are properly secured and not exposed to elements dangerously.

5. Stairways, Railings, and Walkways

- [24-Hour] All stairs and railings are secure and safe.
- Missing or broken handrails or guardrails must be repaired immediately.
- No severe cracking or tripping hazards on walkways.

6. Emergency Egress

- [24-Hour] All emergency exits and pathways are unobstructed and clearly marked.
- No debris, vegetation, or stored items blocking egress paths.

7. Fire Safety (Exterior)

- [24-Hour] Exterior fire escapes (if present) are structurally sound and accessible.
- No combustibles stored near building exteriors or near HVAC/exhausts.

8. Utility Systems (Visible Exterior Components)

- Electrical panels, meters, and wiring are enclosed and undamaged.
- [24-Hour] No exposed wires or unsafe electrical conditions.
- HVAC units are secure, level, and free of leaks.

9. Pest Control

- No visible signs of rodent or insect infestation.
- Garbage and waste are stored in sealed containers.

10. Fencing and Gates

- All fencing is intact and not creating safety hazards.
- Gates open/close securely and are not obstructing egress.

11. Site Security & Access

- Property perimeter is secure (where applicable).
- Entry gates and exterior doors are functional and lockable.

Recommended Frequency for Exterior Inspections

- Monthly visual inspection
- Quarterly walk-through
- Immediately after storms or damage reports

24-Hour Repairs Summary

According to HUD NSPIRE, the following must be addressed within 24 hours:

- Broken/missing exterior lighting that affects resident safety
- Missing/damaged handrails or guardrails on stairs
- Blocked emergency exits or egress paths
- Fire escape inoperable or structurally unsound
- Exposed live electrical wiring or hazards
- Any immediate life/safety issue (trip hazards, unstable structures)

NSPIRE INTERIOR CHECKLIST

1. Doors

- All unit entry and interior doors open, close, and latch properly.
- Entry doors have functioning deadbolts and weather seals.
- [24-Hour] Entry doors must be lockable from both inside and outside to ensure resident security.

2. Windows

- Windows open and close smoothly and stay in position.
- Locks on all accessible windows are functional.
- [24-Hour] No broken or missing glass or damaged sashes in areas where sharp edges or exposure could pose a safety hazard.
- [24-Hour] Bedroom windows used for egress must not be blocked or sealed shut.

3. Electrical

- All light fixtures function and are securely mounted.
- All electrical outlets and switches are operable and have intact covers.
- [24-Hour] No exposed wiring, burnt outlets, or other fire hazards.
- GFCI outlets installed where required (kitchens, bathrooms, laundry).

4. Smoke and Carbon Monoxide (CO) Alarms

- [24-Hour] Smoke alarms are installed in each sleeping area, outside sleeping areas, and on every level.
- [24-Hour] CO alarms are installed where required (typically near fuel-burning appliances or attached garages).
- [24-Hour] All alarms must be tested and functional.
- 10-Year Sealed Battery Smoke Detector Requirements

Installation Requirements:

- Power Source: Sealed, non-removable 10-year lithium battery.
- Tamper-Resistant: Battery must be non-replaceable and non-removable.
- Mounting Locations:
 - Inside each bedroom.
 - Outside each sleeping area (e.g., in hallways).
 - At least one on every level of the home, including basements.
 - No Interconnection Required, though interconnectable battery models are available.
 - No Electrician Needed: Typically installed with screws or mounting tape.
 - Hardwired Smoke Detector Requirements

Installation Requirements:

- Power Source: 120V AC with battery backup (usually 9V or 10-year lithium).
- Interconnected: Must be connected so that when one alarm sounds, all sound.
- Professional Installation Required: Must be installed to electrical code.
- Mounting Locations (same as above):
 - Inside each sleeping room.
 - Outside each sleeping area.
 - One on every level, including basements.
 - Additional required locations: Near stairways, within 21 feet of bedroom doors, or per local amendments.

5. Fire Safety / Egress

- [24-Hour] All interior egress paths (hallways, exits) are free from obstruction.
- [24-Hour] Exit doors are easily opened without keys or special tools during emergencies.
- No blocked bedroom windows or doors.
- 5LB Fire extinguisher needed.

6. HVAC / Heating and Cooling

- HVAC system is operable and provides adequate heat/cooling.
- No exposed or damaged ductwork.
- [24-Hour] If temperature is below 68°F or above 85°F indoors and HVAC is non-functional, immediate repair is required (life-safety).

7. Plumbing

- Sinks, tubs, and toilets function properly with hot and cold water.
- No active leaks under sinks, around toilets, or in walls.
- [24-Hour] No sewage backup or toilet inoperable in single-bathroom units.

8. Flooring

- Flooring is intact and free from trip hazards.
- No large holes or loose tiles that could cause injury.
- [24-Hour] Severe tripping hazards in walking paths must be addressed.

9. Walls and Ceilings

- No large holes, significant water damage, or mold.
- [24-Hour] Any active leaks or structural ceiling damage must be corrected immediately.

10. Kitchen

- Range/stove and refrigerator are present and operable.
- Exhaust fans (if present) work properly.
- GFCI outlets in place and working.

11. Bathrooms

- Toilet, sink, and tub/shower are working and properly sealed.
- [24-Hour] No functional bathroom = immediate correction (if no alternative exists).
- Ventilation (either window or fan) is present and working.

12. Pests and Infestation

- No visible evidence of pests (roaches, rodents, etc.).
- [24-Hour] Severe infestations impacting health/safety must be addressed immediately.

13. Stairs and Railings (Interior)

- [24-Hour] Handrails and guardrails are secure and present where required.
- No loose steps, broken treads, or unstable surfaces.

14. Laundry/Utility Rooms

- Dryer vents are clear and properly vented.
- No gas or water leaks around laundry hookups.

Recommended Inspection Frequency (Interior)

- Annual unit inspections
- Pre-occupancy and move-out
- Emergency or maintenance follow-up

24-Hour Repairs Summary

NSPIRE requires the following to be repaired within 24 hours:

- Non-functioning smoke or CO alarms
- Exposed wiring, fire hazards, or electrical shocks
- Non-functional egress doors/windows
- Active sewage backup or major plumbing failure
- No heat (cold season) or no cooling (hot weather)
- Structural ceiling or stair issues
- Blocked emergency exits
- Unlocked or broken exterior doors (security issue)
- Pest infestations causing unsafe living conditions



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