

City of Hopkins Rental Property Inspection Policy & Guidelines

The operation of rental property is a business enterprise that entails certain responsibilities. Operators are responsible for taking reasonable steps as necessary to ensure that the residents of the city who rent may pursue enjoyment of the normal activities of life in surroundings that are safe, secure and sanitary, free from crimes and criminal activity, nuisances or annoyances.

The minimum standard to be used for inspections, pursuant Section 20-214 for compliance with the Property Maintenance Code for buildings as adopted and amended by Hopkins Ordinance shall include, but not be limited to the inspection of the building exterior, interior, common areas, basement, garages, sheds and any other structures on the property.

Inspection Guidelines

Rental Inspection guidelines are based upon any of the following factors and any other factors deemed by the ~~Building Official~~ City to promote an efficient inspections program:

- ~~(a) Geographic distribution and concentration of rental dwellings.~~
- (b) Rental dwellings with delinquent property taxes, utility bills or other charges.
- (c) Property identified by the inspections division as having an excessive number of housing code violations or a history of noncompliance or slow compliance with housing inspection orders.
- (d) Rental dwellings for which no license has been obtained.
- (e) Rental dwellings with an excessive number of police calls for drug offenses, prostitution, crimes of force or violence, and loud disturbances or parties.
- (f) Sale of the equitable interest in a rental dwelling property.
- (g) Conversion of homesteaded dwelling units to rental dwelling units.
- (h) Rental dwellings registering complaints from but not limited to leaser, neighbors, tenants, landlords or property managers.

Number of Units Inspected for Licensing

The specific individual dwelling units to be chosen for inspection shall be determined pursuant to inspection division policy.

- ~~Ten (10)~~ Twenty-four (24) or fewer individual dwelling units in the building, minimum inspection requirements include inspecting ~~fifty-twenty five (2550)~~ percent of the individual dwelling units, with a minimum of at least one (1) dwelling unit.
- ~~Eleven (11) to twenty-four (24) individual dwelling units in the building, minimum inspection requirements include inspecting five (5) individual dwelling units.~~

- Twenty-five (25) or more individual dwelling units in the building, minimum inspection requirements include inspecting twenty (25) percent of the individual dwelling units. ~~The specific individual dwelling units to be chosen for inspection shall be determined pursuant to inspection division policy.~~

Other Inspections

The City could inspect any number of units including all units if the City deems it necessary to ensure compliance with the City's rental inspection program.

Frequency of Inspections

Dwellings will be categorized into three groups A, B or C based on condition of the rental unit ~~the severity of the deficiency~~ as it relates to the Inspection Point System.

Category A - Properties with average of 4 or fewer points will be classified as Category A and inspected on approximately a ~~three~~five-year cycle,

Category B - Properties with an average of 5 to 10 points will be classified as Category B and inspected on approximately a ~~three~~two-year cycle.

Category C - Properties with an average of 11 or more points will be classified as Category C and inspected on approximately a one-year cycle.

Substandard Dwellings

Deficiency points will be also used in the determination of a substandard dwelling as defined in Section 20-246. If the rental dwelling structure is considered to be "substandard", the Building Official or authorized representative may inspect additional units, up to all of the units in the building.

Recommendations

The City recommends all property owners/managers participate in Hopkins Area Manager Association (HAMA) meetings and participation in the Crime Free Housing program.

Inspection Fees

Fees for inspection will be charged per the fee schedule established in Resolution NO: 2017-022.

Rental Inspections Checklist

Minimum Requirements:

- Units are kept in secure, safe and sanitary condition.
- Proper application materials have been provided.
- Rental dwellings are up to date on property tax payments.
- Review of history related to license applications, public safety interactions, code violations.

Main items to consider (a full list of items required by the code and points associated are available online at [INSERT HYPERLINK TO FULL POINT SYSTEM](#)):

Interior

1. All surfaces and areas of dwellings and structures shall be sanitary, structurally sound and in good repair (*10 pts*)
2. Tight, continuous graspable handrails and guardrails (*10 pts*)
3. Stairs and walking surfaces should be maintained in sound condition free from defects (*6 pts*)
4. Windows shall operate properly, be in good repair, weather tight and be free from broken or cracked glass or glazing) (*4 pts*)
5. Window screens in place May 1- October 1 (*5 pts*)
6. Doors and locks working properly (*5 pts*)
7. All structures shall be kept free from water damage (*6 pts*)
8. Appliance shall not be powered by extension cords (*5 pts*)
9. All structures shall be kept free from pests rodents (*15 pts*)

Exterior

10. Exterior of buildings shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and be in sanitary condition including siding, roof, soffit, fascia, sidewalks, steps, decks, driveway, decks, handrails, guardrails, lighting and chimney (*10 pts*)
11. Proper grade sloping away from building (*2 pts*)
12. 4 inch high address numbers required on house and alley side of garage (*6pts*)
13. Prohibited open storage (*3 pts*)
14. Accessible ADA spaces, free from debris, snow and ice (*10 pts*)

Mechanical

15. All mechanical appliances shall be properly installed, maintained and be capable of performing the intended function (*6 pts*)
16. Heat facilities capable of maintaining dwelling at 68° F 3 feet above the floor (*15 pts*)
17. All gas lines labeled, secured properly and have proper shutoff valves at all gas appliances (*5 pts*)
18. Unused gas lines shall be properly capped (*10 pts*)
19. Dryer vents are properly installed with solid piping or approved UL listed

flexible duct (4 pts)

20. Bathrooms have mechanical ventilation that is clean and working or operable window (3 pts)
21. Three foot clearance met around water heater and furnace (4 pts)
22. Clearance to combustibles is met on gas venting (6 pts)
23. All fuel-burning equipment shall be connected to an approved chimney or vent (10 pts)
24. Furnace filter shall be clean (3 pts)

Plumbing

25. No leaking, defective, obstructed, or unsupported pipes or faucets (5 pts)
26. Plumbing and water system shall be free from hazards and contamination (15 pts)
27. Adequate water supply at all fixtures. Water heats to a minimum of 120° F (10 pts)
28. Water Heater is not leaking or dripping (5 pts)
29. All sinks have traps and are vented (5 pts)
30. No “S-Traps” or flexible style waste lines – waste lines properly installed and vented (5 pts)
31. Backflow devices installed on hand held shower heads and all exterior hose bibs (4 pts)
32. Toilets flush and refill properly (5 pts)

Electrical

33. Electrical Hazards such as open electrical boxes or exposed wires (15 pts)
34. Missing or inoperable lights, receptacles or switches (4 pts)
35. Properly installed electrical service panel; all breakers properly labeled (4 pts)
36. Required 3 foot clearance is met around and in front of service panel (4 pts)
37. Lighting must be provided in every public hallway, interior and exterior stairway, toilet room, kitchen, laundry room and furnace room (4 pts)
38. Every bathroom and laundry room shall contain at least one receptacle (4 pts)

Fire

39. Missing, inoperable or improperly located smoke alarms. Must be located within 10ft of sleeping rooms, installed per manufacturer’s guidelines, no closer than 4 inches to a corner if mounted on the ceiling. If mounted on a wall, no closer than 4 inches but no lower than 12 inches to ceiling. (10 pts)
40. Replace smoke alarms if older than 10 years (Old hardwired alarms must be replaced with the same – not battery operated). (6 pts)
41. Remove items from hallway so that there is a clear exit path (a minimum of 3 feet wide) to all doors and windows. (6 pts)
42. Repair door and/or lock to function properly. (This includes patio doors and screens). (3 pts)
43. Fire separation not maintained. **Using UL-1479, ASTM E-814 FIRE CAULK** – seal all penetrations in firewalls and ceilings. (In the condo’s this is needed

under kitchen and bath sinks as they are fire separation walls) *If needed, use rated gypsum to fill larger holes then use the rated fire caulk. (4 pts)*

- 44. Fire rated doors shall self-close and latch from a fully open position. (This applies to condo unit entry doors). (3 pts)
- 45. Remove double cylinder (keyed) deadbolt locks. (4 pts)
- 46. Remove excessive combustible materials from unit and/or store or dispose of properly. (6 pts)
- 47. Emergency escape openings/windows; required emergency escape openings shall be maintained in accordance with the code in effect at the time of construction. Minimum net clear opening size shall comply with the code that was in effect at the time of construction. (6 pts)

Notes: _____

