

## SECTION 8 HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

Before any unit is accepted for participation in the City of Covington Section 8 program, it must first pass an initial Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection.

The Section 8 inspector will examine the exterior of the building, the plumbing and heating systems, the exits and hallways, and each room in the apartment to make sure the unit is safe, clean, and in good condition. The unit must be vacant at the time of the first inspection, and all utilities must be turned on. The inspector must have access to the unit itself, the basement, and all common areas.

The inspector uses a checklist form provided by HUD, the federal agency in charge of the Section 8 program. For each item on the list, the inspector marks if the unit passes or fails (or not sure). If repairs are needed, the inspector marks this on the form.

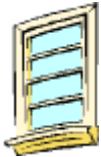
### Examples of inspected items:



- **Electrical service and equipment**



- **Plumbing**



- **Windows, doors and locks**



- **Floors, walls, ceilings and roofs**



- **Furnaces, water heaters and smoke detectors**

Section 8 units are re-inspected no less than annually and are required to meet inspection standards throughout their participation in the program. If inspection problems are found, a landlord is given an appropriate time to correct them. Thirty days are allowed for most items, but more or less time may be given, depending on conditions. If items remain uncorrected after the time allowed, Section 8 will stop payments (abatement) and, ultimately, the unit may be terminated from Section 8 participation.

Section 8 inspections help landlords keep their units in good shape. They do not take the place of any municipal building code and/or occupancy permit requirements.

## COMMON SECTION 8 INSPECTION “FAIL” ITEMS

This list is intended to help both tenants and landlords repair items prior to the inspection and to help maintain the property in a safe, sanitary, and decent manner. It is not all inclusive, just a list of items which commonly fail the initial inspection.

- ✓ All installations to be complete prior to inspection (carpet, appliances, etc.).
- ✓ Everything in unit is to be clean. Unit must be in “move in” condition.
- ✓ Smoke detectors to be in place and working. At least one is required on each level, including the basement.
- ✓ All windows require proper operating devices including locks and screens. There can be no broken or cracked windows.
- ✓ No peeling paint inside or outside the unit.
- ✓ Check furnace and water heater for proper flue connections to chimney. Check chimney cleanouts for debris and proper draft.
- ✓ Handrails are required for all steps having 3 or more risers, interior and exterior.
- ✓ Check for missing light bulbs, globes, cover plates and switch plates.
- ✓ Refrigerators need a bottom kick-plate.
- ✓ All clothes dryers in the unit or the basement must be properly vented.
- ✓ All doorbells must be in working order.
- ✓ All buildings must have address numbers at least 3 inches high. In addition, all units in the building must be identified by apartment number.
- ✓ In units where the tenant must pay for utilities, each unit must have separate metering device(s) for measuring utility consumption. All utilities must be on at time of inspection.
- ✓ A dead bolt lock is required on all exterior doors.
- ✓ Door stops are required behind doors. All bedrooms must have doors for privacy.
- ✓ All electrical outlets have to be operational and grounded.
- ✓ Curb appeal is important: Exterior of unit is to be free of rubbish, debris and weeds.

**LANDLORDS:** You should occasionally check your property; do routine maintenance as needed. Make required repairs in a timely manner.

**TENANTS:** If you are responsible for any of the above “failed” conditions, you need to take care of getting them fixed. Call your landlord for items requiring him/her to repair or replace.

*For all units located within the City of Covington, the owner must be in good standing with the City, which includes having both a current rental license and occupational license, as well as being up to date on all property taxes.*

