



# BOROUGH OF WEST READING

## CODE ENFORCEMENT DEPARTMENT

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### Rental Occupancy/Property Transfer Inspection Checklist

Rental occupancy inspections are coordinated in accordance with applicable Borough Ordinances, Pennsylvania State Law and the International Property Maintenance Code. The following list contains examples of the most common code deficiencies that are discovered during a rental occupancy inspection:

#### Exterior of Property

1. All buildings must have address numbers placed in the front and rear of the property, to be visible from the street, road or alley. The numbers must be a minimum of four (4) inches in height and contrast with the background.
2. All walking surfaces including sidewalks, walkways, stairs, driveways and similar areas are to be kept in a proper state of repair and free from hazardous conditions.
3. Stairways, decks, porches and balconies must be structurally sound and in good repair, and capable of supporting the imposed loads.
4. All accessory structures, including detached garages, fences, sheds and walls are to be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.
5. All exterior surfaces are to be maintained in good condition and kept free from cracks, breaks, holes, loose or rotting material and free from chipped or flaking paint and rust.
6. Exterior yard will be inspected for Borough Code violations (including: weeds, debris, inoperable vehicles).
7. All exterior outlets must be GFI protected and in a weatherproof junction box with cover.
8. Roof drains, gutters and downspouts are to be maintained in good repair and free from obstructions. Drainage must not discharge in a manner that creates a public nuisance.
9. Roofs and flashing must be sound, tight and not have defects that admit water.
10. All gutters, downspouts and shingles are intact and securely mounted.
11. Fire escapes must be properly installed and maintained.
12. Foundation must be free of excessive cracking or shifting, and window and door openings must be securely covered.
13. Handrails and guards are required when:
  - a. Exterior stairways having more than four risers and every open portion of a stair, landing or balcony which is more than 30 inches above the floor or grade below must have guards.
  - b. Handrails shall not be less than 30 inches high or more than 42 inches high measured vertically above the nosing of the tread or above the finished floor of the landing or walking surfaces.
  - c. The vertical openings of the guards are to be constructed to prevent the passage of a four-inch diameter sphere.

#### Interior of Property

1. **General:**
  - a. In multi-unit buildings, every unit shall be numbered for identification purposes.
  - b. Functioning smoke detectors are required on **every** floor level as well as in all bedrooms. Hard-wired detectors must have a battery backup.

- c. Functioning Carbon Monoxide detectors are required in the basement and outside of the bedrooms. In addition, a Carbon Monoxide detector is required on every floor level and in every bedroom where a fuel burning device is located (ex. – fireplace or natural gas range).
- d. All walking surfaces must be maintained in sound condition and good repair.
- e. The interior of a structure and equipment must be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and in a sanitary condition.
- f. Interior surfaces, including walls, ceilings, windows and doors, must be maintained in good, clean and sanitary condition. Peeling, chipping, flaking paint shall be repaired, removed or covered. Cracked or loose plaster, decayed wood and other defective surface conditions shall be corrected.
- g. No basement may be used for sleeping purposes unless: light, ventilation, heating and egress standards are met.
- h. Any habitable space on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor or higher has access to two approved exits.
- i. Bedrooms must be at least 70 square feet for one occupant; for more than one occupant the bedroom shall have a minimum 50 square feet for each occupant.

**2. Doors and Windows:**

- a. Exterior doors must be weather tight and fit within the frame and operate properly. The egress path to the door is to be kept free from obstructions.
- b. Door locks which require keys to unlock from the inside or special knowledge or effort to operate are prohibited.
- c. All interior doors must operate and latch properly.
- d. All windows must be in sound condition, free from holes or cracks in glass and must be weather tight. Screens that are not torn or lose are required in at least one window in every habitable room from May 15<sup>th</sup> to October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- e. All windows must operate properly, must be easily openable and capable of being held in position by the window hardware.
- f. Sash locks are required on all windows within six-feet of ground level.

**3. Handrails and guards required when:**

- a. Interior stairs having more than four risers and every open portion of a stair, landing or balcony which is more than 30 inches above the floor or grade below shall have guards.
- b. Handrails shall not be less than 30 inches high or more than 42 inches high measured vertically above the nosing of the tread or above the finished floor of the landing or walking surfaces.
- c. The vertical openings of the guards are to be constructed to prevent the passage of a four-inch sphere in diameter.

**4. Electrical:**

- a. Every habitable space must contain at least two separate and remote receptacle outlets. Every laundry area must contain at least one grounded-type outlet or a GFCI outlet. Every bathroom must contain at least one GFCI outlet.
- b. A GFCI outlet is required in all areas near a water source, including unfinished basements.
- c. All three prong outlets must be properly wired and grounded. All GFCI outlets that are not grounded must be properly labeled “no equipment ground”. Grounded (3-prong) appliances are not plugged into ungrounded (2-prong) receptacles.
- d. All electrical systems, equipment and wiring must be properly installed, wired and maintained in a safe and approved manner.
- e. Electric panel must be closed and filled with breaker or blanks and all circuit breakers must be labeled as to which circuits they protect.
- f. Outlet and switch plate covers must be in place.

- g. No exposed wiring.
- h. Electric circuits labeled.
- i. Light fixtures must have covers, guards, globes or the like protecting the light bulb.
- j. Extension cords may not be used as permanent wiring or to provide power to heaters, air conditioners or similar equipment.

5. **Mechanical/Heating/Plumbing:**

- a. Heating facilities must be maintained in safe and good working condition, and be available to tenants October 1<sup>st</sup> through May 15<sup>th</sup>.
- b. The heating system must be capable of maintaining a minimum room temperature of 68 degrees in all habitable rooms, bathrooms and toilet rooms.
- c. All mechanical appliances, fireplaces, solid fuel-burning appliances, cooking appliances and water heating appliances must be properly installed and maintained in a safe working condition, and shall be capable of performing the intended function.
- d. A relief valve extension is required on all boilers and water heaters and cannot terminate more than six inches off the floor.
- e. All plumbing piping must be in satisfactory condition, must function properly and be kept free from obstructions, leaks and defects.
- f. Plumbing fixtures must be properly installed and maintained in working order.
- g. Clothes dryers must be properly exhausted to the exterior of the building with a rigid or flexible-rigid metal dryer vent and the vent shall be maintained free of obstruction.
- h. If the property is heated with oil or gas, an operable carbon monoxide detector is required outside sleeping areas and in the vicinity of the fossil fuel burning equipment.

6. **Bathrooms:**

- a. Sinks, tubs and toilets must be clean and able to safely perform its intended function.
- b. Plumbing properly installed (traps, piping, flush tank assembly, etc.).
- c. Faucets, drains and toilets are free of leaks.
- d. Shelving board under the sink must be free from rotting or evidence of excessive water damage.
- e. Walls, ceilings and surfaces are free of mold and mildew.
- f. All receptacle outlets require GFCI protection.
- g. Either a minimum of one openable window or operational exhaust fan is required.

7. **Kitchen:**

- a. All cabinets, counter tops, and storage areas are in good repair.
- b. Faucets and drains are free of leaks, trap installed, and shelving board in good repair.
- c. All electrical equipment such as a stove and refrigerator are in proper operating condition.
- d. Exhaust over stove must be clean and properly installed.
- e. A minimum 3 lbs. fire extinguisher is required to be mounted in an easily assessable location.