

**NEW YORK CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY  
LEASED HOUSING DEPARTMENT**

**Frequently Asked Questions on Temporary Program  
Changes to Housing Quality Standards (January 28, 2021)**

**HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS)**

**1. What are Housing Quality Standards (HQS)?**

HQS are the minimum requirements set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that all dwelling units must meet before a family can occupy the unit and while receiving Section 8 assistance. It is the responsibility of the owner to maintain the unit and building in accordance with HQS. For more information on HQS, please visit <https://www1.nyc.gov/site/nycha/section-8/housing-quality-standards.page>.

**2. What temporary program changes is NYCHA making regarding HQS in response to the state of emergency for COVID-19?**

- a) NYCHA has suspended all in-person HQS inspections until further notice.
- b) NYCHA will accept an owner's certification for initial inspection for new rentals, transfers, and restorations. NYCHA will reinspect the unit when it is safe to do so.
- c) NYCHA will accept an owner's certification for new rentals that failed the initial inspection with non-life-threatening conditions. NYCHA will reinspect the unit when it is safe to do so.
- d) Life-threatening HQS violations (also known as "24-hour violations") must be corrected. NYCHA will temporarily accept a NE-2 certification form and completed work order ticket(s) and/or paid invoice(s) from a supplier for the repairs to verify completed repairs for 24-hour violations cited during an HQS inspection on December 31, 2019 or later.
- e) NYCHA is temporarily extending the timeframe to address non-life-threatening HQS violations until further notice for inspections conducted on February 15, 2020 or later.
- f) NYCHA is conducting remote video inspections (RVI) as part of a pilot program to reinspect life-threatening conditions and to inspect select complaint inspections.

**INITIAL INSPECTIONS**

**1. What is an initial inspection?**

Initial inspections are conducted for a new rental (new rentals, transfers, and restorations) upon submission of a Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA). Units must meet HQS before NYCHA is able to approve a RFTA and enter into a Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract with an owner.

**3. Since initial inspections are suspended during the state of emergency for COVID-19, how will NYCHA confirm a unit meets HQS in order to approve an RFTA?**

Prior to the state of emergency for COVID-19, NYCHA conducted an in-person HQS inspection before the execution of a new Section 8 rental. As an alternative to an in-person inspection, NYCHA will accept via email:

- a) A completed Owner Certification for Initial Inspection (Interim Certification Due to COVID-19) form (this form certifies the conditions in the prospective rental unit meet federal HQS and that the owner has no reasonable basis to have knowledge that life-threatening conditions exist in the prospective rental unit and public space areas of the building); and
- b) A sketch of the floor plan that includes dimensions for each room and the location of windows and doors.

NYCHA will inspect the unit to confirm it meets federal HQS once it is safe to do so.

#### **4. How do I submit a completed Owner Certification for Initial Inspection (Interim Certification Due to COVID-19) form?**

The Owner Certification for Initial Inspection (Interim Certification Due to COVID-19) form will be included in the rental packet or will be provided by email. Owners must submit the completed Owner Certification for Initial Inspection (Interim Certification Due to COVID-19) form by emailing it to [S8.rtu@nycha.nyc.gov](mailto:S8.rtu@nycha.nyc.gov). NYCHA will review the form and, if approved, and the unit is otherwise eligible for Section 8 assistance, will authorize the rental and commence subsidy payments.

#### **5. What if the Owner Certification for Initial Inspection (Interim Certification Due to COVID-19) form is not completed correctly?**

If the form is not complete, NYCHA staff will contact you to resubmit the form. However, providing false statements or information to NYCHA on the Owner Certification for Initial Inspection (Interim Certification Due to COVID-19) form is punishable under federal and local laws and is grounds for disapproval of the rental and/or termination of the HAP contract.

Please be certain all bedrooms meet the minimum requirements of 80 square feet (8ft x 10ft). If upon inspection any bedrooms do not meet this requirement, NYCHA will adjust the subsidy payments retroactively to reflect the payment standard for the number of bedrooms that meet this requirement and may require the tenant to move.

If any other violations are found on the follow-up inspection, the owner will have the opportunity to make any needed repairs in accordance with the normal HQS timeline requirements.

#### **6. If my unit failed the initial inspection but the rental was approved for non-life-threatening conditions, how do I confirm repairs have been made?**

Because of the state of emergency for COVID-19, until further notice, NYCHA is temporarily allowing owners to submit a Certification of Completed Repairs NE-2 form for new rentals that failed the initial inspection with non-life-threatening conditions to certify repairs have been made. Owners must submit the Certification of Completed Repairs NE-2 form via the Owner Extranet. NYCHA will reinspect the unit once it is safe to do.

### **HQS CERTIFICATION OF COMPLETED REPAIRS FOR 24-HOUR/LIFE-THREATENING VIOLATIONS**

#### **1. What is a Certification of Completed Repairs?**

A Certification of Completed Repairs is a document attesting that the HQS violations

noted during a NYCHA inspection have been corrected in the unit and/or building.

During an HQS inspection, if HQS violations are found in a unit, the owner is notified via the NE-1 Letter to Owner – Hazardous Conditions (NYCHA form 059.307B). Once deficiencies are corrected, an owner can submit a Certification of Completed Repairs for the non-life-threatening violations (Certification of Completed Repairs NE-2, NYCHA form 059.307) via the Owner Extranet.

If HQS violations are found in a public space of the building, the owner is notified via the NE-1PS Letter to Owner – HQS Violations – Public Space (NYCHA form 059.348A). Once deficiencies are corrected, an owner can complete a Certification of Completed Repairs for the non-life-threatening violations (Notification of Completed Building Repairs NE-2PS, NYCHA form 059.348) via the Owner Extranet.

## **2. What are 24-hour violations?**

24-hour violations are those that present a life-threatening hazard, including:

- Building in imminent danger of collapse
- Illegal window gates on fire escapes
- Missing or inoperable smoke and/or carbon monoxide detectors
- Gas leak
- Smoking/sparking/exposed wiring that could result in shock or fire
- Severe fire damage
- No secondary means of egress

## **3. How do I certify repairs for 24-hour violations?**

Under normal circumstances, NYCHA does not accept certifications for 24-hour violations and instead must conduct a reinspection. However, during the state of emergency for COVID-19, NYCHA will accept a certification to confirm that 24-hour violations have been corrected for 24-hour violations cited during an HQS inspection on December 31, 2019 or later. Certifications will not be accepted for cases that were suspended due to a failed inspection conducted prior to December 31, 2019.

To submit a certification for cases that failed inspection conducted after December 31, 2019:

- a) Log in to the the Owner Extranet at <https://eapps.nycha.info/owners>.
- b) Review the Letter to Owner: Hazardous Conditions NE-1 Inspection (NYCHA form 059.307B) and/or Notification of Completed Building Repairs NE-1PS.
- c) Complete the related Certification of Completed Repairs.
- d) Upload completed work order ticket(s) and/or paid invoice(s) from a supplier for the repairs. The work order and/or paid invoice must include the Section 8 tenant's address (including the unit number), the date the work was completed, and a description of repairs completed.
- e) Submit the completed form and supporting documentation via the Owner Extranet.

Owners whose unit failed an inspection conducted prior to December 31, 2019 and was cited with 24-hour violations may request a remote video inspection (RVI). To request an RVI, owners can call

NYCHA's Customer Contact Center at 718-707-7771, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

#### **4. When will the Certification of Completed Repairs for 24-hour violations be accepted?**

NYCHA will only accept the Certification of Completed Repairs if:

- The owner's signature is on the certification;
- The work order ticket(s) and/or paid invoice(s) are submitted and include: i) the Section 8 tenant's address (including the unit number); ii) the date the work was completed; and iii) a description of repairs completed;
- There is no tenant dispute about the violations being corrected; and
- The case was suspended for a failed inspection that was conducted December 31, 2019 or later.

#### **5. What should I do if my tenant does not allow me access into the unit to repair HQS deficiencies?**

Owners will be allowed additional time to make repairs on non-life-threatening violations.

Life-threatening violations must be corrected within 24 hours of the failed inspection. If the tenant refuses access for a life-threatening violation, send a letter to the tenant requesting access via Certified Mail and upload a copy of this letter and a copy of the Certified Mail receipt to NYCHA via the Owner Extranet along with the Hazardous Conditions NE-1 Inspection (NYCHA form 059.307B), indicating that the tenant refused access.

### **REMOTE VISUAL INSPECTIONS (RVI)**

#### **1. What is a remote visual inspection (RVI)?**

RVI is a Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspection performed with the property owner or owner's representative ("proxy") at the physical subject location and an HQS inspector directing the inspection remotely. NYCHA is launching a pilot to test RVI.

#### **2. Who is eligible for an RVI?**

An owner can request an RVI if the unit failed an inspection for a life-threatening condition and meets the following conditions:

- Both the owner (or proxy) and tenant agree to an RVI and having the inspection recorded;
- The owner (or proxy) will be available onsite on the date and time of the inspection;
- The owner (or proxy) has a fully charged mobile device with internet connection, has downloaded the free Zoom or Microsoft Teams application onto their mobile device, and has the following equipment onsite, on the date and time of the inspection:
  - 25-foot measuring tape,
  - Flashlight,
  - Electrical tester (3-prong/GFI circuit and 2-prong outlet tester),
  - Digital infrared thermometer, and
  - Retractable stick (to reach the carbon monoxide/smoke detector[s]);

***Note:** NYCHA will advise the owner which application (Zoom or Microsoft Teams) to download on their mobile device when the inspection is scheduled.*

- The subject property has good internet/Wi-Fi connection with no "dead spots";

- The request must be for the reinspection of a unit that failed for a life-threatening condition (please note: complaint and special inspection requests for RVI will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis);
- Property is not new to the Section 8 program;
- Tenant is currently active on the Section 8 program (NOT being restored);
- Unit has no unit size discrepancy; and
- The repairs to be confirmed are not for a heat and/or hot water violation.

### **3. How do I request an RVI?**

RVIs can be requested by contacting the Customer Contact Center (CCC) at 718-707-7771, Monday through Friday, between the hours of 8am and 4pm. The CCC representative will create a request for an RVI that will be reviewed by the HQS Inspections Unit, which will determine if the unit qualifies for RVI.