



City of Charleston, MO  
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## Residential Rental Property Inspection Criteria Effective September 13, 2017

### A. Exterior of Property:

1. The side of the house facing the street must clearly display correct house numbers.
2. Yard must be free of trash, debris, and weeds, and grass must be mowed and bushes trimmed to meet city code.
3. There can be no motor vehicles or trailers which are not currently licensed unless they are inside an enclosed structure and not visible from the street.
4. Any driveway or parking area must be covered with stone, asphalt, or concrete. Parking on bare dirt areas or using bare dirt areas as a driveway is not permissible.
5. Any fencing must be in good repair and must comply with the city's fencing ordinances.
6. There must be no indication of infestation by rodents or insects.

### B. Exterior of Structure:

1. Building foundation must be free of significant cracks and settling. If no continuous foundation, the area below the building must be securely sealed to prevent access by animals. The area below the building may not be sealed with wood.
2. For buildings with a continuous foundation, any ventilation openings or access openings must be covered and secured in such a way as to prevent entry by animals, rodents, reptiles, etc. These openings may not be covered with wood.
3. All exterior surfaces must be covered with brick, stone, or other masonry materials, siding materials, paint, or stain; no bare wood surfaces are allowed except cypress or cedar.
4. All siding materials must be in good condition and free of cracks, rotted areas, holes, or other signs of disrepair.
5. All fascia areas, soffit areas, and other trim must be in good repair and free of splitting, rotting, cracks, holes, and other signs of disrepair. These areas must be painted, stained, or covered in vinyl or metal unless constructed of cedar, cypress, or concrete board.
6. Any painted areas must be in good condition and free of peeling, flaking, crackling, or chipping.
7. Windows, window-framing, and window sills must be in good condition. Broken window panes, broken or loose storm windows, rotted or deteriorated window framing or window sills are not allowed.
8. Roof must be in good condition and not show signs of sagging, buckling, or significant deterioration. Roof materials must be continuous; combinations of different roofing materials are not allowed. Unattached carports or garages, or portions of a house without sufficient slope for use of shingles may be roofed in metal or rubber membrane materials. Bare felt roofing sheets are not allowed.
9. Any gutters, must be securely attached, including downspouts.
10. Any porch more than 30" off the ground must have railings at least 36" high, securely attached and in good condition, and with balusters not more than 4" apart.
11. Any roof areas accessible from windows or doors must have railings at least 36" high, securely attached and in good condition, and with balusters not more than 4" apart.
12. Exterior steps must be stable and in good condition so as not to cause trip or fall hazards. Any steps with more than three risers must have a handrail on at least one side that is well anchored and in good condition. Step risers must be uniform and not exceed 8" in height.

## C. Interior of Structure:

### 1. General Requirements

- a. The living unit must be clean and sanitary. There must be no trash or debris. Floors must be broom-clean, and there can be no visible buildup of dirt in corners, on window sills, around bathroom fixtures, inside kitchen cabinets on kitchen countertops, etc. Minor accumulations of dust are acceptable, but, the living unit must be generally clean at the time of inspection.
- b. Inspections are not conducted on units where remodel or construction work is in progress. This type of work must be finished (including cleanup) prior to the inspection.
- c. Single-family dwelling structures must have at least two points of ingress / egress; front and rear or front and side. A single point of ingress / egress is not allowed in single-family dwelling structures.
- d. Ingress / egress doors must fit and operate freely..
- e. Ingress / egress doors must contain both a deadbolt lock and a keyed passage lock. (Sliding glass doors or doors that exit into a secured garage area do not require deadbolt locks.) Deadbolt and passage locks must be operable from the interior without the use of a key or other device.
- f. Floors must not sag or flex appreciably under normal walking traffic. (Minor floor sag due to age and settling is acceptable.) Flooring areas that are soft or flex appreciably must be repaired.
- g. All windows must be in good operating condition and must contain screens and locks. Window facings and sills may not be rotted, broken, or otherwise deteriorated.
- h. There must be no holes in walls or ceilings. Interior walls must be covered in painted plaster or drywall, tile, or by tile or paneling installed over drywall. (Wall paneling attached directly to studs without drywall is permissible as long as paneling is at least 1/4" thickness.
- i. Walls and ceilings cannot have or show damage from prior water leaks .
- j. Any painted areas must be in good condition and free of peeling, flaking, crackling, or chipping.
- k. All floor coverings must be securely attached and in good repair. Loose or damaged floor covering may not prohibit opening or closing of doors or cause trip hazards.
- l. Kerosene heaters are not allowed. Heat service must be electric, natural gas, LP gas, or fuel oil. All primary heating devices must be vented to the outside. Portable heaters are acceptable but cannot be the primary source of heat.
- m. Each level of the living space must contain at least one battery-powered smoke detector, including one located near the primary heating source if the heating source is located inside the living structure. Other smoke detectors should be located adjacent to sleeping areas. The specific number of smoke detectors necessary will vary based on the size and layout of any individual living unit.
- n. All interior hallways and passages must be free of debris and obstructions.
- o. Any interior stairs or steps with more than three risers must contain a handrail on at least one side which is securely attached and in good repair.
- p. There must be no indication of infestation by rodents or insects.

### 2. Kitchen

- a. There must be water service to at least one kitchen sink, and each sink must have a water supply shut-off.
- b. Each kitchen sink must drain freely.
- c. There must be no evidence of mold on floors, walls, countertops, or inside cabinets.
- d. There must be no indication of infestation by rodents or insects.
- e. There must be suitable service for either a gas or electric cook stove.
- f. There must be storage cabinets and work counter area covered in an impervious material such as tile, metal, laminate, etc. Bare wood countertops or countertops covered in any type of paper product are not allowed.

### 3. Bedrooms

- a. Each bedroom will be at least 80 square feet with a functional ceiling height of at least 84".
- b. Each bedroom will have access to a bathroom without having to pass through another bedroom.
- c. Each bedroom must contain at least one operable window of sufficient size to serve as a means of emergency egress.
- d. Each bedroom must have a source of heat, either via a permanently installed and vented heating unit for that room or via a duct connection to a central heating unit. Portable space heaters cannot be the primary heat source for a bedroom nor for any other room in the house.
- e. Each bedroom must have a door that can be closed for privacy.

#### 4. Bathrooms

- a. There must be water service to at least one bathroom sink, one toilet, and either one shower or bathtub.
- b. All bathroom sinks, showers, and bathtubs must drain freely.
- c. All toilets must flush, drain, and re-fill properly.
- d. All toilets and sinks must have a water supply shut-off.
- e. There must be no evidence of mold on floors, ceilings, or walls or in or around bathroom fixtures.
- f. There must be no evidence of water leakage or floor materials damaged by water leakage around bathroom fixtures.
- g. Each bathroom must contain either a ventilation fan vented to the outside or an operable window to the exterior.
- h. Each bathroom must be clean and free of debris and dirt.
- k. There must be no indication of infestation by rodents or insects.

#### 5. Electrical

- a. Electric service boxes may be equipped with either breakers or fuses but must have covers.
- b. All electric outlets must have covers.
- c. There can be no exposed electrical wiring running along ceilings or walls in habitable areas.
- d. All electrical outlets located adjacent to a water source must be GFI as well as all exterior electrical outlets.

#### 6. Plumbing

- a. There must be a water shut-off valve located around the foundation of the house, in the basement or cellar, or wherever the city's water service enters the structure or the property. The shut-off valve must be easily accessible and clearly labeled so that water service to the structure can be turned off by a plumber, resident or other workman. Water shut-off valves located in a crawl space under a structure do not meet the requirement. If the structure contains more than one living unit, each individual living unit must have its own shut-off valve.
- b. A structure containing two living units may be serviced from one tap to the city water lines as long as each living unit can be shut off by the city independently in the event of non-payment, emergency repairs, etc. It is the property owner's responsibility to separate the water service to the units.
- c. There must be a gas or electric powered hot water heater with a minimum size of 30 gallons which contains its own water supply shut-off.
- d. All water lines and connections should be free of drips and leaks.
- e. Any sump pump must drain outside the house or building and cannot drain into a sanitary sewer line.
- f. Washing machines may not empty into sump pump basins.

#### 7. Outbuildings

- a. Outbuildings are expected to be maintained to the same general level as the primary residence, although not all the same criteria will directly apply.
- b. Outbuildings should be structurally sound, not show signs of leaning or undue settling, or rotting, have a roof in good condition, able to be secured, and be properly painted or sided.
- c. All outbuildings are expected to comply with the city's municipal code regarding placement, construction and maintenance of such structures.

**NOTE TO LANDLORDS:** This list of inspection criteria is not all inclusive. Owners of rental property should be aware that the residential rental property program requires that "...all dwelling units...must conform to all applicable Federal, State, and City of Charleston building, plumbing, and electrical codes, property maintenance codes, and Residential Rental Property Inspection Criteria..." Therefore, an inspection of any particular property may result in repair items that are not specifically listed here. Property owners may research the 2012 International Property Maintenance Code or 2012 series of International Building Codes for other specific requirements that may apply to a property or for further clarification of this criteria. Please remember that a property that passes an inspection one time is not guaranteed to necessarily pass the next inspection.

If you have questions about any part of the inspection criteria or about the general inspection process, feel free to contact City Hall during normal business hours.