

NORTH DAKOTA
housing
FINANCE AGENCY

**MINIMUM HOUSING
REHABILITATION AND PROPERTY
STANDARDS**

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency
2624 Vermont Avenue
PO Box 1535
Bismarck, ND 58502-1535

800/292-8621 or 701/328-8072
800/366-6888 (TTY)
www.ndhfa.org · hfainfo@nd.gov



TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	PREFACE.....	3
II.	DEFINITIONS.....	4
III.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR BASIC EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES.....	4
IV.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR VENTILATION.....	8
V.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ELECTRICAL SERVICE.....	8
VI.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR HEATING SYSTEMS.....	9
VII.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE INTERIORS OF STRUCTURES.....	11
VIII.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE EXTERIOR OF STRUCTURES.....	12
IX.	MINIMUM SPACE, USE, AND LOCATION REQUIREMENTS.....	13
X.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PLUMBING SYSTEMS.....	13
XI.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR POTABLE WATER SUPPLY.....	14
XII.	MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CONNECTION TO SANITARY SEWER.....	14
XIII.	LEAD-BASED PAINT.....	15
XIV.	ACCESSIBILITY.....	15
XV.	UNIFORM PHYSICAL CONDITION STANDARDS.....	15
XVI.	DISASTER MITIGATION.....	20
XVII.	CAPITAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT.....	21

I. PREFACE

This document is intended to provide the minimum acceptable standards for existing multi-family household dwelling units rehabilitated in whole or in part with North Dakota Housing Finance Agency (NDHFA) program funds. Any reference in this document to “rehabilitation” is meant to include rehabilitation of existing housing and adaptive reuse of existing non-residential building(s) which create new multifamily rental housing. These standards are not intended to reduce or exclude the requirements of any local or state building or housing codes, standards, or ordinances that may apply. In the event of any conflicting code(s), the more restrictive code(s) will apply. Housing rehabilitated with NDHFA assistance must meet all applicable State and local codes, ordinances, and requirements or, in the absence of a State or local building code, the International Existing Building Code of the International Code Council.

These standards were designed to assist in achieving consistency throughout the state for all rehabilitation activities assisted with NDHFA funds.

These standards assume that a knowledgeable inspector will thoroughly inspect each dwelling to verify the presence and condition of all components, systems, and equipment of the dwelling. All components, systems, and equipment of a dwelling referenced in this document shall be in good working order and condition and be capable of being used for the purpose for which they were intended and/or designed. Components, systems and/or equipment that are not in good working order and condition shall be repaired or replaced. When it is necessary to replace items (systems, components, or equipment), the replacement items must conform to these standards. These standards also assume that the inspector will take into account any extraordinary circumstances of the occupants of the dwelling (e.g., physical disabilities) and reflect a means to address such circumstances in their inspection and in the preparation of work write-ups and project specifications for that dwelling.

All interior ceilings, walls, and floors must not have any serious defects such as severe bulging or leaning, large holes, loose surface materials, severe buckling, missing components or other serious damage. The roof must be structurally sound and weather-resistant. All exterior walls (including foundation walls) must not have any serious defects such as leaning, buckling, sagging, large holes, or defects that may result in the structure not being weather-resistant or that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation. The condition of all interior and exterior stairs, halls, porches, walkways, etc. must not present a danger of tripping or falling.

If an inspector determines that the specific individual standards of this document cannot be achieved on any single dwelling due to it being structurally impossible and/or cost prohibitive, the inspector shall document the specific item(s) as non-conforming with these standards. The inspector shall prepare, for NDHFA’s consideration, a list of any and all non-conforming items along with his/her recommendation to waive, or not to waive, the individual non-conforming items. Any waiver of non-conforming items are at the sole discretion of NDHFA. Items necessary to meet HUD Uniform Physical Conditions Standards may not be waived.

Rehabilitation projects (including adaptive reuse) must address any and all deficiencies identified in Section XV of this Property Standards document as part of the project’s scope of work so that, upon completion, all such deficiencies are cured. For projects which include acquisition and/or rehabilitation of occupied housing, any life threatening health and safety deficiencies, as defined in Section XV, must be addressed and corrected immediately.

Energy Star rated systems, components, equipment, fixtures and appliances are encouraged.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Egress** – A permanent and unobstructed means of exiting from the dwelling in an emergency escape or rescue situation.
- B. Habitable Space (Room)** – Space (rooms) within the dwelling for living, sleeping, eating, or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage, or utility spaces, and similar areas (rooms) are not considered habitable spaces (rooms).
- C. Energy Star Rated** – Includes all systems, components, equipment, fixtures, and appliances that meet strict energy efficiency performance criteria established, as a joint effort, by the federal Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Department of Energy, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and that carry the Energy Star label as evidence of meeting this criteria.

III. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR BASIC EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

- A. Kitchens – Every dwelling shall have a kitchen room or kitchenette equipped with the following:**
 - 1. Kitchen Sink.** The dwelling shall have a kitchen sink, connected to both hot and cold potable water supply lines under pressure and to the sanitary sewer waste line. When replacing such components, water supply shut off valves shall be installed.
 - 2. Oven and Stove or Range.** The dwelling shall contain an oven and a stove or range connected to the source of fuel or power, in good working order and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
 - 3. Refrigerator.** The dwelling shall contain a refrigerator connected to the power supply, in good working order and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
 - 4. Counter Space Area.** Every kitchen or kitchenette shall have an adequate storage area. Every kitchen or kitchenette shall have adequate counter space.
- B. Toilet Room:** Every dwelling shall contain a room which is equipped with a flush toilet and a lavatory. The flush water closet shall be connected to the cold potable water supply, under pressure, and to the sanitary sewer system. The lavatory shall be connected to both a hot and cold potable water supply, under pressure, and connected to the sanitary sewer system. When replacing such components, water supply shut-off valves shall be installed.
- C. Bath Required:** Every dwelling shall contain a bathtub and/or shower.

1. The bathtub and/or shower unit(s) need not be located in the same room as the flush water closet and lavatory. The bathtub and/or shower unit may be located in a separate room.
2. The bathtub and/or shower unit shall be connected to both hot and cold potable water supply lines, under pressure, and shall be connected to the sanitary sewer system. Where feasible, shut off valves shall be installed on the water supply lines. All faucets, when replaced, shall be water balancing scald guard type faucets.

D. Privacy in Room(s) Containing Toilet and/or Bath: Every toilet room and/or every bathroom (the room or rooms containing the bathtub and/or shower unit) shall be contained in a room or rooms that afford privacy to a person within said room or rooms. Every toilet room and/or bathroom shall have doors equipped with a privacy lock or latch in good working order.

E. Hot Water Supply: Every dwelling shall have supplied water-heating equipment (water heater and hot water supply lines) that is free of leaks, connected to the source of fuel or power, and is capable of heating water to be drawn for general usage.

1. No atmospheric water heaters shall be allowed in a confined space. No water heaters shall be allowed in the toilet rooms, bathrooms, bedrooms, or sleeping rooms. No gas water heaters shall be allowed in a clothes closet.
2. All gas water heaters shall be vented in a safe manner to a chimney or flue leading to the exterior of the dwelling. Unlined brick chimneys must have a metal liner installed to meet manufacturer's venting requirements. If metal chimney venting cannot be added, a power vented water heater may be installed. Install according to manufacturer's specifications.
3. All water heaters shall be equipped with a pressure/temperature relief valve possessing a full-sized (non-reduced) approved discharge pipe to within six (6) inches of the floor. The discharge pipe shall not be threaded at the discharge end.
4. All water heaters must be installed to manufacturer's installation specifications.
5. Replacement water heaters shall meet Energy Star requirements at the time of installation.
6. Where feasible, tankless water heaters may be installed in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines and sized to provide adequate hot water supply to all fixtures. Gas supply lines and/or electrical capacity must be evaluated before installing tankless water heaters. Before installing, careful consideration should be made regarding supply and water temperature to owners.

F. Exits: Every exit from every dwelling shall comply with the following requirements:

1. Every habitable room shall have two (2) independent and unobstructed means of egress. This is normally achieved through an entrance door and an egress window.
2. All above grade egress windows from habitable rooms shall have a net clear opening of 5.7 square feet. The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall not be less than twenty inches (20") wide, and the minimum net clear opening height dimension shall not be less than twenty-four inches (24") wide. Note that the combination of minimum window width and minimum window height opening size does not meet the 5.7 square feet requirements. Therefore, the window size will need to be greater than the minimum opening sizes in either width or height. Where windows are provided as a means of escape or rescue, they shall have a finished sill height of not more than forty-eight inches (48") above the floor in basements. Egress windows with a finished sill height of more than forty-eight inches (48") shall have a permanently installed step platform that is in compliance with stair construction standards.

All at-grade egress windows from habitable rooms may be reduced in size to 5.0 square feet of operable window area, but the area must meet the minimum width and height requirements of all egress windows.

When windows are being replaced within existing openings, the existing window size shall be determined to be of sufficient size even if current window sizes do not meet current egress standards. However, if the specification writer determines that changing the window size is beneficial, such egress window size modification will be allowed but not required. If new construction windows are being installed, these windows must meet all egress window requirements (for example, if adding on to existing building in a rehabilitation or adaptive reuse).

3. In habitable basements (or habitable rooms within a basement) where one means of egress is a window, the window shall have a net clear opening of 5.0 square feet. The window shall open directly to the street or yard or, where such egress window has a finished sill height that is below the adjacent ground elevation, shall have an egress window/area well. The egress window/area well shall provide a minimum accessible net clear opening of nine square feet that includes a minimum horizontal dimension of thirty-six inches (36") from the window. Egress window/area wells with a depth of more than forty-four (44") shall be equipped with an affixed ladder, stairs or platform according to local code that are accessible with the window in the fully opened position. Such ladder will have rungs at 12 inches on-center and projecting out a minimum of three inches from the side of the window well.

G. Stairs: If replacing existing stairs, stairs will need to conform as close as possible to new construction standards, but replacement stairs do not need to be in compliance with new codes. All newly constructed stairs (interior and exterior

stairways) shall comply with the following requirements and local code requirements:

1. All stairways and steps of four (4) or more risers shall have at least one (1) handrail. All stairways and steps which are five (5) feet or more in width shall have a handrail on each side.
2. All handrails shall be installed not less than thirty-four inches (34") nor more than thirty-eight inches (38"), measured plumb, above the nosing of the stair treads. Handrails adjacent to a wall shall have a space of not less than one and one-half inches (1 1/2") between the wall and the handrail. All handrails shall be turned back into the wall on railing ends. The size of a round railing must be a minimum of 1.25 inches, but not more than 2 inches. Railings must be continuous from the top riser to the bottom riser.
3. Porches, balconies, decks, or raised floor surfaces, including stairway riser and/or landing, located more than thirty (30) inches above the floor or the grade, shall have guardrails installed that are not less than thirty-six inches (36") in height. Open guardrails and stair railings shall have intermediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere four inches (4") in diameter cannot pass through.
4. All stairs and steps shall have a riser height of not more than eight inches (8") and a tread depth of not less than nine inches (9"). All newly constructed stairs, not replacement stairs, shall have a riser height of not more than seven and three quarters (7 3/4") and a tread depth of not less than ten inches (10"). Risers and treads cannot be different in size by more than 3/8 of an inch from the top to the bottom of the stairs.

H. Smoke Detectors: All smoke detectors shall be dual sensor detectors. They shall be hard-wired with battery back-up and interconnected with all other alarms. Smoke detectors shall be located as follows:

1. On the ceiling or wall outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of bedrooms.
2. In each room used for sleeping purposes, and
3. In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

All smoke detectors shall be installed per manufacturer's installation instructions.

I. Carbon Monoxide Detectors: Where a heating system source, other than solid fuel burning appliances (e.g., wood stoves), and/or water heater that burns solid,

liquid or gaseous fuels is located horizontally adjacent to any habitable room, a hard-wired with battery back-up carbon monoxide detector is required and is to be installed per the manufacturer's instructions. Any dwelling that has a fuel source heating system (not electric), other solid fuel burning appliances (e.g., wood stoves, pellet, or corn stoves), and/or fuel source water heater (not electric), a hard-wired with battery back-up combination smoke alarm/carbon monoxide detector is required to be installed per the manufacturer's instructions on the main living area floor.

IV. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR VENTILATION

- A. In general, sufficient ventilation shall be present to ensure adequate air circulation in the dwelling.
- B. Bathrooms, including toilet rooms, shall be provided with an exhaust fan. If it is being installed or replaced, it shall be rated at a minimum of 60 CFM and 4 sones or less. Fans shall have insulated ducting vented to the exterior. A fan needs to be installed if there is no window or a non-operable window is present.

V. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR ELECTRICAL SERVICE

- A. **Minimum Electrical Service:** Every dwelling unit, at a minimum, shall have a 100-ampere breaker controlled electrical panel. All electrical work shall be in compliance with adopted State electrical code requirements. The panel, service mast, etc. shall also be installed to local utility company requirements.
- B. **Convenience Outlets:**
 - 1. Every habitable room within the dwelling shall contain at least two (2) separate duplex, wall-type electrical outlets. Placement of such outlets shall be on separate walls. All newly installed receptacles shall be grounded duplex receptacles or GFCI protected.
 - 2. All electrical outlets used in bathrooms and toilet rooms, all outlets within six feet (6'-0") of a water source (excluding designated simplex equipment circuits for clothes washing machines and sump pumps), outlets located on open porches or breezeways, exterior outlets, outlets located in garages and in non-habitable basements, except those electrical outlets that are dedicated appliance outlets, and all kitchen receptacles serving the countertop area shall be ground fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) protected. All exterior receptacles shall be covered by a receptacle cover that when a cord is plugged in, the GFCI outlet will stay covered and protected.
 - 3. All accessible knob and tube, unsafe, and/or illegal wiring shall be removed and replaced with type NM cable (Romex) or as required by code.

4. All broken, damaged or nonfunctioning switches or outlets shall be replaced. All fixtures and wiring shall be adequately installed to ensure safety from fire so far as visible components are observed.
5. All missing or broken switch and outlet covers (including junction boxes) shall be replaced. Each receptacle or switch located on an exterior wall shall have a foam seal placed under the cover.

C. Lighting:

1. Every habitable room and every bathroom (including toilet room), laundry room, furnace or utility room, and hallway shall have at least one (1) ceiling or wall-type electric light fixture, controlled by a remote wall switch. Habitable rooms (except kitchens or kitchenettes) may have a wall-type electrical outlet controlled by a remote wall switch in lieu of a ceiling or wall-type light fixture. Energy efficient fixtures that meet energy star ratings and compact florescent bulb equivalent or better shall be installed in all new fixture installations.
2. All stairwells shall have at least one light fixture controlled by a remote wall switch at the top and bottom of the stairs.
3. Porcelain type fixtures with pull chains are acceptable for use in basements (except for the one controlled by a remote wall switch) cellars, and attics.
4. All pendant type lighting fixtures that are supported only by the electrical supply wire shall be removed or replaced. If replaced, replace with Energy Star rated fixtures.

VI. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR HEATING SYSTEMS

- A. Heating System:** All heating systems (and central air-conditioning systems where they exist) shall be capable of safely and adequately heating (or cooling as applicable) for all living space.
- B. Cooling System:** Non-working or improperly functioning central air conditioning systems may be replaced as part of the rehabilitation work. The installation of a central air conditioning system, where it currently does not exist, is permissible where feasible and practical. New A/C installation will not be a priority unless project funds are available.
- C. Requirements for Heating and or Cooling Systems:**
 1. All existing heating systems, including but not limited to, chimneys and flues, cut-off valves and switches, limit controls, heat exchangers, burners, combustion and ventilation air, relief valves, drip legs and air, hot water, or steam delivery components (ducts, piping, etc.) that are not being replaced, shall be inspected to be in a safe and proper functioning

condition at the time of inspection, by means of written project file documentation.

2. Every heating system burning solid, liquid or gaseous fuels shall be vented in a safe manner to a chimney or flue leading to the exterior of the dwelling. The heating system chimney and/or flue shall be of such design to assure proper draft and shall be adequately supported.
3. No heating system source burning solid, liquid or gaseous fuels shall be located in any habitable room or bathroom, including any toilet room.
4. Every fuel burning appliance (solid, liquid or gaseous fuels) shall have adequate combustion air and ventilation air. All new furnaces will have sealed combustion with combustion air brought in from the exterior of the house and installed in accordance with manufacturer's guidelines.
5. Every heat duct, steam pipe and hot water pipe shall be free of leaks and shall function such that an adequate amount of heat is delivered where intended. All accessible duct joints must be sealed with mastic or any other acceptable product. Newly installed ductwork must also be sealed. All accessible steam piping and hot water piping must be installed with an approved material.
6. Every seal between any of the sections of the heating source(s) shall be air-tight so that noxious gases and fumes will not escape into the dwelling.
7. No space heater shall be of a portable type.
8. Minimum requirements for forced air furnaces, when installed, will be no less than a 92% AFUE, or the minimum AFUE, if greater than 92%, to obtain a local utility rebate (Energy Star rated for northern climates). A digital programmable thermostat must be installed. Condensate lines will drain to a floor drain or have a condensate pump installed and piped to discharge. All furnace ductwork shall be equipped with an air filter clean out location that has a tight fitting cover installed over it.
9. All boilers, when replaced, will have an "A" rating and be no less than 90% AFUE rating. All combustion air will be from the exterior of the house. The addition of zone valves may be useful to reduce energy cost. Heat lines shall be insulated with approved material. Programmable thermostats will be installed.
10. A/C units, if added or replaced, shall not be less than 14.5 SEER or the lowest SEER rating that is available at the time of installation but not less than 14.5 SEER. All units shall be installed, when possible, on either the north or east side of the dwelling or in an area that will provide shade for the unit. The correct coil will be installed that is compatible with both the furnace and A/C unit. Homeowners who use window air conditioners will be encouraged to purchase Energy Star rated air conditioners. No window A/C units may be purchased with NDHFA funds.

11. All wood, pellet, corn, switch grass, hydrogen, or other biomass fuel stoves must be installed to manufacturer's guidelines. Where such guidelines are not available, the heating unit will be removed. Venting and combustion air must be installed in accordance with manufacturer's requirements.

D. Energy Conservation: All structures shall comply with certain energy conservation measures (U.S. Department of Energy recommendations). These measures include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

1. When siding is being replaced and/or interior wall finishes of exterior walls are being replaced on a dwelling, such exterior walls are to be provided with insulation and at the recommended resistance factor (R-value) or R-11, or that which is allowed by the stud cavity space. In addition, an air infiltration barrier, such as Tyvek or approved equal, shall be installed on all exterior walls. If new walls are being framed and insulated, the minimum R factor is R-19 or R-13 plus R-5 foam. The installation of fan-fold foam or foam sheathing may be added to increase household R-ratings.
2. When new windows are to be installed, windows must be current Energy Star rated for northern climates. All rope weight openings will be insulated and all new windows will have the window jamb sealed. Where SHPO requirements will restrict the installation of vinyl windows, the specifications will be written to come as close as possible to achieving Energy Star requirements.
3. All heat ducts and hot water or steam heat distribution piping shall be insulated or otherwise protected from heat loss where such ducts or piping runs are located in unheated spaces. Similarly, distribution piping for general use hot water shall also be protected from heat loss where such piping is located in unheated spaces. All water distribution piping shall be protected from freezing.
4. Attic access passage ways (scuttle holes) shall be no less than 22" by 30" or the size of original construction. If it is impossible to conform to this standard, the largest attic access hole possible will be installed.

VII. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE INTERIOR OF STRUCTURES

A. Interior Walls, Floors, Ceilings, Doors, and Windows:

1. All interior walls, floors, ceilings, doors and windows shall be capable of being kept in a clean and sanitary condition by the owner.
2. Every bathroom and/or toilet room, kitchen or kitchenette, and utility room floor surface shall be constructed such that they are impervious to water and can easily be kept in a clean and sanitary condition by the owner.

3. All interior doors shall be capable of affording the privacy for which they are intended.
4. No dwelling containing two or more bedrooms shall have a room arrangement that access to a bathroom, toilet room, or a bedroom can be achieved only by going through another bathroom, toilet room, or another bedroom.
5. It is encouraged that all paints, stains, varnishes, lacquers and other finishes used in the rehabilitated dwelling shall be low or no VOC paint finishes and installed as required by the manufacturer.

VIII. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR THE EXTERIOR OF STRUCTURES

A. Foundations, Exterior Walls, Roofs, Soffits and Fascia:

1. Every foundation, exterior wall, roof, soffit and fascia shall be made weather resistant. Products for exterior walls, roofs, soffits, and fascia shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.
2. Roof replacement shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements. When installing asphalt or fiberglass shingles, a minimum of a 30-year shingle shall be used. Other products such as metal roofing may be considered.

B. Drainage:

1. All rainwater shall be conveyed and drained away from every roof so as not to cause wetness or dampness in the structure. No roof drainage systems shall be connected to a sanitary sewer, or directly to a storm sewer system.
2. The ground around the dwelling shall be sloped away from foundation walls to divert water away from the structure.
3. If feasible, the collection of roof water is encouraged.

C. Windows, Exterior Doors and Basement Entries (Including Cellar Hatchways):

1. Every window, exterior door, basement entry and cellar hatchway shall be tight fitting within their frames, be rodent-proof, insect-proof and be weatherproof such that water and surface drainage is prevented from entering the dwelling. In addition, the following requirements shall also be met:
 - a. All exterior doors and windows shall be equipped with security locks. Deadbolts are not required.

- b. Every window sash shall be fully equipped with glass windowpanes which are without cracks or holes. Every window sash to be replaced shall use Energy Star rated for northern climate windows unless the existing windows have insulated glass. Stained or leaded glass found to be historically significant may be protected by a fixed low-E glass storm window. Every window sash shall fit tightly within its frame, and be secured in a manner consistent with the window design. All window jambs will be sealed. All rope weight openings shall be insulated before installing the new window. Energy Star rated for Northern climate.
- c. Storm doors, when installed, shall also be equipped with a self-closing device.
- d. Every exterior door, when closed, shall fit properly within its frame and shall have door hinges and security locks or latches. All exterior doors will be no less than metal clad insulated (foam filled) doors. All jambs and thresholds will be sealed.
- e. Every exterior door shall be not less than two foot-four inches (2'-4") in width and not less than six foot-six inches (6'6") in height. Existing door sizes will be grandfathered, but an attempt shall be made to have at least one exterior door that is not less than 36 inches wide and no less than 6'-8" high.

IX. MINIMUM SPACE, USE, AND LOCATION REQUIREMENTS

- A. No cellar space shall be converted to habitable space.
- B. **Habitable Basement Space:** No basement space shall be used as habitable space unless all habitable space requirements are met and all of the following requirements are met:
 - 1. The floor and walls are waterproof or damp proof construction.
 - 2. Such habitable space has a hard surfaced floor of concrete or masonry.
 - 3. Such space shall have a minimum of two exits. In addition to the stairs, this would normally consist of one egress window.

X. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR PLUMBING SYSTEMS

- A. All dwelling plumbing systems shall be capable of safely and adequately providing a water supply and wastewater disposal for all plumbing fixtures. Every dwelling plumbing system shall comply with the following requirements.
 - 1. All existing plumbing systems and plumbing system components shall be free of leaks. When repairing or adding to such systems, any type of pipe allowed by the State plumbing code shall be allowed.

2. All plumbing system piping shall be of adequate size to deliver water to plumbing fixtures and to convey wastewater from plumbing fixtures (including proper slope of wastewater piping) as designed by the fixture manufacturer).
3. All plumbing fixtures shall be in good condition, free of cracks and defects, and capable of being used for the purpose in which they were intended.
4. The plumbing system shall be vented in a manner that allows the wastewater system to function at atmospheric pressure and prevents the siphoning of water from fixtures. Venting by mechanical vents is accepted as an alternative to exterior atmospheric venting.
5. All fixtures that discharge wastewater shall contain, or be discharged through, a trap that prevents the entry of sewer gas into the dwelling.
6. All plumbing system piping and fixtures shall be installed in a manner that prevents the system, or any component of the system, from freezing.
7. All plumbing fixtures and water connections shall be installed in such a way as to prevent the backflow of water from the system into the plumbing system's water source.
8. Valves shall be installed with the valve in the upright position. When replacing valves, the use of a full port ball-valve shall be encouraged.

XI. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR POTABLE WATER SUPPLY

- A. Every dwelling shall be connected to an approved (by the jurisdiction having authority) potable water source.
- B. All potable water fixtures and equipment shall be installed in such a manner as to make it impossible for used, unclean, polluted or contaminated water, mixtures or substances to enter any portion of the potable water system piping. All equipment and fixtures shall be installed with air gaps (traps) to prevent back siphonage. All outlets with hose threads (except those serving a clothes washing machine) shall have a vacuum breaker for use with the application. Any plumbing equipment or fixtures that allow, or appear to allow, the previous conditions, or are otherwise deemed to be unhealthy, unsanitary, or unsafe shall be replaced. No water piping supplied by a private water supply system shall be connected to any other source of water supply without the approval of the jurisdiction having authority over the installation.

XII. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CONNECTION TO SANITARY SEWER

Every dwelling shall be connected to an approved (by the jurisdiction having authority) sanitary sewer system.

XIII. LEAD-BASED PAINT (Housing Trust Fund only)

Housing assisted by the Housing Trust Fund is subject to the regulations at 24 CFR Part 35, subparts A, B, J, K, and R which govern lead-based paint poisoning prevention in residential structures. Applicants, developers, and builders of any project requiring the rehabilitation or adaptive reuse of structures built prior to 1978 must read, fully understand, and comply with 24 CFR Part 35, subparts A, B, J, K, and R.

XIV. ACCESSIBILITY

Housing assisted with NDHFA funds must meet the accessibility requirements of 24 CFR Part 8, which implements Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, implemented at 28 CFR Parts 35 and 36, as applicable. "Covered multifamily dwellings", as defined at 24 CFR Part 100.201, must also meet the design and construction requirements at 24 CFR Part 100.205, which implements the Fair Housing Act.

XV. UNIFORM PHYSICAL CONDITION STANDARDS

Housing assisted with NDHFA funds and which are placed in service must follow property standards which include all inspectable items and inspectable areas specified by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) based on the HUD physical inspection procedures, known as the Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS) prescribed by HUD pursuant to 24 CFR Part 5, subpart G. Any and all deficiencies identified during annual compliance monitoring site visits of NDHFA-assisted properties must be cured. NDHFA will monitor property condition standards by the same processes and procedures as have been used by NDHFA for the federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program, which does not employ a scoring protocol or grade levels of deficiencies; all identified deficiencies must be corrected.

Rehabilitation projects (including adaptive reuse) must address any and all deficiencies identified in this section as part of the project's scope of work so that, upon completion, all such deficiencies are cured. For projects which include acquisition and/or rehabilitation of occupied housing, any life threatening health and safety deficiencies, identified in this section in ALL CAPS, must be addressed and corrected immediately.

- A.** Housing assisted with NDHFA funds must be decent, safe, sanitary, and in good repair. Owners of NDHFA-assisted property must maintain such housing in a manner that meets the physical condition standards set forth in this section in order to be considered decent, safe, sanitary, and in good repair. These standards address the major areas of the NDHFA-assisted housing: the site; the building exterior; the building systems; the dwelling units; the common areas; and health and safety considerations.
1. **Site:** The inspectable items related to Site, such as fencing and gates, retaining walls, grounds, lighting, mailboxes/project signs, parking lots/driveways, play areas and equipment, refuse disposal, roads, market appeal, storm drainage, walkways, and steps must be free of health and

safety hazards and be in good repair. The site must not be subject to material adverse conditions, such as abandoned vehicles, dangerous walks or steps, poor drainage, septic tank back-ups, sewer hazards, excess accumulation of trash, vermin or rodent infestation, or fire hazards.

Examples of observable deficiencies for inspectable items related to Site include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Fencing and Gates (both security/safety and non-security fences and gates): Damaged, falling, or leaning; Holes; Missing sections.
- Grounds: Erosion; Rutting areas; Overgrown or penetrating vegetation; Ponding or poor site drainage.
- Mailboxes/Project Signs: Missing or damaged.
- Market Appeal: Graffiti, Litter
- Parking Lots/Driveways/Roads: Cracks; Ponding; Potholes; Loose material; Settlement or heaving.
- Play Areas and Equipment: Damaged or broken equipment; Deteriorated play area surface.
- Refuse Disposal: Broken or damaged enclosure; Inadequate outdoor storage space.
- Retaining Walls: Damaged, falling, or leaning.
- Storm Drainage: Damaged or obstructed.
- Walkways/Steps: Broken or missing handrail; Cracks; Settlement; Heaving; Spalling; Exposed rebar.

2. Building exterior: Each building on the site must be structurally sound, secure, habitable, and in good repair. The inspectable items related to Building Exterior, which includes each building's doors, fire escapes, foundations, lighting, roofs, walls, and windows, where applicable, must be free of health and safety hazards, operable, and in good repair.

Examples of observable deficiencies for inspectable items related to Building Exterior include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Doors: Damaged frames, threshold, lintels, or trim; Damaged hardware or locks; Damaged surface (Holes, paint, rusting, glass); Damaged or missing screen, storm or security door; Deteriorated or missing caulking or seals; Missing door.
- FIRE ESCAPES: BLOCKED EGRESS OR LADDERS; VISIBLY MISSING COMPONENTS.
- Foundations: Cracks or gaps; Spalling; Exposed rebar.
- Lighting: Broken fixtures or bulbs.
- Roofs: Damaged soffits or fascia; Damaged vents; Damaged or clogged drains; Damaged or torn membrane; Missing ballast; Missing or damaged components from downspout or gutter; Missing or damaged shingles; Ponding.
- Walls: Cracks or gaps; Damaged chimneys; Missing or damaged caulking or mortar; Missing pieces, holes, or spalling; Stained, peeling, or needs paint.
- Windows: Broken, missing, or cracked panes; Damaged sills, frames, lintels, or trim; Damaged or missing screens; Missing or deteriorated

caulking, seals, or glazing compound; Peeling or missing paint;
SECURITY BARS PREVENT EGRESS.

3. Building systems: The inspectable items related to Building Systems, which includes each building's domestic water, electrical system, elevators, emergency power, fire protection, HVAC, roof exhaust system, and sanitary system must be free of health and safety hazards, functionally adequate, operable, and in good repair.

Examples of observable deficiencies for inspectable items related to Building Systems include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Domestic Water: Leaking central water supply; Missing pressure relief valve; RUST OR CORROSION ON HEATER CHIMNEY; IMPROPER ANGLE OF OR DISCONNECTED FLUE ON WATER HEATER; Water supply inoperable.
- Electrical System: Blocked access or improper storage; Burnt breakers; Evidence of leaks or corrosion; Frayed wiring; MISSING BREAKERS OR FUSES; MISSING OUTLET COVERS.
- Elevators: Not operable.
- Emergency Power: Auxiliary lighting inoperable; Run-up records/Documentation not available.
- Fire Protection: Missing/disabled/painted/blocked/capped sprinkler head; Missing, damaged, or expired extinguishers.
- HVAC: Boiler or pump leaks; Fuel supply leaks; General rust or corrosion; MISALIGNED CHIMNEY OR VENTILATION SYSTEM.
- Roof Exhaust System: Roof exhaust fan(s) inoperable.
- Sanitary System: Broken, leaking, or clogged pipes or drains; Missing drain, cleanout, or manhole covers.

4. Dwelling units: Each dwelling unit within a building must be structurally sound, habitable, and in good repair. All inspectable items of the dwelling unit (for example, the unit's bathroom, call-for-aid (if applicable), ceiling, doors, electrical systems, floors, hot water heater, HVAC, kitchen, lighting, laundry area, outlets/switches, patio/porch/balcony, smoke detectors, stairs, walls, and windows) must be free of health and safety hazards, functionally adequate, operable, and in good repair.

Examples of observable deficiencies for inspectable items related to the Dwelling Units include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Bathroom: Bathroom cabinets damaged or missing; Lavatory sink damaged or missing; Plumbing has clogged drains or faucets or leaking faucet or pipes; Shower or tub is damaged or missing; Ventilation or exhaust system is absent or inoperable; Water closet or toilet is damaged, clogged, or missing.
- Call-for-Aid (if applicable): Inoperable.
- Ceiling: Bulging, bucking, or leaking; Holes, missing tiles, panels, or cracks; Peeling or missing paint; Water stains, water damage, mold or mildew.
- Doors: Damaged frames, threshold, lintels, or trim; Damaged hardware or locks; Damaged or missing screen, storm or security door; Damaged

- surface, including holes, bad paint, rusting, broken glass, or rotting; Deteriorated or missing seals on the entry door; Missing door.
- Electrical System: Blocked access to electrical panel; Burnt breakers; Evidence of leaks or corrosion; Frayed wiring; GFI inoperable; MISSING BREAKERS OR FUSES; MISSING COVERS.
- Floors: Bulging or buckling; Hard floor covering damage; Missing flooring tiles; Peeling or missing paint; Rotten or deteriorated subfloor; Water stains, water damage, mold, or mildew.
- Hot Water Heater: MISALIGNED CHIMNEY OR VENTILATION SYSTEM; Inoperable unit or components; Leaking valves, tanks, or pipes; Pressure relief valve missing; Rust or corrosion.
- HVAC System: Convection or radiant heat system covers missing or damaged; Inoperable system; MISALIGNED CHIMNEY OR VENTILATION SYSTEM; Noisy, vibrating, or leaking system; Rust or corrosion.
- Kitchen: Cabinets are missing or damaged; Countertops are missing or damaged; Dishwasher or garbage disposal is inoperable; Plumbing has clogged drains, leaking faucets, or pipes; Range hood or exhaust fans are inoperable; Excessive grease buildup; Range or stove is missing, damaged, or inoperable; Refrigerator is missing, damaged, or inoperable; Sink is damaged or missing.
- Laundry Area: Dryer vent is missing, damaged, or inoperable.
- Lighting: Missing or inoperable fixture.
- Outlets/Switches: Missing outlet or switch; MISSING OR BROKEN COVER PLATE.
- Patio/Porch/Balcony: Baluster or side railings damaged.
- SMOKE DETECTOR: MISSING OR INOPERABLE.
- Stairs: Broken, missing, or damaged steps or handrail.
- Walls: Bulging or buckling; Damaged wall surface; Damaged or deteriorated trim; Peeling or missing paint; Water stains, water damage, mold, or mildew.
- Windows: Cracked, broken, or missing panes; Damaged window sill; Missing or deteriorated caulking, seals, glazing; Inoperable or not lockable; Peeling or missing paint; SECURITY BARS PREVENT EGRESS.

5. Common areas: The common areas must be structurally sound, secure, and functionally adequate for the purposes intended. The basement/garage/carport, restrooms, closets, utility, mechanical, community rooms, day care, halls/corridors, stairs, kitchens, laundry rooms, office, porch, patio, balcony, and trash collection areas, if applicable, must be free of health and safety hazards, operable, and in good repair. All common area ceilings, doors, floors, HVAC, lighting, outlets/switches, smoke detectors, stairs, walls, and windows, to the extent applicable, must be free of health and safety hazards, operable, and in good repair.

Examples of observable deficiencies for inspectable items related to the Common Areas include, but are not limited to, the following. Common Areas include Basement, Garage, Carport, Closet, Utility or Mechanical

Room, Community Room, Halls, Corridors, Stairs, Kitchens, Laundry Room, Lobby, Office, Patio, Porch, Balcony, Restrooms, Storage Areas, Pedestrian or Wheelchair Ramps, Pools and Related Structures, Trash Collection Areas, or Other Community Spaces.

- Missing or damaged balusters or side railings.
- Cabinets missing or damaged.
- Call-for-Aid system (if applicable) inoperable.
- Ceiling: Holes, missing tiles or panels, cracks; Peeling or missing paint; Water stains, water damage, mold, or mildew; Bulging or buckling.
- Chutes: Damaged or missing components.
- Countertops missing or damaged.
- Dishwasher or garbage disposal inoperable.
- Doors: Damaged frames, threshold, lintels, or trim; Damaged hardware or locks; Damaged surface (holes, paint, rust, glass); Damaged or missing screen, storm, or security door; Deteriorated or missing seals on entry door; Missing door.
- Dryer Vent: Missing, damaged, or inoperable.
- Electrical: Blocked access to electrical panel; Burnt breakers, Evidence of leaks or corrosion; Frayed wiring; MISSING BREAKERS; MISSING PLATES OR COVERS; Inoperable GFI; Missing or broken outlets, switches, or cover plates.
- Fencing: Damaged or not intact.
- Floors: Bulging or buckling; Floor covering damaged; Missing flooring or tiles; Peeling painted surface; Rotten or deteriorated subflooring; Water stains, water damage, mold, or mildew.
- Graffiti
- HVAC: Convection or radiant heat system covers missing or damaged; General rust or corrosion; Inoperable unit or system; MISALIGNED CHIMNEY OR VENTILATION SYSTEM; Noisy, vibrating, or leaking.
- Lavatory Sink: Damaged or missing fixture.
- Lighting: Missing, damaged, or inoperable fixture.
- Mailbox: Missing or damaged.
- Plumbing: Clogged drains; Leaking faucet or pipes.
- Range Hood/Exhaust Fans: Excessive grease buildup; Inoperable.
- Range/Stove: Missing, damaged, or inoperable.
- Refrigerator: Missing, damaged, or inoperable.
- Shower/Tub/Sink: Damaged or missing.
- SMOKE DETECTORS: MISSING OR INOPERABLE.
- Stairs: Broken, damaged, or missing steps or handrail.
- Ventilation/Exhaust system inoperable.
- Walls: Bulging or buckling; Damaged surface, peeling or missing paint; Damaged or deteriorated trim; Water stains, water damage, mold, or mildew.
- Water Closet/Toilet: Damaged, clogged, or missing.
- Windows: Cracked, broken, or missing panes; Damaged window sill; Inoperable or missing lock; Missing or deteriorated caulking, seals, or glazing; Peeling or missing paint; SECURITY BARS PREVENT EGRESS.

6. Health and safety concerns: All areas and components of the housing must be free of health and safety hazards. The inspectable areas related to Health and Safety include, air quality, electrical hazards, elevators, emergency/fire exits, flammable materials, garbage and debris, general hazards, infestation, and lead-based paint. For example, the buildings must have fire exits that are not blocked and have handrails that are undamaged and have no other observable deficiencies. The housing must have no evidence of infestation by rats, mice, or other vermin, or of garbage and debris. The housing must have no evidence of electrical hazards, natural hazards, or fire hazards. The dwelling units and common areas must have proper ventilation and be free of mold, odor (e.g., propane, natural gas, methane gas), or other observable deficiencies. The housing must comply with all requirements related to the evaluation and reduction of lead-based paint hazards and have proper certifications of such (see 24 CFR part 35). For projects which include acquisition of occupied housing, life threatening deficiencies in areas of health and safety must be addressed and corrected immediately. Life threatening health and safety deficiencies are identified below by ALL CAPS.

Examples of observable deficiencies for inspectable items related to Health and Safety include, but are not limited to, the following.

- Air Quality: Mold and/or mildew observed; PROPANE, NATURAL GAS, OR METHANE GAS DETECTED; Sewer odor detected.
- ELECTRICAL HAZARDS: EXPOSED WIRES; OPEN PANELS; WATER LEAKS ON OR NEAR ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT.
- Elevator: Elevator is misaligned with floor by $\frac{3}{4}$ inches or more.
- Emergency Fire Exits: EXITS BLOCKED OR UNUSABLE; Missing exit signs.
- Flammable or Combustible Material: Improperly stored and secured.
- Garbage and Debris: Present indoors or outdoors.
- General Hazards: Sharp edges; Tripping; unsafe or missing handrails.
- Infestation: Insects, rats, mice, or other vermin.

7. Compliance with state and local codes: These physical condition standards do not supersede or preempt State and local codes for building and maintenance with which NDHFA-assisted housing must comply. NDHFA-assisted housing must continue to adhere to those codes.

- B.** NDHFA is responsible for conducting physical inspections of NDHFA-assisted housing to determine compliance with these standards, and will conduct such inspections every one to three years at its sole discretion.

XVI. DISASTER MITIGATION

Housing assisted with NDHFA funds and which involve rehabilitation or adaptive reuse must be improved to mitigate the impact of potential disasters (e.g., earthquake, flooding, wildfires) in accordance with state and local codes, ordinances, and requirements.

XVII. CAPITAL NEEDS ASSESSMENT (Applicable Only to Tax Credit and Housing Trust Fund)

All housing assisted by the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) or Housing Trust Fund (HTF) programs involving rehabilitation or adaptive reuse must commission a Capital Needs Assessment (CNA). HTF regulations at 24 CFR Part 93.301(b)(1)(ii) allows projects under 26 units in size to forego a CNA. However, in order to ensure that all needed rehabilitation work is performed so that, upon completion, the project will be decent, safe, sanitary, and in good repair, NDHFA has chosen to establish requirements which exceed 24 CFR Part 93. **All rehabilitation projects assisted through LIHTC or HTF must commission a CNA.**

- A.** The CNA must be completed by a competent, independent third party acceptable to NDHFA, such as a licensed architect or engineer, as well as include interviews with available on-site property management and maintenance personnel to inquire about past repairs and improvements, pending repairs, and existing or chronic physical deficiencies.
- B.** The assessment will include a site visit and a physical inspection of the interior and exterior of all units and structures. The assessment will consider the presence of environmental hazards such as asbestos, lead paint and mold on the site.
- C.** The assessment will include an opinion as to the proposed budget for recommended improvements and should identify critical building systems or components that have reached or exceeded their expected useful lives. If the remaining useful life of any component is less than 50 percent of the expected useful life, immediate rehabilitation will be required unless capitalized. If the remaining useful life of a component is less than the term of the period of affordability, the application package must demonstrate sufficient periodic payments to a replacement reserve to finance the future replacement of the component.
- D.** The assessment will examine and analyze the following:
 - 1. Site, including topography, drainage, pavement, curbing, sidewalks, parking, landscaping, amenities, water, sewer, storm drainage, and gas and electric utilities and lines;
 - 2. Structural systems, both substructure and superstructure, including exterior walls and balconies, exterior doors and windows, roofing system, and drainage;
 - 3. Interiors, including unit and common area finishes (carpeting, tile, plaster walls, paint condition, etc.), unit kitchen finishes, cabinets and appliances, unit bathroom finishes and fixtures, and common area lobbies and corridors; and

4. Mechanical systems, including plumbing and domestic hot water; HVAC, electrical, lighting fixtures, fire protection, and elevators.
- E.** Applicants are advised to also consider the requirements of other funding sources, such as USDA Rural Development, when ordering a CNA.

North Dakota Housing Finance Agency
2624 Vermont Avenue
PO Box 1535
Bismarck, ND 58502-1535

800/292-8621 or 701/328-8072
800/366-6888 (TTY)
www.ndhfa.org · info@ndhfa.org



*Equal Housing
Opportunity*