



Learn About NSPIRE-V Inspection Standards

NEW FEDERAL STANDARDS APPLY TO ALL RENTAL HOUSING VOUCHERS

Starting on February 1, 2027, all rental units that receive federal rental assistance will be inspected using a new protocol implemented nationwide by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The new **NSPIRE-V** Standards (National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate-Voucher) replace the standards that were used before, the Housing Quality Standards (HQS), and apply to housing that receives funding from the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Project-Based Voucher (PBV) programs.



Key Aspects of NSPIRE-V

- **Updates Inspection Checklist:** NSPIRE-V modernizes and replaces HQS checklists, which were established in the 1970s.
- **Focus on Health and Safety:** NSPIRE-V prioritizes functional defects, fire safety, electrical components and environmental hazards over minor cosmetic flaws.
- **Consistent Standards:** NSPIRE-V aligns the inspection of rental units supported by vouchers closer to the inspections that apply to multifamily housing.

Inspections During the Transition Period

When a rental unit is inspected, the landlord must follow the inspection requirements that were in effect on the day the inspection took place. These requirements apply throughout the entire inspection process and do not switch over, even if they take place in between the transition from HQS to NSPIRE-V.

Example: SDHC conducts an HQS inspection on an apartment assisted by federal rental assistance on January 4, 2027. The inspection fails and requires a correction and a reinspection that is scheduled to take place after February 1, 2027, when the NSPIRE-V standards go into effect. The corrections and verification process will continue to follow the HQS inspection standards.



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Key Changes

Below are some of the key changes to the inspection standards included in NSPIRE-V.

- Updates life-threatening and severe deficiencies
- NSPIRE-V standards will change the timeframe to correct failed inspection items on several items. There are also new criteria on what will be classified as failed inspection items.
- Establishes three inspectable areas:
 - **UNIT:** The interior components of an individual dwelling, where the resident lives.
 - **INSIDE:** Refers to the common areas and building systems within the building, but not inside of a unit. This could include laundry facilities, workout rooms, etc.
 - **OUTSIDE:** Refers to the building site, building exterior components and any building systems located outside of the building and unit. This includes things like playgrounds, sidewalks, and air-conditioning units.
- Smoke Alarm Standards are consistent with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 72 – National Fire Alarm and Signaling Code.
- The Fire Door Standard details the specific function, operability and structural integrity requirements for fire doors.
- Sets minimum temperature requirements during the colder months of October 1 to March 31, and requires a permanent heating source. If the interior temperature is below 64 degrees Fahrenheit, it will require a 24-hour correction. If the interior temperature is 64 to 67.9 degrees Fahrenheit, it will require a 30-day correction.
- Includes criteria for when guardrails and handrails are required.
- Establishes infestation deficiencies based on discrete levels of observations, with clarification on which pests are included in this standard.
- Deficiencies based on observed mold conditions or elevated moisture levels are measured using a moisture meter.
- Includes Ground-Fault Circuit Interrupter (GFCI) protection as a requirement.
- Sets affirmative habitability requirements for bathrooms, kitchens and other rooms utilized by residents.
- Inspector will be required to take pictures of all failed items.

Stay Informed

SDHC's website has additional resources for landlords about the new NSPIRE-V inspections. This includes a list of the conditions that require correction within 24 hours (NSPIRE-V Life-Threatening Defects) as well as a checklist with common things that lead to failed NSPIRE-V inspections. To visit SDHC's Inspection Page, go to <https://sdhc.org/inspections/>

SDHC encourages landlords to also review the full list of updates on HUD's NSPIRE-V website, <https://www.hud.gov/reac/npire-standards>