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# Harris County Minimum Property Standards

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Harris County  
Community Services  
Department

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Revised August 1, 2023

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## Change Log

Version	Change Date	Page #	Section	Change
MPS 2018	7/6/2023	75, 85	VI.a. 2.c.	Deleted: The unit shall not be required to be equipped with ceiling fans
MPS 2018	7/6/2023	80	VI.a. 4.e	Added clarification for accessibility requirement for attic access
MPS 2018	7/6/2023	– Entire document	All sections	Made corrections to punctuation, grammar, sentence structure, spacing and alignment.
MPS 2018	7/20/23	32	III.h.11.	Added statement to clarify treads for stairs
MPS 2018	7/20/23	32	III.h.14.	Added statement for existing telephone jacks
MPS 2018	7/20/23	35	III.i.2.a.	Added statement regarding egress doors
MPS 2018	7/20/23	36	III.i.2.a.	Added statement regarding egress windows
MPS 2018	7/20/23	40	V.a.3.	Updated information on SEER
MPS 2018	7/20/23	40	V.a.3.	Added Carbon Monoxide combination to statement
MPS 2018	7/20/23	45	V.a.5.f.	Added statement for attic pull-down stairs
MPS 2018	7/20/23	48 & 49	V.a.7.c.	NEC updates
MPS 2018	7/20/23	49	V.a.8.c.	Updated statement on duct replacement

MPS 2018	7/20/23	50	V.a.9.b.	Clarification on exhaust for kitchen appliances
MPS 2018	7/20/23	51	V.a.9.c.	Cabinets to include ADA approved pulls/handles
MPS 2018	7/20/23	52	V.a.9.h.	NEC updates
MPS 2018	7/20/23	53	V.a.9.k.	Updated statement on tread height for stairs
MPS 2018	7/20/23	55	V.a.10.6.	Updated statement on smoke detectors to include carbon monoxide combination
MPS 2018	7/20/23	55	V.a.10.c.	Included roof pitch
MPS 2018	7/20/23	56	V.a.11.e.	Updated statement to include 90° bends
MPS 2018	7/20/23	56	V.a.12.	Included statement regarding egress and wheel stops
MPS 2018	7/20/23	58	V.b.2.c.	Updated information on SEER
MPS 2018	7/20/23	62	V.b.3.j.	Updated information on drainage near house
MPS 2018	7/20/23	74	V.b.8.o.	Updated statement on tread height for stairs
MPS 2018	7/20/23	81	VI.a.2.c.	Updated statement on interior features (smoke detectors, ice maker, etc.)
MPS 2018	7/20/23	86	VI.a.4.e.	Clarification of information on pull-down stairs
MPS 2018	7/20/23	87	VI.a.4.e.	Information to include scuttle panel

MPS 2018	7/20/23	89	VI.a.8.a.	Clarification of information for vents on appliances
MPS 2018	7/20/23	91	VI.a.8.l.	Removed section regarding Ceiling Fans
MPS 2018	7/20/23	93	VI.a.9.b.	Egress statement removed
MPS 2018	7/2023	113	Appendix A	Updated section on Building Codes

## Harris County Minimum Property Standards

### I. Preface/Introduction

The standards contained in this document establish the Harris County Minimum Property Standards for the acquisition, rehabilitation, and/or new construction of single-family and multi-family properties that are federally funded through the Harris County Community Services Department (CSD). 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.

The Harris County Minimum Property Standards have been designed to include and expand on the requirements of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Section 8 Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and meet the requirement to establish minimum property standards under the HOME Investment Partnerships Program. The standards in this document apply to any housing projects that receive funding through the HOME Program, the Community Development Block Grant Program, or other CSD funds made available for the purpose of acquiring, rehabilitating, or constructing housing. Many of the requirements and standards of this document exceed the requirements of the HUD Section 8 HQS.

The intent of these requirements is to establish minimum standards and criteria for the health and safety of the home's occupants and to repair/renovate/construct quality housing units. All Single Family and Multi-family housing units including senior and special needs housing that receive federal assistance through CSD may be inspected prior to, during construction, and upon completion of construction depending on the type of activity, for compliance with these requirements. A year-end warranty inspection may also be performed on Single Family units that undergo housing rehabilitation and repair services. Multi-family housing units are inspected initially, upon completion, and at least annually throughout the affordability period for compliance with these requirements.

Additional requirements:

The Harris County Minimum Property Standards require compliance with:

- The applicable codes as outlined in appendix A
- All units built before 1978 are required to comply with the lead-based paint regulations as described in 24 CFR part 35. Units built before 1978 shall be tested by a certified lead-based paint professional, if visual cracking, scaling, peeling, chipping, or loose paint is discovered during the inspection.
- Multi-Family units constructed prior to 1967 where asbestos is suspected or where reasonable evidence of asbestos exists will be required to have an asbestos certificate to certify that no hazardous materials are present, including finishes, adhesives, or non-encapsulated building materials. The discovery of any asbestos will require total and verified remediation prior to continuation of any further construction activities.

- Other Governing entities such as a Homeowner’s Association, Local and Federal regulations pertaining to the zoning, traffic, drainage, floodplains and fire must also be observed.
- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Minimum Property Standards at 24 CFR 200.925 and 24 CFR 200.926.
- ADA Standards for Accessible Design found at 28 CFR Part 36.
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which prohibits discrimination against the handicapped in any federally assisted program. Single family units to be constructed will be made accessible as needed upon request of a prospective buyer if the nature of the disability of an expected occupant so requires in accordance with the Section 504 requirements of C.F.R. §8.29.
- Multi-family dwellings, as defined at 24 C.F.R. § 100.201, to be constructed must also meet the design and construction requirements at 24 C.F.R. § 100.205, which implement the Fair Housing Act (42 U.S.C. 3601-3619).

### **Reader Advisory**

Readers of this document are advised that this document alone is not detailed enough to describe all of the codes, and standards which apply to the housing activities identified here. It is advised that contractors and developers carrying out federally funded housing projects have copies of the various codes and standards referenced in this document and a working knowledge of how to meet them.

## **II. Definitions**

**Egress** – A permanent and unobstructed means of exiting from the dwelling in an emergency escape or rescue situation.

**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.

**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).

**Multi-Family Unit-** A generally tenant-occupied residence in a project which consists of not less than five (5) dwelling units on one site.

**Single Family Unit** – A one- to four-family residence detached or attached to other housing structures.

**Single Room Occupancy or SRO** –housing consisting of single-room dwelling units that are the

primary residence of its occupant or occupants. If the SRO project involves conversion of non-residential space, or reconstruction, each unit must contain either food preparation or sanitary facilities (and may contain both). If the SRO project involves acquisition or rehabilitation of an existing residential structure or hotel, neither food preparation nor sanitary facilities are required to be in the units. If the units do not contain sanitary facilities, the building must contain sanitary facilities that are shared by tenants. SRO does not include facilities for students.

### III. Minimum Acceptable Standards- Rental Housing and Acquisition of Existing Multi-Family Rental Housing (no rehabilitation or construction)

#### a. Overview/Applicability

This minimum standard applies to multi-family rental housing units that currently receive federal assistance, normally called a housing subsidy or voucher, or were acquired/developed/rehabilitated using federal assistance. Units are inspected for compliance with this code at least annually or upon initial move-in by a resident who is qualified to receive rental assistance. This standard equal or exceed the Housing Quality Standards of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

#### b. Minimum Standards for Basic Equipment and Facilities

1. **KITCHENS** - Every dwelling unit, except for Single Room Occupancy (SRO) shall have a kitchen room or kitchenette equipped with the following:
  - a. **Kitchen Sink** - It shall contain an approved kitchen sink, properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and maintained in working order.
  - b. **Stove** - It shall contain a stove (gas or electric), properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
  - c. **Refrigerator** - It shall contain a refrigerator, properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
  - d. **In properties** - where tenants are required to furnish their own appliances, the landlord shall furnish sufficient space and all required electrical/gas hookups, properly installed, to facilitate the user of said appliances.
2. **TOILET ROOM REQUIRED** - Every dwelling unit, except as otherwise permitted for rooming houses, shall contain a room, which is equipped with a flush water closet and a properly installed lavatory. All lavatories shall be properly connected to both hot and cold running water, under pressure, and shall be properly maintained in working order. All flush water closets shall be properly connected to the water supply, under pressure and shall be maintained in working order.
3. **SHARED TOILET FACILITIES** - Shared toilet rooms shall be equipped with a flush water closet and lavatory basin and shall be connected and maintained as provided in **Section 2** above. In SROs and rooming house type structures, at least one (1) toilet and one (1) lavatory basin, properly connected as set forth above, shall be supplied for each eight (8) persons or fractions thereof, residing within a rooming house, including members of the operator's family, whenever they share the use of said facilities; provided, that in rooming houses where rooms are let only to males, flush urinals may be substituted for not more than 1/2 of the required number of toilets.
4. **BATH REQUIRED** - Every dwelling unit shall contain a bathtub and/or shower except

in the case of SROs with communal bathroom facilities.

Potable water supply piping, water discharge outlets, backflow prevention devices or similar equipment shall not be so located as to make possible their submergence in any contaminated or polluted liquid or substance. Said bathtub and/or shower may be in the same room as the flush water closet and lavatory or said bathtub and/or shower may be in a separate room.

In all cases, these facilities shall be properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and shall be maintained in working order.

In rooming house type structures, at least one (1) bathtub and/or shower, properly connected as set forth above, shall be supplied for each eight (8) persons or fraction thereof residing within rooming house, including members of the operator's family whenever they share the use of said facilities.

5. **PRIVACY IN ROOM CONTAINING TOILET AND BATH** - Every toilet and every bath shall be contained in a room or within separate rooms, which affords privacy to a person within said room or rooms.

Toilets and bathrooms shall have doors with a privacy-type lock and such doors, lock and hardware shall be operable and maintained in working order.

6. **LOCATION OF COMMUNAL TOILETS AND BATHS** - Every communal bath required to be provided in accordance with other provisions, shall be located within a room(s) accessible to the occupants of each dwelling unit sharing such facilities, without going through a dwelling unit of another occupant and without going outside of the dwelling.

In SROs and rooming houses, communal facilities shall be located on the same floor as the dwelling unit, whose occupants share the use of such facilities.

7. **HOT AND COLD WATER LINES TO BATH AND KITCHEN** - Every dwelling shall have supplied water-heating facilities which are properly installed; are maintained in working condition and free of leaks; are properly connected to any required hot water lines; and are capable of heating water to be drawn for every bath as well as general usage.

Hot water storage associated with water heating facilities shall be not less than the following minimum capacities:

- |   |                    |
|---|--------------------|
| a. One (1) dwelling unit                                  | 30 gallons         |
| b. Two (2) dwelling units                                 | 40 gallons         |
| c. Three (3) or more dwelling units<br>and rooming houses | 50 gallons or more |

Sizes and/or number of water heaters shall be based upon the number of units served. No water heaters shall be allowed in bathrooms or closets. All water heaters shall be properly vented and sealed and shall be equipped with a pressure relief valve and drip leg.

The local rehabilitation division/department and or the applicable local building inspection division/department may adjust the above-required capacities upwards or downwards based on the type and recovery time of the water heater being installed.

8. **CONNECTION OF SANITARY FACILITIES TO WATER AND SEWER/SEPTIC SYSTEM** - Every kitchen sink, toilet, lavatory basin and bathtub/shower, shall be maintained in working condition and be properly connected to an approved water and sewer or septic system.

9. **EXITS** - Every exit from every dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall comply with the following requirements:
- a. It shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair;
  - b. It shall be unobstructed at all times;
  - c. All stairways and steps of 2 or more risers shall have at least 1 handrail, and all stairways and steps, which are 5 feet or more in width, or which are open on both sides, shall have a handrail on each side;
  - d. Every dwelling unit shall have two (2) independent means of egress;
  - e. All handrails shall be not less than 30" vertically above the nose of the stair treads and not less than 36" above the stairway platform;
  - f. All balconies and platforms, which are 30" or more above grade, shall have a protective railing not less than 36" in height above the balcony or platform level;
  - g. All multiple dwellings, one- and two-family residences exempted, shall have a second exit stairway or approved fire escape available to all occupants from the second floor and above of all such structures;
  - h. All stairs and steps shall have a rise height of not more than 8" and a tread width of not less than 9". This requirement may be waived by Harris County CSD if in an existing structure it would be impossible or cost-prohibitive to meet this requirement. In such cases, new stairs could be installed which have the same rise and run as the old.

10. **SMOKE DETECTORS** - All residential structures shall have U. L. approved “hard wired” smoke detectors or battery-operated smoke detectors, properly installed and located near bedrooms and sleeping areas. All smoke detectors shall be operable.

c. **Minimum Standards for Light, Ventilation, and Heating**

1. **REQUIRED WINDOW AREA** - Every habitable room, provided such rooms are adequately lighted, shall have at least one (1) open air space. The minimum total window area, measured between stops, for every habitable room shall be as follows:
- a. 1/12 of the floor area if two or more separate windows exist, or;
  - b. 1/10 of the floor area if only one window exists;
  - c. A minimum of 12 square feet of window area is required in habitable rooms other than kitchens;
  - d. A kitchen may pass without a window area, provided, there is a mechanical means of ventilation which is maintained in working order.

Whenever the only window in a room is a skylight type window at the top of the room, the total window area of such skylight shall be equal to at least 15% of the total floor area of such room. Skylight type windows, if less than 15% of the total floor area, shall be increased to 15% of the total floor area unless another window is to be installed which will provide adequate light and ventilation.

2. **ADEQUATE VENTILATION REQUIRED** - Every habitable room shall have at least one window or skylight which can easily be opened, or other such device as will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size or minimum skylight type window size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

3. **LIGHT AND VENTILATION REQUIREMENTS FOR BATHROOMS, TOILET ROOMS, AND KITCHENS** - Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.
4. **ELECTRIC OUTLETS AND SERVICE REQUIRED** – Where there is suitable electricity available from supply lines, which are not more than 300 feet away from a dwelling, all existing dwellings shall be supplied with electrical services.

- a. Every habitable room within such dwelling shall contain **at a minimum**, two (2) separate and remote wall type electric convenience outlets. Habitable rooms over 120 square feet, shall contain, **at a minimum**, three (3) separate and remote wall type electric convenience outlets. All newly installed outlets shall be of the grounded type. Temporary wiring or extension cords **shall not be used as permanent wiring**.
- b. Every habitable room shall have at least one (1) ceiling or wall type electric light fixture, controlled by a wall switch, or a wall type grounded electric convenience outlet controlled by a remote switch.
- c. Every toilet room, bathroom, laundry, furnace room, and hallway (hallway where applicable) shall contain at least 1 supplied ceiling or wall type electric light fixture, controlled by a wall switch, and at least 1 wall type grounded electric convenience outlet. Wall type convenience outlets used in bathrooms and kitchens shall be the GFCI type.
- d. Every kitchen shall be wired to meet the requirements of the N. E. C., based on the size and layout of each individual kitchen. GFCI's should also encompass the counter top area.
- e. All heavy-duty appliances, i. e., window air conditioners, freezers, refrigerators, electric stoves, washers, electric dryers, microwaves, etc., shall be supplied with their own proper outlet(s) on separate circuits, as applicable.
- f. Receptacle convenience outlets installed on the exterior of the structure or on open porches, breezeways, garages, utility rooms, etc. shall be of the GFCI type.
- g. A wall switch shall control all wall and/or ceiling type lighting fixtures, except that porcelain type fixtures such as those used in attics may be controlled with a proper pull chain. All old pendant type lighting fixtures shall be removed and replaced with properly installed non-pendant type fixtures.
- h. All electric lighting fixtures installed on the exterior shall be of the type approved for exterior use.
- i. All broken and/or missing switch plates and / or receptacle plates shall be replaced.
- j. All outlets and fixtures shall be properly installed, shall be maintained in working condition, and shall be connected to the source of electric power in a proper manner and shall be in accordance with the electrical code of the city and / or the N. E. C., as applicable.
- k. If a unit does not have a central air-conditioning system and central air will not be installed, at a minimum a proper grounded outlet shall be installed under one (1) window in each habitable room to allow the occupant(s) to install window air conditioning units.
- l. All electric panel boxes shall be properly labeled.
- m. The minimum electrical service for each dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall be 150 amps, (in one-bedroom unit, 100 amps is acceptable) or as adjusted and approved, in writing, by the Chief Electrical Inspector of the City.

5. **HEATING FACILITIES** - All heating facilities shall be properly installed, be maintained in working condition and be capable of adequately heating all habitable rooms, bathrooms, and toilet rooms contained therein, or intended for use by the occupants

thereof, to a temperature of at least 70 degrees F. (21 degrees C.) at a distance 3 feet above the floor when the outside temperature is at or below 0 degrees F. Every supplied central heating system shall comply with all of the following requirements:

- a. The central heating unit shall be safe and in good working condition;
- b. Every heat duct, steam pipe, and hot water pipe shall be free of leaks and shall function so that an adequate amount of heat is delivered where intended;
- c. Every seal between any of the sections of a hot air furnace shall be airtight so noxious gases and fumes will not escape into the heat ducts;
- d. If there is no existing flue liner, a double-walled metalbestos liner shall be installed. The liner shall meet or exceed the requirements of the local building code and shall be installed according to same;
- e. All fuel burning heating systems shall be inspected by a qualified furnace inspector to determine if the unit is safe, free from carbon-monoxide leakage and capable of supplying heat as required above.

Each dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall be supplied with its own heating system.

Any dwelling and/or dwelling unit having as its **only** source of heat, space heaters or floor furnaces shall have such units removed and replaced with a proper central heating system.

All mechanical work shall be inspected and approved by the City's local mechanical inspector and/or the building inspection department or by a person knowledgeable in mechanical heating systems.

**6. LIGHTING OF PUBLIC HALLS AND STAIRWAYS**

- a. Public halls and stairways in every dwelling containing two (2) to four (4) dwelling units, shall be provided with convenient wall-mounted light switches controlling an adequate lighting system that will provide at least five (5) foot candles of illumination on all parts thereof, and which may be turned on when needed. An emergency circuit is not required for this lighting.
- b. Public hall and stairways in every dwelling containing five (5) or more dwelling units shall be lighted at all times with an artificial lighting system. Said system shall provide at least 5-foot candles of illumination on all parts thereof at all times by means of properly located electric light fixtures, provided, that such artificial lighting may be omitted from sunrise to sunset where an adequate amount of natural light is provided. Whenever the occupancy of the building exceeds 100 persons, the artificial lighting system as required herein, shall be on an emergency circuit.
- c. The required intensity of illumination shall apply to both natural and artificial lighting.

7. **SCREENS REQUIRED** - Every window opening to outdoor space, which is used or intended to be used for ventilation, shall be supplied with screens covering all of the window areas required for ventilation. The material used for all such screens shall be not less than 16 mesh per inch and shall be properly installed, maintained and repaired to prevent the entrance of flies, mosquitoes or other insects.

Half screens on windows may be allowed, provided, they are properly installed and are bug and insect tight.

8. **SUPPLIED HEATING TO DWELLINGS OR PARTS THEREOF** - Every owner or operator of any dwelling who rents, leases, or lets for human habitation, any dwelling unit contained within such dwelling, on terms either expressed or implied, to supply or furnish heat to the occupants there of, shall maintain therein a minimum temperature of 70 degrees F. (21 degrees C.) at a distance 3 feet above the floor at all times when the outdoor temperature is at or below 0 degrees F.

Whenever a dwelling is heated by means of a furnace, boiler or other heating apparatus under the control of the owner or the operator, in the absence of a written contract or agreement to the contrary, said owner or operator shall be deemed to have contracted, undertaken, or bound himself/herself to furnish heat in accordance with the provisions of this section to every dwelling unit which contains radiators, furnace heat, duct outlets or other heating apparatus outlets, and to every communal bathroom, communal toilet room and/or communal laundry room located within such dwelling.

- a. Every central heating unit, space heater, water heater, and cooking appliance shall be located and installed in such a manner so as to afford protection against involvement of egress facilities or egress routes in the event of uncontrolled fires in the structure (s);
- b. Every fuel burning heating unit or water heater shall be effectively vented in a safe manner to a chimney or duct leading to the exterior of the building. The chimney duct and vents shall be of such a design as to assure proper draft, shall be adequately supported and shall be kept clean and in a state of maintenance and repair;
- c. No fuel-burning furnace shall be located in any sleeping room or bathroom unless provided with adequate ducting for air supply from the exterior, and the combustion chamber for such heating unit shall be sealed from the room in an airtight manner. Gas water heaters are prohibited in bathrooms, sleeping rooms, and closets;
- d. Every steam or hot water boiler and every water heater shall be protected against overheating by appropriate temperature and pressure limit controls;
- e. Every gaseous or liquid fuel burning heating unit and water heater shall be equipped with electronic ignition or with a pilot light and an automatic control to interrupt the flow of fuel to the unit in the event of failure of the ignition device. All such heating units with plenum shall have a limit control to prevent

overheating.

9. **ENERGY CONSERVATION** - All structures shall comply with energy conservation measures to the maximum extent feasible. These measures include, but are not limited to:
- a. Installation of insulation or the installation of additional insulation, especially in the attic/ceiling areas: The recommended level for ceiling insulation is to an R-30, wherever possible;
  - b. Weather-stripping;
  - c. Caulking;
  - d. Replacement of ineffective or inefficient heating/cooling systems;
  - e. Replacement of single pane window units with thermal units or, the installation of combination storm windows if the single window units will not be replaced.

**d. Minimum Standards for Maintenance**

1. **MAINTENANCE OF FOUNDATIONS, EXTERIOR WALLS, ROOFS, SOFFITS & FASCIA**  
Every foundation, exterior wall, roof, soffit, fascia and all component parts shall be weathertight, watertight, rodent proof, and insect-proof and shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.
- a. All exterior surface material shall be protected from weather and the elements by lead-free paint or other protective coatings i.e., stain, in accordance with acceptable standards. The exception to painting shall be all types of exterior materials acceptable to weathering without deterioration, i.e., siding. All siding material shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.
  - b. In units constructed on or before 1978, treatment of all applicable surfaces, (interior and exterior) will be in full compliance with the Lead Base Paint regulations, as found at 24 CFR Part 35, including all future amendments as published by HUD.
2. **MAINTENANCE OF INTERIOR WALLS, FLOORS, CEILINGS, DOORS & WINDOWS-**  
Every interior partition, wall, floor, ceiling, door, window, and all component parts shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair, and shall be maintained in such a manner so as to be capable of being kept in a clean and sanitary condition.
- All interior doors shall be capable of affording the privacy for which they were intended.
3. **RAINWATER DRAINAGE FROM ROOF** - All rainwater shall be so drained and conveyed from every roof so as not to cause dampness/ damage to walls, ceilings, or floors of any habitable rooms, bathroom, toilet room, laundry room, or any other type of room therein. If present, all rainwater draining devices such as gutters and downspouts shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair. Ground areas around buildings shall be sloped away from the foundation walls to eliminate low areas where standing water may collect.

4. **MAINTENANCE OF WINDOWS & EXTERIOR DOORS** - Every front, rear and side door shall be not less than 2' 8" in width and not less than 6' 6" in height, except where larger doors and doorways are required to accommodate handicapped access. In existing structures, if replacement to meet these requirements would be impossible or cost-prohibitive said requirements may be waived, in writing.

Every window and exterior door shall be substantially tight and rodent-proof and be kept in a state of maintenance and repair. In addition, the following requirements shall be met:

- a. All exterior doors to the outside or to a common public hall shall be solid core and be equipped with adequate security locks. All windows accessible from ground level without the aid of mechanical devices shall have a security device/lock;
- b. Every window sash shall be fully equipped with glass windowpanes, which are without cracks or holes, and all panes shall be secured with an adequate amount of putty. Said putty shall not be cracked, broken or missing;
- c. Every window sash shall be in good condition and shall fit tightly within its frame;
- d. Every window, other than a fixed window, shall be capable of being easily opened and shall be held in position by window hardware, not broom handles, sticks or other such items;
- e. Every exterior and interior door, when closed, shall fit well within its frame;
- f. Every exterior and interior door, door hinge, and door latch and/or lock shall be maintained in good working condition;
- g. Every window, door and frame shall be constructed and maintained in such relation to the adjacent wall construction, so as to exclude rain, as completely as possible and to the maximum extent feasible substantially exclude wind from entering the dwelling or structure, i.e., it must have adequate weather-stripping.

5. **MAINTENANCE OF STAIRWAYS AND PORCHES** - Every interior and exterior stairway, every porch and every appurtenance thereto shall be so constructed as to be safe to use and capable of supporting the load that normal use may cause to be placed thereon; and shall be kept in sound condition and in a state of maintenance and repair, including compliance with the Lead Base Paint Regulations, if applicable.

6. **MAINTENANCE OF SUPPLIED PLUMBING FIXTURES** - Every supplied plumbing fixture and water and waste pipe shall be properly installed in accordance with the plumbing code of the City and maintained in safe, sanitary working condition, free from leaks, defects and obstructions.

7. **MAINTENANCE OF BATHROOM, TOILET ROOMS, KITCHEN AND UTILITY ROOM FLOORS** - Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen and utility room floor surface shall be

constructed and maintained so as to be substantially impervious to water and so as to permit such floor to be easily kept in a clean and sanitary condition.

Indoor-outdoor type carpeting, when properly installed, shall be allowed in bathrooms, toilet rooms, kitchens and utility rooms.

8. **SAFE AND EFFECTIVE FUNCTIONING OF SUPPLIED FACILITIES** - Every supplied facility, piece of equipment, or utility which is required under this section, shall be constructed or installed so it will function properly and shall be maintained in working condition.

**e. Minimum Space, Use, and Location Requirements**

1. **MINIMUM CEILING HEIGHT** - Wherever possible, no habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 7'6". At least 1/2 of the floor area of every habitable room located above the 1st floor shall have a ceiling height of 7'6", and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than 5' shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining maximum floor area;
  - a. A ceiling height of a minimum of 7' is acceptable in bathrooms, toilet rooms, hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.
  - b. All rooms, except kitchen and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of 7'.
2. **MAINTENANCE OF SLEEPING, BATH, AND TOILET ROOMS** - No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.
3. **OCCUPANTS TO HAVE ACCESS TO SANITARY FACILITIES** - Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.
4. **CLOSETS AND COUNTER AREAS** - Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6'-0", located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two (2) or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least 4 square feet per bedroom. This storage requirement does not necessarily have to be located in the bedrooms.

All kitchens shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of eight square feet with a minimum vertical clearance of 12" and a horizontal width of at least 12". Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 4 square feet of counter area.

5. **PEST CONTROL/EXTERMINATION**-- Units with visible infestation should be properly exterminated. Termites can cause serious problems in the wood structural components of a dwelling and may go undetected for a long period of time. In the case of acquisition, a pest inspection shall be required if the dwelling unit or other structures on the property show evidence of termite infestation, and a termite certificate will be required prior to closing.

**f. Maintenance of Non-Dwelling Structures**

1. **MAINTENANCE OF NON-DWELLING STRUCTURES** - Every foundation, wall, roof, window, door, hatchway, and every other entryway of every non-dwelling structure shall also be so maintained as to prevent the structure from becoming a harborage for rodents, snakes, vermin, and insects, and shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.
2. **PROTECTION OF EXTERIOR WOOD SURFACES** - All exterior wood surfaces of all non-dwelling structures shall be properly protected from the elements and from decay and rot by lead-free paint or other approved protective coatings. If units are constructed on or before 1978, treatment of all applicable surfaces shall be in full compliance with the Lead Base Paint regulations as found at 24 CFR Part 35, including all future amendments as published by HUD.
3. **MAINTENANCE OF FENCES** - Every fence shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair or shall be removed. Replacement is optional for single family rental properties.  
  
If a fence is to be removed and replaced said installation shall be in conformance with all local requirements.
4. **GRADING AND DRAINAGE OF PREMISES** - Every premises shall be graded and maintained so no stagnant water will accumulate or stand on the premises, or within or around any building or structure located on the premises. Ground areas around buildings shall be sloped away from walls to eliminate low areas where standing water may collect.
5. **MAINTENANCE OF RETAINING WALLS, SIDEWALKS, DRIVEWAYS & PATIOS** - All retaining walls shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair. All sidewalks, service walks driveways & patios shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair, free from obstructions, defects, uneven joints, tripping hazards, etc.
6. **MAINTENANCE OF PREMISES** - All areas and all parts of the premises upon which any

dwelling or dwelling units are located, and all areas adjacent thereto and a part of the premises, shall be maintained and kept in a clean and sanitary condition. This shall include, but not be limited to, the cutting of grass/weeds; removal of dead trees and brush; removal of abandoned and junked automobiles; automobile bodies, chassis and parts, trailers; removal of inoperable machines and appliances; lumber piles and building materials not being used in actual construction; tin cans; broken glass; broken furniture, boxes, crates and other debris; rubbish, junk and garbage.

7. **WATER SUPPLY - CONNECT TO WATER MAIN** - Every owner of a dwelling situated on property which abuts any street or alley in which a water main is laid, shall cause the water service system of his/her dwelling to be connected to such main.
8. **ABANDONED WELLS AND CISTERNS** - Every owner of a dwelling, which contains an abandoned well, or cistern on the premises, shall close and fill them in a proper manner.

#### **IV. Minimum Acceptable Standards- Acquisition of Existing Single-Family Housing (no rehabilitation or construction)**

##### **a. Overview/Applicability**

The following minimum property standards (MPS) apply to pre-existing single-family units (not newly constructed units) acquired in whole or in part with funds administered by CSD including downpayment assistance to eligible homebuyers. The intent of these requirements is to establish minimum property standards and criteria for the health and safety of the home's occupants and to ensure the value and the durability of the home. Homes are the collateral for deferred downpayment assistance loans and lack of durability can increase the financial risk in the event of default.

More specifically, the model codes do not contain any minimum requirements for the durability of such items as doors, windows, gutters and downspouts, painting and wall coverings, kitchen cabinets and carpeting. This MPS includes minimum standards for these and other items to ensure the value of the home is not decreased by the deterioration of these components.

The inspection for conformance with these standards is of conditions that are present and visible at the time of the inspection prior to acquisition including the assessment of all equipment that is present in normal operating modes. The inspection does not require the dismantling or removal of appliances and mechanical-electrical fixtures including covers.

##### **b. Lead Based Paint Inspection/Clearance Report**

Units built before 1978 shall be inspected and evaluated for the presence or absence of lead-based paint (LPB) in accordance with 24 CFR Part 35 requirements.

Units built before 1978 must be inspected by a Lead Base Paint Inspector or Risk Assessor to evaluate and determine the presence or absence of lead-based paint on painted or coated surfaces. If the presence of lead is detected during the evaluation, any deteriorated surfaces must be stabilized in accordance with the requirements of paint stabilization of the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 35.

A copy of the clearance report verifying the stabilization and other lead hazard reduction efforts have been completed to ensure a lead free and safe environment for the occupants shall be provided.

In the best interest of the buyer, CSD reserves the right to rescind federal assistance for acquisition when LBP is detected.

##### **c. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

- The property must be free of those foreseeable hazards and adverse conditions that may affect the health and safety of the occupants, the structural soundness of the dwelling or which may impair the customary use and enjoyment of the property.
- The dwelling unit must be provided with space necessary to assure suitable living, sleeping, cooking and dining accommodations, sanitary facilities and facilities necessary to create a safe, functional, healthful, durable, and energy efficient living environment.
- Defective construction, poor workmanship, evidence of continuing settlement, excessive dampness, leakage, decay, termites, or other conditions impairing the safety, sanitation or structural soundness of the dwelling shall render the property unacceptable, until the defects or conditions have been remedied and the probability of further damage eliminated.

#### **1. Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all-weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and maintained by a Homeowners Association or joint maintenance agreement.
  - Private streets shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

#### **2. Access onto Property**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- The backyard shall be accessible without passing through any other unit.
  - For a row type dwelling, the access may be by means of alley, an easement, by passage through the dwelling or by other acceptable means.

#### **3. Service**

- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining properties.
- If a single drain line in the building serves more than one unit, the building drain clean-outs must be accessible from the exterior. Exterior clean-outs shall be installed in an area and in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard.

#### **4. Utilities**

- Utilities must be independent for each dwelling unit except that common services, water, sewer, gas, and electricity, may be provided for the dwelling units under a single mortgage or ownership.
- Dwelling units shall have separate utility service shut-offs.
- Dwelling units shall have individual meters for individual utilities.
- Individual utilities shall not pass over, under or through another unit.
  - Unless provision is made for repair and maintenance of utilities without trespass on adjoining properties.
  - Or legal provision is made for permanent right of access for maintenance and repair of utilities.
- Other facilities must be independent for each dwelling unit, except common services such as laundry and storage space or heating, may be provided for two to four living unit buildings under a single mortgage.

#### **5. Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

- Power lines including low voltage power lines may not pass over the dwelling.
- Power lines may have to be removed or repositioned.
- Overhead wires from the street to the electrical service panel shall be no lower than 10 feet above ground and shall not come in contact with tree branches or other obstacles and shall not be reachable from nearby windows or other accessible areas.

#### **6. Landscaping, Lawn Areas and Trees**

In general, landscaping including lawn, shrubs, trees, and plantings should be compatible with the neighborhood and comparable homes.

- Sod (grass) shall be installed as necessary to establish consistency with comparable units.
- At a minimum, it shall be required that the front and both sides of the unit shall be fully sodded (grass) up to the fence/property lines. Additional sod at other areas may be required to establish consistency.
- Additional sod (grass) may also be installed to stop erosion. Eroded areas shall be filled and graded as necessary before installing sod.
- Lawn shall be appropriately mowed and trimmed at the time of the inspection.
- Trees:
  - Trees that threaten the structure shall be trimmed or removed.
  - Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.

#### **7. Backyard/Fence**

- The unit must have a fully fenced-in backyard with an access gate.

- The fence shall extend from the rear and side property lines to the rear of the structure.
- The fence must completely enclose the backyard and any structures located at the back of the property, including detached garage, storage and other structures.
- The fence shall provide security and privacy.
- The fence gate and gate hardware shall operate smoothly.
- The fence and fence gate must be free of any significant defects and irregularities.
- Deteriorated fence planks, missing fence planks and other defective or missing fence components shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Fence planks and other fence components shall be securely fastened in place.
- The backyard (ground) must be reasonably graded.
  - Holes or depressions shall be filled to correct drainage problems and remove safety hazards.
- The backyard shall be clear and free of weeds and other wild growth at the time of the inspection.

**8. Trash and Debris**

The property shall be free from any accumulation of trash, rubbish and garbage, dead branches, discarded items, and other conditions conducive to infestation of insects, vermin and other pests.

**9. Drainage**

- The site must be graded to provide positive drainage away from the perimeter walls of the unit and to prevent standing water (ponding) on the site.
- The ground on all sides of the unit shall be elevated and shall slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
- Drainage on site shall drain away from the house, but not directed to any adjacent housing or structures.
- Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the unit.

**10. Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must be operating as intended and securely fastened and shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard and shall direct water away from structure.

- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

## **11. Paving**

- Badly deteriorated walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Non-essential deteriorated paving shall be repaired or removed.

### **d. Minimum Standards for Ventilation, Insulation, and Attic Access**

#### **1. Adequate Ventilation Required**

Every habitable room shall have at least one window or skylight which can easily be opened, or other such device that will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size or minimum skylight type window size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

#### **2. Light and Ventilation Requirements for Bathrooms, Toilet Rooms and Kitchens**

Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.

#### **3. Attic Ventilation**

Natural ventilation of structural space, such as attics and crawl spaces, must be provided to reduce the effect of conditions of excess heat and moisture which are conducive to decay and deterioration of the structure.

- Attics must have adequate ventilation to allow moisture and excessive heat to escape.
- Attics will be ventilated through the roof or by other appropriate methods.

**4. Attic Support Structure**

The attic support structure must be structurally sound and not damaged; must not have evidence of leakage (visible daylight); and must not have significant water damage visible from the attic or the interior of the dwelling.

**5. Attic Insulation**

- Attic areas will be insulated over living area.
- The attic insulation shall be to at least an R 26 rated insulation.
- Attic insulation shall not be required over the garage.

**6. Attic Access and Attics Containing Appliances**

- Attic access must be located in a hallway or other readily accessible location with pull downstairs.
- Attic pull-down stairs or scuttle panels located in a living area shall be insulated to reduce heat penetration into the home.
  - The attic pull-down stairs or scuttle shall also close to form a reasonably tight seal flush against the ceiling. This applies to pull-down stairs located in living areas and other areas (such as in a garage).
- At least one lighting outlet must be provided in the attic, controlled by a wall light switch or integral switch. The lighting must be located near the equipment to be serviced.
- A convenience receptacle outlet shall be present to service appliances located in the attic.
- Attic containing appliances requiring access:
  - The clear access opening shall be a minimum of 20 inches by 30 inches where such dimensions are large enough to allow the removal of the largest appliance.
  - The passageway to the appliances shall be continuous solid flooring and not less than 24 inches wide.
  - A level service space at least 30 inches deep and 30 inches wide shall be present along all sides of the appliance where access is required.
    - ❑ Exception: On units built before 2000, a working platform need not be provided when the furnace can be serviced from the required access opening.
- Cables and wiring located within the attic shall be housed in an electrical box with a cover plate and securely fastened.

**e. Minimum Space, Use, and Location Requirements**

1. **Minimum Ceiling Height** - No habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 7'6". At least 1/2 of the floor area of every habitable room located above the 1st floor shall have a ceiling height of 7'6", and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than 5' shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining maximum floor area;
  - a. A ceiling height of a minimum of 7' is acceptable in bathrooms, toilet rooms,

hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.

- b. All rooms, except kitchen and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of 7'.

2. **Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath and Toilet Rooms** - No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.
3. **Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities** - Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.
4. **Minimum Storage and Counter Areas** - Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6'-0", located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two (2) or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least 4 square feet per bedroom. This storage requirement does not necessarily have to be located in the bedrooms.
  - a. All kitchens shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of eight square feet with a minimum vertical clearance of 12" and a horizontal width of at least 12". Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 4 square feet of counter area.
5. **Pest Control/Extermination** - Visible pest infestation shall be properly exterminated. Termites can cause serious problems in the wood structural components of a dwelling and may go undetected for a long period of time. In the case of acquisition, a pest inspection shall be required if the dwelling unit or other structures on the property show evidence of termite infestation, and a termite certificate will be required prior to closing.

**f. Minimum Standards for Electrical Service and Lighting**

The dwelling shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

**1. Electrical Switches and Outlets**

- Every room shall have at least two duplex receptacle and one light fixture or three duplex receptacles.
- Large rooms or rooms with heavy current electrical loads may require three or more outlets.
- All electrical outlets and switches must be operating as intended.

- Sparks or smoke should not be present in electrical outlets.
- Readily accessible electrical outlets shall be randomly tested with a circuit tester to determine if outlets are wired correctly and operating as intended.

## **2. Light Fixtures**

- Every habitable room must be provided with a light fixture, or one outlet controlled by a wall switch.
- Existing wall or ceiling lights with internal switches are acceptable.
- Common or internal stairways from one floor used as a living area to another must have at least one light controlled by a three-way switch.
- Exterior stairs with five risers or more shall have a light fixture.
- All light fixtures must be LED or retrofitted with LED bulbs

## **3. Ground Fault Circuits Interrupter (GFCI Electrical Outlets)**

Electrical outlets that are not GFCI protected must be replaced as necessary with GFCI protected outlets to comply with the below referenced requirements.

- Kitchens shall have at least two (2) GFCI protected outlets.
- Bathrooms must have at least one (1) GFCI protected outlet.
- Bar sink must have at least one (1) GFCI protected outlet.
- At least one (1) GFCI electrical outlet must be present in the garage.
- All exterior outlets shall be GFCI protected.

## **4. Appliance Outlets**

- Appropriate electrical outlets must be provided for all existing appliances.
- Appliances requiring 120 volts may be on a circuit with other outlets so long as there is no evidence the circuit is overloaded.
- Essential motors requiring 240 volts must have a separate dedicated circuit and outlet.

## **5. Main Panel Board (Circuit Breaker Box)**

The service entrance must be intact, securely fastened, in good condition and sized to safely service all outlets, fixtures, and basic appliances.

- The service rating shall not be less than 100 amps for single family dwellings. Service ratings under 100 amps shall require a calculation and certification by a qualified authority to be prepared to demonstrate and confirm the rating of the service is sufficient.
- Electric circuit breaker panel box shall be appropriately labeled. The use or purpose of all panel board circuits shall be legibly marked and identified on a circuit directory located on the face or inside the door of the enclosure.
- Panel box shall not be missing any knockouts.
- The panel box shall be grounded at the service.

### **g. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

Heating and cooling systems must:

- Be safe to operate.
- Be protected from destructive elements.
- Have reasonable future utility, durability and economy.
- Have adequate capacity and quality.

**1. Thermostatic Controls**

A thermostat that controls both heating and cooling shall be operable and present within the unit.

**2. Heating**

The heating system must be capable of delivering enough heat to assure a healthy environment and a comfortable living condition.

- Fuel supply lines shall have a shut off valve easily accessible and all piping well supported and protected.
- Gas supply lines should be black iron or steel pipe or other approved piping.

**3. Duct Distribution System**

- Existing circulating air ducts shall be insulated including those located in attics and crawl spaces.
- Existing air ducts shall be supported above the ceiling joist and insulation.

**4. Air Conditioning**

The cooling system must be capable of delivering enough cool air to assure a healthy living environment and a comfortable living condition.

- The airflow around the existing condenser must not be obstructed.
- The existing condenser unit must be reasonably level and well supported with the housing intact.
- The unit refrigerant line (larger line) must have the insulation intact.
- An electric disconnect switch used for maintenance and repairs should be located within sight of the condenser unit. Circuit breaker in the service panel box is acceptable if located within sight of the unit.

**h. Minimum Standards for the Interiors of Structures**

**1. Kitchen Standards**

- The kitchen must provide suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve foods in a sanitary manner.
- Kitchens shall be equipped with a minimum of one (1) single bowl sink with hot and cold running water. Hot water tap should be located on the left side.

- A continuous and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure shall be provided for all kitchen applications.
- Kitchen plumbing fixtures shall function as intended and free of water leakage.
- Stove and refrigerator receptacles shall be present.

## **2. Kitchen Appliances and Countertop**

- Kitchen appliances, fixtures and other components shall be in good repair and function as intended.
- Kitchen must have refrigerator and stove receptacles with appropriate appliance connections.
- If present, garbage disposer shall be labeled and shall have a smooth sounding operating noise.
- Stoves and ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices, leveled and free of movement.
- A means to vent the stove to the outside shall be present by a stove vent hood or a kitchen window located in proximity to the stove.
- Countertop shall be leveled, structurally sound and free of significant warping, deterioration or other irregularities.
- Special built-in spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops and in other areas shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to house. Stove and refrigerator are exempt.

## **3. Kitchen Cabinetry**

- Kitchen cabinets shall be leveled, structurally sound and securely fastened.
- Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled.
- Cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Cabinets shall be free of defects, irregularities, and deterioration.
- Cabinet decking shall be leveled and free of significant warping, deterioration or other irregularities.

## **4. Bathroom Standards**

The bathroom shall be equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a tub and shower with hot and cold running water and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.

- Plumbing fixtures and other plumbing components shall be in good repair and operating as intended. Water leakage shall not be present.
- Bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.

- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside by an exhaust fan or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. The vent window must open to the exterior of the unit. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling. An exception shall be considered on first floor 1/2 bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present and located below another room which is not the attic. In such a case the installation of an air circulating vent fan with a replaceable activated charcoal filter will meet this requirement. A bathroom without a bathtub, shower facilities or other bathing facilities shall be considered a ½ bathroom.
- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be intact and securely fastened.
- Bathroom vent window shall have a locking device (as referenced in the Windows Section of this MPS) and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall be consistent with the kitchen cabinetry standards.

#### **5. Floor Covering**

- Floor coverings must be free of any significant defects and conditions that may cause a tripping hazard.
- Complete replacement of existing floor tile may be necessary if some tiles do not match.
- Floor coverings in the bathroom and kitchen area shall be of water-resistant material rendered smooth and easily cleanable.
- Carpet floor covering shall be reasonably clean and safe. Significantly damaged or worn carpet or defects causing tripping hazards shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.

#### **6. Interior Walls and Ceilings**

Ceilings and walls must not have significant defects such as bulging, leaning, holes, loose surface materials, buckling, missing parts or other damage that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.

- Walls must be reasonably plumb, and the ceiling must be reasonably level.
- Walls and ceilings shall be reasonably clean.
- Paint finishes or other appropriate coverings (wallpaper, paneling) shall be reasonably uniform and in reasonably good condition.
- Solid plaster or wallboard that is slightly uneven, but sound shall be acceptable.
- Cracks more than one sixteenth (1/16) of an inch on existing walls and ceilings shall be repaired, painted and textured to match existing.

## **7. Utility Room/Washer and Dryer Connections**

- Washer and dryer connections shall be provided.
- Existing washer water connections shall be free of water leakage, intact and securely fastened and function as intended.
- Hot water tap shall be on the left side.
- The water supply line housing shall be intact and flush with the wall.
- Dryer vents that pass-through walls or other combustible material shall be metal and vented to the outside.
- Enclosed washer and dryer shall be equipped with an exhaust system, independent of all other systems, and shall convey moisture to the outside.

## **8. Bedroom Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be access through a door shall have a door.
  - Door and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Closet light fixtures shall not be located too close to the shelves.
  - Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

## **9. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.
  - Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.
- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of a fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

## **10. Interior Doors and Hardware**

- Doors and door components shall be free of significant defects, deterioration, and irregularities.
- Bedroom, bathroom, and closet doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance doors to the primary bedrooms and bathrooms doors shall be equipped with privacy door locks.

- A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

#### **11. Stairs**

Stairs shall comply with the following:

- 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.
- All handrails shall be installed not less than thirty-four inches (34") no 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 ½") 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.
- Porches, balconies or raised floor surfaces, including stairway riser and/or landing, located more than thirty (30") inches above the floor or grade, shall have guardrails installed that are not less than thirty-six (36") inches in height. Open guardrails and stair railings shall have immediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere of four inches (4") in diameter cannot pass through.
- 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 ¾") and a tread depth of not less than eleven inches (11"). Treads less than eleven inches (11") requires nosing. 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.

#### **12. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

- The unit shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.
- The front entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).
  - Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required

#### **13. Ceiling Fans**

Existing ceiling fans shall be intact, securely fastened and free of excessive vibration.

#### **14. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two pre-wired telephone jacks. Any existing telephone jacks shall be in good working order.

#### **15. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- Smoke detectors shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and provided in the following locations:
  - A smoke detector in each room used for sleeping.
  - Outside of each bedroom or sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms or sleeping area (hallway area).
  - If bedrooms or sleeping areas are located on different (usually on opposite) sides of the unit, the reference above applies to bedrooms and sleeping areas on each side.
  - On each additional story of the dwelling.
  - The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
  - On units built after 2000, when more than one smoke alarm is required in an individual unit, the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be installed in rooms where natural gas is present.

#### **i. Minimum Standards for the Exteriors of Structures**

##### **1. FOUNDATIONS AND STRUCTURE**

The dwelling unit shall be structurally sound and not present any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and must protect the occupants from the environment.

##### **a. Foundations**

Foundations must be:

- Sound and reasonably level.
- Must be adequate to withstand all normal loads imposed.
- Free of any irregularities or evidence that could indicate safety or structural deficiencies.
- Free of any defects that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.
- Foundation walls should provide sufficient clearance above finish grade adjacent to the foundation.

##### **b. Structural (Exterior) Walls**

- Structural framing and masonry shall be free from defects and deterioration such as water damage, cracks, rotting, loose surface material and termite damage.
- Walls shall be free of any cavities between the exterior wall and windows, door entries or openings at the soffit for a weather tight exterior wall.

**c. Wall Surfaces and Trim**

- Siding and trim, brick veneer and other wall components shall be intact and weather tight.
- Paint coverage on exterior surfaces and components shall be uniform.
- Paint coverage and finish on existing siding and trim components must not be significantly deteriorated.
- Siding and trim determined defective and deteriorated shall be replaced.
- Siding exposing the bottom plates of the structure shall be replaced.
- If over 40 % of the siding on an existing wall is required to be replaced, the entire siding on the wall must be replaced. Siding on each wall shall be assessed individually.
- Brick veneer shall be free of significant deterioration, cracking and loose bricks that may cause water penetration.

**d. Roof Covering**

The roof covering must prevent moisture from entering and must provide future utility, durability and economy of maintenance.

- The roof must be structurally sound, and weather tight and must cover the entire unit.
- Roof shall not have signs of leakage when observed from the ground (missing tiles).
- If the roof cannot be observed from the ground, the roof shall be assessed from the inside of the dwelling including attic if it easily accessible and shall be noted on the inspection report.
- Missing or damaged shingles shall be replaced.
- Roof covering will be replaced in its entirety if the shingles are blistered, and the mineral covering is substantially deteriorated.
- Damaged shingles and flashing on roofs will be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Flat roofs shall require inspections by a licensed roofing authority.

**e. Chimney/Fireplace**

Chimneys shall be structurally sound, durable, smoke tight and capable of conveying flue gases to the exterior safely.

- Chimney cap must be present.
- Proper flashing must be present to eliminate water penetration.
- Masonry must be free of any significant defects or irregularities.
- Fireplace damper shall be operating as intended.
- Fireplace hearth shall be free from significant defects.

- Gas Fireplace shall have a gas shut off valve in proximity with shut off valve handle (if applicable).

**f. Stairways, Decks, Handrails and Guards (Exterior)**

Stairways, decks, handrails, and guards must not present the danger of tripping or falling.

- Exterior steps, stairways, and decks shall be structurally sound and reasonably level with smooth and even surfaces.
- Deteriorated, damaged, rotten or other defective stairways, decks, handrails, guards, or other stairway components shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Porches, balconies or raised floor surfaces located more than 30 inches above grade or above another floor shall have handrails/guards or balustrades. Handrails should be at least 36 inches in height.
- Stairways with more than three (3) steps (risers) should have a handrail at least on one side of the stairway.
  - The handgrip portion of the handrail shall be rounded smooth and safe.

**2. EXTERIOR DOORS AND WINDOWS**

**a. Exterior/Egress Doors**

Exterior doors include all doors leading to the outside from the inside and leading into the house or garage from the outside. Connecting doors leading from the inside of the dwelling into the garage shall not be considered an exterior/egress door. A vehicle door in a garage shall not be considered an outdoor egress door (exterior door).

- All exterior/egress doors shall be readily opened from the side from which egress is to be made without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort. This applies to connecting doors leading from the inside into the garage.
- Exterior/egress doors shall be solid core or metal/fiberglass clad and shall be a 3'0" x 6'8" door. Additional egress doors shall be a minimum of 2'8" x 6'8".
- Existing exterior/egress hollow core doors shall be replaced with solid core or wood/metal/fiberglass clad doors.
- All six sides of the door shall be uniformly painted.
- Exterior doors shall be equipped with a single key deadbolt lock and entrance lockset or entry handle-set with a deadbolt and the door and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Doors, door hardware and paint coverage on exterior doors shall not be deteriorated.
- Exterior doors shall be weather-stripped and reasonably sealed.
- Glazed entrance doors including storm doors, sliding glass patio doors, and glazing immediately adjacent to these doors must be safe and securely fastened.

**b. Windows**

- Windows must be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools or force greater than normal. Window and window hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Windows designed to open shall have a locking device as referenced in this section and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Defective, screw type or missing window locks shall be replaced with matching or locks similar to the original window locks. Window locks shall be securely fastened to the window.
  - Screw type devices are not acceptable.
- Existing windows and window components shall be free of defects and significant deterioration.
- Defective windows shall be replaced with double pane aluminum frame Low E windows.
- Windows shall provide a reasonably tight seal.
- Windowpanes (glass) that are broken or cracked shall be replaced.
- At least one window in the bedroom has to have a maximum height of 44" and meet IRC square footage dimensions.

**c. Window Screens**

- Windows designed to be open shall have insect screens.
- Window screens shall be free of defects; shall be intact and properly fit; and must keep out insects, bugs and other pests.

**3. OTHER EXTERIOR STANDARDS**

**a. Mailbox**

Units must have a mailbox or community cluster mailboxes.

**b. Address Numbers**

The unit must have a minimum of 3-inch-high address numbers placed on the unit and plainly visible and legible from the street or road fronting the property.

**d. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems**

All plumbing fixtures and plumbing components must be in good repair and in proper working condition free of dripping.

**1. Water Supply**

- The units must be provided with a continuing and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure and of appropriate quality for all household uses.
- Hot taps shall be located on the left side.
- One main water shut-off valve should be located near the entrance of the water service into the unit.

- Hose connections shall be protected by backflow prevent devices (vacuum breakers).
  - This does not apply to water heater drain valves.
  - Nor water supply valves intended for connecting clothes washing machines.
- Water supply lines to the kitchen sink, lavatory basin, water heater and other water supply lines must have individual shut-off valves.
- Water line penetrations under kitchen sinks, lavatory basin, and at other locations must be adequately sealed. Clean-out penetrations located in the referenced areas or in other locations must be sealed.
- Sinks, basins or pipes shall not leak; puddles (water) or wetness under plumbing fixtures shall not be present.
- The following water supply lines shall be appropriately insulated:
  - Water supply lines located in the attic.
  - Water heater cold water supply lines; also applies to water heaters located in the garage.
  - Water supply lines exposed to the weather.
- Electrical wiring under sinks/basins (usually from a garbage disposal) must not present a hazard or threat to the occupants. The wiring must not come in contact with water lines and possible water leakage.
- The main meter compartment shall be free of stagnated water and evidence of possible leakage.

## 2. **Drain, Waste, Vent Lines**

Units must have sanitary facilities and a safe method of sewage disposal.

- Existing drainage, waste, and vent system should be adequately sized to provide drainage and removal of wastes.
- Existing vents must prevent pressure build-up and sewer gas from entering the unit.
- Existing traps or other plumbing components that are broken or leaking shall be repaired or replaced as necessary with similar components and installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and current IRC.

## 3. **Water Heaters**

- The water heater (WH) shall provide an adequate supply of hot water at all taps.
- Each dwelling unit shall have a gas-fired or electric WH with at least a minimum capacity of 30 gallons.
- The WH shall be connected to an appropriate flue, to vent combustion gases to the exterior.
- The WH shall be equipped with an appropriately sized temperature and pressure relief valve with discharge pipe properly installed.
- WH discharge line shall be directed approximately 6 inches above floor or to the exterior.
- A shut-off valve to the WH cold water supply line shall be present. The valve shall be located at or near the WH and shall be readily accessible.

- WH cold water supply line shall be completely insulated if located in the attic, garage and other locations in which the WH may be exposed to low temperatures which may result in the referenced line freezing.
- A WH installed where leakage of the WH tank or connections may cause damage, shall be installed in a galvanized drain pan or in other pans listed for such use.
- Gas and electric WH located in the garage and that have an ignition source shall be elevated 18 inches above the garage floor.
  - Exception: Elevation is not required if the WH is listed as “flammable vapor resistant” and “installation without elevation.”
- The WH shall not be located in any room used or designed for sleeping purposes or in a clothes closet.

#### e. Garage

- An attached garage shall have drywall completely installed and fully painted walls and ceilings.
- Attached garage interior walls shall be consistent with the same standards as interior walls.
- A detached garage may not have fully painted walls and ceilings, or sheetrock completely installed. Exposed wiring shall be intact, securely fastened and safe.
- Vehicle doors and hardware shall operate smoothly.

#### f. Detached Structures

Detached buildings (storage, sheds, or other structures) that have deteriorated and are unsound causing a hazard shall be repaired, replaced, or removed.

#### g. Repairs and Installations

All repairs, maintenance work, alterations and installations which are required for compliance with this MPS shall be executed and installed in a workmanlike manner to secure the results intended by the referenced standards:

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Residential Rehabilitation Inspection Guide 2000 shall establish the life expectancy of all household components.
- All repairs, maintenance work, alterations and installation of household components must result in an extended useful life of the household component of at least 5 years.
- Household appliances, mechanical systems and other household components with a remaining useful life of less than 5 years **must be replaced with Energy Star labeled products, if available**, and installed in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions and IRC.

- If the age of a household component cannot be determined, the age of the dwelling shall be the determining factor in establishing the remaining life of the household component.

## **V. Minimum Acceptable Standards – Rehabilitation of Housing**

### **a. Single Family Rehabilitation**

#### **1. Overview/Applicability**

This document consists of standards, which must be met for rehabilitating a single-family home. It is applicable only to substantial rehabilitation as opposed to a new construction. The standards are **performance standards**--for example, specifying that units must be habitable and in functional condition with maximum life expectancy. The performance standards are similar to codes governing the quality of new construction of housing. This minimum standard applies to all substantial rehabilitation of owner-occupied single-family housing funded through CSD.

#### **2. Applicability of Standards to Minor Home Repairs and Emergency Repairs**

Minor home repairs and emergency repairs may meet these standards on a selective basis. When applying these standards to minor and emergency repairs for single-family housing where funding may be limited, not all standards are expected to be met; however, the items to be repaired shall be repaired to the applicable standard for such item. For example, if the roof is to be repaired, it shall be repaired according to the standard found in this document. To the maximum extent economically feasible, all housing addressed under a minor repair program shall first make repairs in the following order of greatest need:

- Repairs to protect the health, safety, and security of the occupant and his/her family,
- Repairs to preserve or restore the structural integrity of the building to assure its continued fitness for use as a single-family dwelling, and
- Repairs to improve the energy efficiency of the dwelling in a cost-effective manner; and
- Repairs to address other work deemed necessary to accomplish work items identified above.

Such minor/emergency repair work will be funded to be completed to the maximum amount of funding available to address minor or emergency repairs. When performing minor repairs, repairs to these standards will only address items to remove or reduce hazards and not necessarily designed to meet or exceed Housing Quality Standards (HQS), or local expected building codes. Since minor or emergency repairs may not bring the housing units into compliance with all codes and use of HOME program funds requires compliance with all applicable codes, funding for such repairs are restricted to Community Development Block Grant or other grant, or local funds.

#### **3. Minimum Standard Features in All Homes**

The following minimum standard features shall be met when rehabilitating single family units if existing materials, and/or appliances are hazardous to the health and safety of the occupants, inoperable, or irreparable, and must be replaced:

### **Exterior Features**

- Clay brick or fiber cement siding on exterior walls consistent with comparable, neighboring homes
- Fiber cement siding on rear and 2nd floor level exterior walls
- Composition Roof Shingles -Class "A" Fire Rated
- Hollow metal, solid core wood, or fiberglass clad exterior doors
- Keyed lockset and deadbolt at all exterior doors

### **Construction & Energy Efficiency Features**

- Foundation (*above base flood elevation*)
- R-13 (or above) fiberglass insulation in exterior walls
- R-26 fiberglass insulation in ceiling areas
- 16 SEER/15.2 SEER 2 (or above) air conditioning system with programmable thermostat
- Double pane Low E windows, when feasible, with screens on all operable windows
- Adequate roof ventilation

### **Interior Features**

- No-wax vinyl flooring in Kitchen/Breakfast, Baths, Entry Ways, and Utility rooms
  - Carpet flooring in all other rooms except accessible units for mobility impaired may include no-wax vinyl flooring throughout unit
  - Ice maker connection in Kitchen
  - Two (2) pre-wired telephone Jacks
  - Two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections
  - Equipped for internet services, which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street
  - GFCI wiring in wet Areas
  - Laminate kitchen countertops
  - Appliances – refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, vent hood, cooking surfaces, and oven, all energy star rated where such rating is applicable
  - Ceramic tile or ten-year warranty fiberglass molded tub and shower enclosure
  - Cultured marble vanity tops in all bathrooms
  - Shower over Tubs
  - If replaced, ceiling Fans with Light Kits (2) in Living Room and Bedrooms
  - Fully painted walls and ceilings when funds are available
  - Smoke and Carbon Monoxide combination detectors in all bedrooms and adjacent hallways and rooms with gas operating appliances (such as stoves and fireplaces).
- Appendix A

## **4. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

### **Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all-weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and maintained by a Homeowners Association or joint maintenance agreement.
  - And (private streets) shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

### **Access onto Property**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- The backyard shall be accessible without passing through any other unit.
- For a row type dwelling, the access may be by means of alley, an easement, by passage through the dwelling or by other acceptable means.

### **Service**

- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining properties.
- If a single drain line in the building serves more than one unit, the building drain clean-outs must be accessible from the exterior. Exterior clean-outs shall be installed in an area and in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard.

### **Utilities**

- Utilities must be independent for each dwelling unit except that common services, water, sewer, gas, and electricity, may be provided for the dwelling units under a single mortgage or ownership.
- Dwelling units shall have separate utility service shut-offs.
- Dwelling units shall have individual meters for individual utilities.
- Individual utilities shall not pass over, under or through another unit.
  - Unless provision is made for repair and maintenance of utilities without trespass on adjoining properties.
  - Or legal provision is made for permanent right of access for maintenance and repair of utilities.
- Other facilities must be independent for each dwelling unit, except common services such as laundry and storage space or heating, may be provided for two to four living unit buildings under a single mortgage.

### **Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

- Power lines including low voltage power lines may not pass over the dwelling.
- Power lines may have to be removed or repositioned.
- Overhead wires from the street to the electrical service panel shall be no lower than 10 feet above ground and shall not come in contact with tree branches or other obstacles and shall not be reachable from nearby windows or other accessible areas.

### **Landscaping, Lawn Areas and Trees**

In general, landscaping including lawn, shrubs, trees, and plantings should be protected and restored if damaged.

#### Trees

- Trees that threaten the structure shall be trimmed or removed.
- Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.

### **Backyard/Fence**

If funding is available, existing fence will be repaired or as needed replaced for safety.

### **Trash and Debris**

The property shall be free from any accumulation of trash, rubbish and garbage, dead branches, discarded items, and other conditions conducive to infestation of insects, vermin and other pests.

### **Drainage**

If funds are available, the site shall be free of ponding.

- The site must be graded to provide positive drainage away from the perimeter walls of the unit and to prevent standing water (ponding) on the site.
- The ground on all sides of the unit shall be elevated and shall slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
- Drainage on site shall drain away from the house, but not directed to any adjacent housing or structures.
- Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the unit.

### **Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- If funds are available, existing gutters will be repaired or replaced as needed.
- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must be operating as intended and securely fastened and shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard and shall direct water away from structure.
- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

### **Paving**

- Badly deteriorated walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Non-essential deteriorated paving shall be removed.

## **5. Minimum Standard for Ventilation, Insulation and Attic Access**

### **a. Adequate Ventilation Required**

Every habitable room shall have at least one window or skylight which can easily be opened, or other such device as will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size or minimum skylight type window size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

### **b. Light and Ventilation Requirements for Bathrooms, Toilet Rooms and Kitchens**

Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.

### **c. Attic Ventilation**

Natural ventilation of structural space, such as attics and crawl spaces, must be provided to reduce the effect of conditions of excess heat and moisture which are conducive to decay and deterioration of the structure.

- Attics must have adequate ventilation to allow moisture and excessive heat to escape.
- Attics will be ventilated through the roof or by other appropriate methods.

**d. Attic Support Structure**

The attic support structure must be structurally sound and not damaged; must not have evidence of leakage (visible daylight); and must not have significant water damage visible from the attic or the interior of the dwelling.

**e. Attic Insulation**

- Attic areas will be insulated over living area.
- The attic insulation shall be increased to at least an R 26 rated insulation.
- Attic insulation shall not be required over the garage.

**f. Attic Access and Attics Containing Appliances**

- Attic access must be located in a hallway or other readily accessible location with pull downstairs.
- If attic pull-down stairs are replaced/installed, it is required to have a 250 pound weight limit, be insulated and fire rated.
- Attic pull down stairs or scuttle panels located in a living area shall be insulated to reduce heat penetration into the home.
  - The attic pull-down stairs or scuttle shall also close to form a reasonably tight seal flush against the ceiling. This applies to pull down stairs located in living areas and other areas (such as in a garage).
- At least one lighting outlet must be provided in the attic, controlled by a wall light switch or integral switch. The lighting must be located near the equipment to be serviced.
- A convenience receptacle outlet shall be present to service appliances located in the attic.
- Attic containing appliances requiring access:
  - The clear access opening shall be a minimum of 20 inches by 30 inches where such dimensions are large enough to allow the removal of the largest appliance.
  - The passageway to the appliances shall be continuous solid flooring and not less than 24 inches wide.
  - A level service space at least 30 inches deep and 30 inches wide shall be present along all sides of the appliance where access is required.
    - ❑ Exception: On units built before 2000, a working platform need not be provided when the furnace can be serviced from the required access opening.
- Cables and wiring located within the attic shall be housed in an electrical box with a cover plate and securely fastened.

**6. Minimum Space, Use, and Location Requirements**

**a. Minimum Ceiling Height**

Wherever possible, no habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 7'6". At least 1/2 of the floor area of every habitable room located above the 1st floor shall have a ceiling height of 7'6", and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than 5' shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining maximum floor area;

- A ceiling height of a minimum of 7' is acceptable in bathrooms, toilet rooms, hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.
- All rooms, except kitchen and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of 7'.

**b. Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath and Toilet Rooms**

No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.

**c. Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities**

Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.

**d. Minimum Storage and Counter Areas**

- Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6'-0", located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two (2) or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least 4 square feet per bedroom. This storage requirement does not necessarily have to be located in the bedrooms.
- All kitchens shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of eight square feet with a minimum vertical clearance of 12" and a horizontal width of at least 12". Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 4 square feet of counter area.

**e. Pest Control/Extermination**

Visible pest infestation shall be properly exterminated. Termites can cause serious problems in the wood structural components of a dwelling and may go undetected for a long period of time. A pest inspection shall be required if the dwelling unit or other structures on the property show evidence of termite infestation. A termite inspection shall be required before notice to proceed to construction and a termite certificate will be required prior to project completion.

## **7. Minimum Standard for Electrical Service and Lighting**

The dwelling shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

### **a. Electrical Switches and Outlets**

- Every room shall have at least two duplex receptacle and one light fixture or three duplex receptacles.
- Large rooms or rooms with heavy current electrical loads may require four or more outlets.
- All electrical outlets and switches must be operating as intended.
- Readily accessible electrical outlets shall be randomly tested with a circuit tester to determine if outlets are wired correctly and operating as intended.

### **b. Light Fixtures**

- Every habitable room must be provided with a light fixture, or one outlet controlled by a wall switch.
- Existing wall or ceiling lights with internal switches are acceptable.
- Common or internal stairways from one floor used as a living area to another must have at least one light controlled by a three-way switch.
- Exterior stairs with five risers or more shall have a light fixture.
- Light fixtures must be LED or equipped with LED bulbs.

### **c. Ground Fault Circuits Interrupter (GFCI Electrical Outlets)**

Electrical outlets that are not GFCI protected must be replaced as necessary with GFCI protected outlets to comply with the requirements as described in Appendix A under the 2020 National Electric Code or current adopted code by Texas (Appendix A).

### **d. Appliance Outlets**

- Appropriate electrical outlets must be provided for all existing appliances.
- Appliances requiring 120 volts may be on a circuit with other outlets so long as there is no evidence the circuit is overloaded.
- Essential motors requiring 240 volts must have a separate dedicated circuit and outlet.

**e. Main Panel Board (Circuit Breaker Box)**

The service entrance must be intact, securely fastened, in good condition and sized to safely service all outlets, fixtures, and basic appliances.

- The service rating shall not be less than 150 amps for multi-family dwellings.
- Electric circuit breaker panel box shall be appropriately labeled. The use or purpose of all panel board circuits shall be legibly marked and identified on a circuit directory located on the face or inside the door of the enclosure.
- Panel box shall not be missing any knockouts.
- The panel box shall be grounded at the service.
- All panel box improvements shall comply with the 2020 NEC or current adopted code by Texas (Appendix A).

**8. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

**a. Thermostatic Controls**

A thermostat that controls both heating and cooling shall be present and operable within the unit and, if replacement is necessary, shall be replaced with a programmable thermostat.

**b. Heating**

Gas and oil-fired plants shall be rated at 78 AFUE or better. Heat pumps shall comply with the requirement of ARI-240 and UL-559. Units shall be tested, rated and listed accordingly.

**c. Distribution System**

Duct coverings shall not flame, glow, smolder or smoke when tested in accordance with ASTM C 411 at the temperature to which they are exposed in service. The test temperature shall not fall below 250 degrees Fahrenheit. External duct installation and factory installed flexible ducts shall be legibly printed or identified at intervals not greater than 36" with the name of the manufacturer; thermal resistance R-value at the specified installed thickness. All duct insulation product R-values shall be based on insulation only. If ducts are replaced, R8 is required or current adopted code by Texas (Appendix A).

**d. Air Conditioning**

Air conditioning equipment shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Unless the equipment is listed for installation on a combustibile surface such as a floor, or unless the surface is protected in an approved manner, equipment shall be installed on a surface of noncombustible construction with noncombustible material.

## **9. Minimum Standards for Interiors of Structures**

### **a. Kitchen Standards**

- The kitchen must provide suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve foods in a sanitary manner.
- Kitchens shall be equipped with a minimum of one (1) single bowl sink with hot and cold running water. Hot water tap should be located on the left side.
- A continuous and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure shall be provided for all kitchen applications.
- Kitchen plumbing fixtures shall function as intended and free of water leakage.
- Stove and refrigerator receptacles shall be present.

### **b. Kitchen Appliances and Countertop**

- Kitchen appliances, fixtures and other components shall be in good repair and function as intended.
- Kitchen must have refrigerator and stove receptacles with appropriate appliance connections.
- If present, garbage disposer shall be labeled and shall have a smooth sounding operating noise.
- Stoves and ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices, leveled and free of movement.
- A means to vent the stove to the outside shall be present, either by a stove vent hood or a kitchen window located in proximity to the stove.
- An exception shall be considered for kitchens/bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present. When it is not practical to vent exhaust to the outside, charcoal filtered non-vented hoods are acceptable.
- Countertop shall be leveled, structurally sound and free of significant warping, deterioration or other irregularities.
- Special built-in spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops and in other areas shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to house. Stove and refrigerator are exempt.

### **c. Kitchen Cabinetry**

- Kitchen cabinets shall be leveled, structurally sound and securely fastened.
- Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled.
- Cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware (to include ADA approved pulls and handles) shall operate smoothly.
- If cabinets are replaced, all drawers and doors shall have pulls and handles to conform to ADA requirements.
- Cabinets shall be free of defects, irregularities, and deterioration.
- Cabinet decking shall be leveled and free of significant warping, deterioration or other irregularities.

### **d. Bathroom Standards**

The bathroom shall be equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a tub and shower with hot and cold running water and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.

- Plumbing fixtures and other plumbing components shall be in good repair and operating as intended. Water leakage shall not be present.
- Bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.
- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside by an exhaust fan or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. The vent window must open to the exterior of the unit. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling. An exception **shall be considered** on first floor 1/2 bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present and located below another room which is not the attic. In such a case the installation of an air circulating vent fan with a replaceable activated charcoal filter will meet this requirement. A bathroom without a bathtub, shower facilities or other bathing facilities shall be considered a ½ bathroom.
- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be intact and securely fastened.
- Bathroom vent window shall have a locking device (as referenced in the Windows Section of this MPS) and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall be consistent with the kitchen cabinetry standards.

**e. Floor Covering**

- Floor coverings must be free of any significant defects and conditions that may cause a tripping hazard.
- Complete replacement of existing floor tile may be necessary if some tiles do not match.
- Floor coverings in the bathroom and kitchen area shall be of water-resistant material rendered smooth and easily cleanable.
- Carpet floor covering shall be reasonably clean and safe. Significantly damaged or worn carpet or defects causing tripping hazards shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Complete replacement of existing carpet flooring may be allowable to accommodate accessibility requirements.

**f. Interior Walls and Ceilings**

Ceilings and walls must not have significant defects such as bulging, leaning, holes, loose surface materials, buckling, missing parts or other damage that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.

- Walls must be reasonably plumb, and the ceiling must be reasonably level.
- Walls and ceilings shall be reasonably clean.
- Paint finishes or other appropriate coverings (wallpaper, paneling) shall be reasonably uniform and in reasonably good condition.
- Solid plaster or wallboard that is slightly uneven, but sound shall be acceptable.
- Cracks more than one sixteenth (1/16) of an inch on existing walls and ceilings shall be repaired, painted and textured to match existing.

**g. Utility Room/Washer and Dryer Connections**

- Washer and dryer connections shall be provided.
- Existing washer water connections shall be free of water leakage, intact and securely fastened and function as intended.
- Hot water tap shall be on the left side.
- The water supply line housing shall be intact and flush with the wall.
- Dryer vents that pass-through walls or other combustible material shall be metal and vented to the outside.
- Enclosed washer and dryer shall be equipped with an exhaust system, independent of all other systems, and shall convey moisture to the outside.

**h. Bedroom Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be access through a door shall have a door.
- Door and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Closet light fixtures, when present, shall be located in accordance with the NEC shown in Appendix A..
- Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

**i. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.
- Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.

- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of a fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

**j. Interior Doors and Hardware**

- Doors and door components shall be free of significant defects, deterioration, and irregularities.
- Bedroom, bathroom, and closet doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance doors to the primary bedrooms and bathrooms doors shall be equipped with privacy door locks.
  - A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

**k. 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 shall comply with the following:

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") no 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 ½") 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 or raised floor surfaces, including stairway riser and/or landing, located more than thirty (30") inches above the floor or grade, shall have guardrails installed that are not less than thirty-six (36") inches in height. Open guardrails and stair railings shall have immediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere of 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 ¾") and a tread depth of not less than eleven inches (11"). Treads less than eleven inches (11") requires nosing. 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.

**l. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

The unit shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.

The front entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).

- Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required.

**m. Ceiling Fans**

Existing ceiling fans shall be intact, securely fastened and free of vibration. If fixtures are to be replaced, light fixtures in the living room and bedrooms shall be replaced with a combination ceiling fan/light fixture.

**n. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two pre-wired telephone jacks. Any existing telephone jacks shall be in good working order.

**o. Cable TV Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections, generally located at the living/family room and the primary bedroom to allow access to required digital television connections.

**p. Internet (Broadband Infrastructure)**

The home must be equipped for internet service which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street.

**q. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- Smoke detectors shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and provided in the following locations:
  - Smoke and carbon monoxide combination detector in all.
  - If bedrooms or sleeping areas are located on different (usually on opposite) sides of the unit, the reference above applies to bedrooms and sleeping areas on each side.
  - On each additional story of the dwelling.
  - The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
  - On units built after 2000, when more than one smoke alarm is required in an individual unit the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
  - Smoke detectors shall be hardwired when accessible. When inaccessible, use a battery with a 10 year life expectancy.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be installed per code. (Appendix A) .

**10. Minimum Standards for Exteriors of Structures**

**a. Foundations and Structure**

**FOUNDATIONS-** Foundations shall be above base flood elevation and will be sound, reasonably level, and free from movement.

**STRUCTURAL WALLS-** Structural framing and masonry shall be free from visible defects. Be adequately sized for current loads.

**b. Windows and Doors**

**EXTERIOR DOORS-** Doors shall be solid, weather-stripped, operate smoothly, and include a peep site, a dead bolt, and an entrance lock set.

**WINDOWS-** All replaced windows shall meet or exceed the International Energy Conservation Code.

**INTERIOR DOORS/PLACEMENT-** All bedrooms and baths shall have well-operating doors with locksets

**c. Roofing**

**PITCHED ROOFS-** Fiberglass asphalt, 3-tab class A shingles with a prorated 20-year manufactured warranty with adequate ventilation.

**FLAT AND LOW SLOPE ROOFING (3/12 pitch or less) -** Built-up roofing or approved substitute, flashing and accessories shall be installed to provide a 10-year warranty from a certified roofing company.

**d. Exterior Surfaces**

**EXTERIOR STEPS AND DECKS-** Steps, stairways, and porch decks will be structurally sound, reasonably level, with smooth and even surfaces.

**EXTERIOR RAILINGS -** Handrails will be present on one side of all interior and exterior steps or stairways with four risers or more, and around porches or platforms 30" or above ground level. Railing repairs will be historically sensitive.

**EXTERIOR CLADDING -** Siding and trim will be intact and weatherproof. All exterior wood components will have full coverage of paint

**EXTERIOR HARDWARE\_-** Every dwelling unit will have a mailbox, or mail slot, and minimum 3" high address numbers visible from the street.

## 11. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems

- a. **WATER SUPPLY** -\_All fixtures must be: supplied with 3-gallons/minute water flows.
- b. **DRAIN, WASTE, VENT LINES**-\_Waste and vent lines must function without losing the trap seal. Lines shall be installed in accordance with the most recently approved version of the International Plumbing Code.
- c. **PLUMBING MINIMUM EQUIPMENT**-\_Every dwelling unit shall have a minimum of one double bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen and bathrooms containing a vanity with a sink, and a shower/tub unit, both with hot and cold running water, and a toilet.
- d. **PLUMBING FIXTURES** -\_Metal faucets and shower diverters, ceramic toilets, double bowl stainless steel sinks, fiberglass tub surrounds and steel enameled 5' tubs.
- e. **WATER HEATERS**-\_Each dwelling unit shall have a gas-fired or electric water heater. The minimum capacity for units with two bedrooms or less shall be 30 gallons; larger units shall have a minimum capacity of 40 gallons. The discharge pipe shall be installed so as to drain by gravity flow and shall terminate atmospherically not more than 6" above the floor. The end of the discharge pipe shall not be threaded or have more than four 90° bends.

## 12. Garages

- An attached garage shall have drywall installed on common walls to livable space and fully painted walls and ceilings.
- Attached garage interior walls shall be consistent with the same standards as interior walls.
- A detached garage may not have fully painted walls and ceilings, or sheetrock completely installed. Exposed wiring shall be intact, securely fastened and safe.
- An attached garage vehicle doors and hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Garage pedestrian doors shall be fire rated and have self-closing hinge.
- Wheel stop at rear of garage is required.

## 13. Detached Structures

Detached buildings (storage, sheds, or other structures) that have deteriorated and are unsound causing a hazard to the site or primary residence shall be removed.

## 14. Accessibility

Single-family structures shall comply with the applicable code as outlined in Appendix A and B for accessibility and visitability.

## **b. Multi-Family Rehabilitation**

### **1. Overview/Applicability**

The following standards must be met for rehabilitating multi-family rental housing. These standards are applicable only to substantial rehabilitation as opposed to a new construction or buildings undergoing conversion of land use with substantial rehabilitation to convert them to residential use (projects proposing conversion activities should contact CSD staff prior to application). The standards are performance standards—for example, specifying that units must be habitable and in functional condition with maximum life expectancy. The performance standards are similar to codes governing the quality of new construction of housing. This minimum standard applies to all substantial rehabilitation of multi-family housing funded through CSD.

The intent of these requirements is to establish minimum property standards and criteria for the health and safety of the occupants upon completion of rehabilitation, and to ensure the value and the durability of the property and all improvements. The property and improvements are the collateral for loans/deferred loans provided to finance improvements and the lack of durability can increase the financial risk in the event of default.

More specifically, the model codes do not contain any minimum requirements for the durability of such items as doors, windows, gutters and downspouts, painting and wall coverings, kitchen cabinets and carpeting. This MPS includes minimum standards for these and other items to ensure the value of the property is not decreased by the deterioration of these components but are enhanced via restoration and installation of sustainable materials and equipment.

CSD requires developers/owners of multi-family rental housing to ensure compliance with these minimum standards when designing the project, developing the project budget and when submitting applications to CSD for funding of such projects. However, CSD acknowledges that each project may face unique site, design, and financing challenges, and will accept and review waivers of specific standards on a case by case basis.

## 2. Minimum Standard Features in All Units

The following minimum standard features shall be met when rehabilitating multi-family rental units if existing materials, and/or appliances are hazardous to the health and safety of the occupants, inoperable, or irreparable, and must be replaced. If existing materials, and/or appliances meet code, are in good condition, and offer a reasonable remaining life expectancy, these minimum features may not apply:

### a. Exterior Features

- Existing landscaping shall be restored and maintained.
- Clay brick, cementitious plaster, or fiber cement siding on exterior walls
- Fiber cement siding on rear and 2nd floor level exterior walls
- Composition Roof Shingles -Class "A" Fire Rated
- Hollow metal, solid core wood, or fiberglass clad exterior doors
- Single cylinder deadbolt and keyless deadbolt at all exterior doors
- Bar or pin lock at all exterior sliding doors
- Perimeter fencing enclosing entire site with pedestrian and vehicular access gates

### b. Construction & Energy Efficiency Features

- Foundation (*above base flood elevation*)
- R-13 (or above) fiberglass insulation in exterior walls
- R-38 insulation in ceiling areas
- 16 SEER/15.2 SEER 2 (or above) air conditioning system with programmable thermostat
- Double pane Low E windows with screens on all operable windows
- Adequate roof ventilation

### c. Interior Features

- No-wax vinyl flooring in Kitchen/Breakfast, Baths, Entry Ways, and Utility rooms
- Carpet flooring in all other rooms except accessible units may include no-wax vinyl flooring throughout the unit
- At least one (1) pre-wired telephone Jack
- At least one (1) pre-wired cable TV connection
- Equipped for internet services, which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street
- GFCI outlet in wet Areas
- Laminate kitchen countertops
- Appliances – refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, vent hood, cooking surfaces, and oven, all energy star rated where such rating is applicable, except for SROs

- Ceramic tile or ten-year warranty fiberglass molded tub and shower enclosure
- Cultured marble vanity tops in all Bathrooms
- Shower over Tubs
- Ceiling Fans with Light Kits in Living Room and every Bedroom
- Fully painted walls and ceilings
- Smoke detectors in all bedrooms and adjacent hallways
- Carbon Monoxide detectors in rooms with gas operating appliances (such as stoves and fireplaces)

### **3. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

#### **a. Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets within and that provide access to the project site must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all-weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and properly maintained.
  - And (private streets) shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

#### **b. Parking/Curbs**

- Unless stricter requirements apply, parking shall comply with the following minimum requirements and noted exceptions:
  - One (1) parking space for each 1-bedroom or larger dwelling unit;
  - Units may have less than one (1) parking space for each dwelling unit for special purpose housing (i.e., seniors, permanent supportive housing or single room occupancy developments). Such exceptions shall be reviewed on a case by case based by CSD.
  - Parking spaces shall be at least 8'-6" wide except at designated handicapped parking space(s) which shall be in compliance with applicable codes.
- Poured concrete curb at outer perimeter of onsite drive lanes and parking.

#### **c. Access and Service**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining properties.

#### **d. Utilities**

Utilities shall be centralized wherever practicable to realize economies of efficiency in operation or maintenance. Layout of electrical distribution, and where possible of

heat and water systems, shall be designed for separate metering whenever differential rates do not cause separate metering to be more expensive, in which case the installation shall be readily convertible to separate metering in the future. Whenever possible, electrical entrances shall be underground leading from a point where overhead service does not intrude upon the residential scale.

**e. Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

- Power lines including low voltage power lines may not pass over dwellings.
- Power lines may have to be removed or repositioned.
- Overhead wires from the street to the electrical service panel shall be no lower than 10 feet above ground and shall not come in contact with tree branches or other obstacles and shall not be reachable from nearby windows or other accessible areas.

**f. Landscaping, Lawn Areas and Trees**

Landscaping shall maximize the use of open space and existing landscaping shall be reasonably restored and maintained.

- New landscaping to be installed shall conform to a low maintenance landscaping methods and materials that use indigenous species that are drought-tolerant to conserve water used for irrigation. Native plants should be used.
- Sod (grass) shall be installed at all unpaved surfaces and plantings along the existing building foundation at street facing elevations.
- Additional sod (grass) may also be installed to stop erosion. Eroded areas shall be filled and graded as necessary before installing sod.
- Lawn shall be appropriately mowed and trimmed at the time of the inspection.
- Do not install sod at densely shaded areas and in extremely sloped areas. Add mulch or soil amendments as appropriate.

Trees

- Existing, healthy trees shall be preserved and maintained.
- Trees too close to the structure or threaten the structure shall be trimmed or removed.
- Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.
  - New trees to be installed shall be minimum 25-gallon size trees or larger and shall be appropriately planted and watered to ensure sustainability.

**g. Fence**

- The development must be fully fenced-in with access gate(s).
- The fence must completely enclose all structures, including storage buildings and other structures.
- The fence shall provide security.
- All fence components including fence gate(s) and gate hardware shall operate smoothly.
- The fence and fence gate(s) must be free of any significant defects and irregularities.
- Deteriorated, defective or missing fence components shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- All fence components shall be securely fastened in place.
- Electronic access gates shall operate smoothly and appropriately.
- Emergency access shall be provided at mechanically operated gates.

**h. Play Areas/Play Equipment**

Play areas are required for all family developments. Play areas are not required to be preserved if any of the following conditions apply:

- Development contains only 1-bedroom or small dwelling units;
- Public park with play equipment is located within 1000 feet of the development (measured from the closest property line to the public park as straight-line distance, not travel distance); or
- Preservation of such an amenity is not economically feasible or viable.

Play areas/play equipment shall comply with the following requirements:

- Entire play area must be filled with synthetic protective materials and equipped with reasonable play equipment for the size of the lot. The perimeter shall be designed to keep the play area material from spilling, such as curb and/or sidewalk.
- An existing play area/play equipment scheduled to remain shall be in good repair and in compliance with all applicable safety regulations.
- New play equipment shall be installed in compliance with equipment manufacturer requirements.
- Lumber treated with chromate copper arsenate shall not be used for play equipment.
- Provide drain beneath all permeable play area surface materials with outlet to nearest storm sewer or drainage ditch.
- Provide shade, seating, and trash receptacle near all play areas.

**i. Trash and Debris**

The property shall be free from any accumulation of trash, rubbish and garbage, dead branches, discarded items, and other conditions conducive to infestation of insects, vermin and other pests.

Appropriately sized and secure trash receptacles must be provided and be properly screened.

**j. Drainage**

- The site must be graded to provide positive drainage a minimum of 20'-0" or per Engineering drawing away from the perimeter walls of buildings to prevent standing water (ponding) on the site.
- The ground on all sides of each building shall be elevated and shall slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
- Drainage on site shall drain away from buildings, but not directed to any adjacent housing or structures.
- Drainage of paved areas such as parking lots shall be designed to prevent ponding and directed to proper drainage facilities.
- Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the building.

**k. Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- Existing gutter and downspouts shall be properly maintained and in working order or shall be repaired or as needed replaced.
- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must be operating as intended and securely fastened and shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard and shall direct water away from structure.
- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

**l. Paving and Walkways**

Deteriorated walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.

**m. Signage**

**Temporary signage** shall be erected prior to start of construction and shall remain in place until construction is completed. Such temporary signage shall be located on the

project site most at a location most visible to the public. Such temporary signage shall meet the following specifications:

- 4' x 8" framed, single-face ¾" thick grand plywood mounted on 4" x 4" members. Plywood to be Southern Yellow Pine AC Grade.
- Sign shall be fully painted front, back and sides with two (2) coats of waterproof enamel white paint before any graphics are printed on sign.
- Wood members used must be preservative treated.
- Sign must be capable of withstanding 50 mph gale winds.

**Permanent development sign** shall be provided and installed on site from materials consistent with those used in the main property. It shall provide name of development, Equal Housing Opportunity logo, and leasing information/phone number.

For conversion projects involving conversion from commercial to residential, existing signage shall be removed and replaced with permanent signage appropriate to the scale and new use of the property. Existing signage may be modified and remain upon express written approval by CSD.

**Permanent bronze plaque** recognizing Harris County, and/or HUD as source of funding for the project shall be installed at the project site. Such plaque shall be installed at the main entrance to the property, usually in the common building where leasing offices are located, prior to construction completion. Specifications for plaque shall be found in project contract documents.

#### **4. Minimum Standards for Ventilation, Insulation and Attics**

##### **a. Adequate Ventilation Required**

Every habitable room shall have at least one window, which can easily be opened, or other such device as will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

##### **b. Light and Ventilation Requirements for Bathrooms, Toilet Rooms and Kitchens**

Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.

**c. Attic Ventilation**

Natural ventilation of structural space, such as attics and crawl spaces, must be provided to reduce the effect of conditions of excess heat and moisture which are conducive to decay and deterioration of the structure.

- Attics must have adequate ventilation to allow moisture and excessive heat to escape.
- Attics will be ventilated through the roof or by other appropriate methods.

**d. Attic Support Structure**

The attic support structure must be structurally sound and not damaged; must not have evidence of leakage (visible daylight); and must not have significant water damage visible from the attic or the interior of the dwelling.

**e. Attic Insulation**

- Attic areas will be insulated over living area.
- Insulation shall be flush with joist.
- If the existing insulation is not flush with the joist, the attic insulation shall be increased to at least an R 26 rated insulation (flush with the joist).
- Attic insulation shall not be required over garage areas.

**5. Minimum Space, Use and Location Requirements**

**a. Minimum Ceiling Height**

Wherever possible, no habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 7'6". At least 1/2 of the floor area of every habitable room located above the 1st floor shall have a ceiling height of 7'6", and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than 5' shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining maximum floor area;

- A ceiling height of a minimum of 7' is acceptable in bathrooms, toilet rooms, hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.
- All rooms, except kitchen and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of 7'.

**b. Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath and Toilet Rooms**

No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.

**c. Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities**

Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.

**d. Minimum Storage and Counter Areas**

Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6'-0", located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two (2) or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least 4 square feet per bedroom. This storage requirement does not necessarily have to be located in the bedrooms.

- Except in SROs, all kitchens shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of eight square feet with a minimum vertical clearance of 12" and a horizontal width of at least 12". Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 4 square feet of counter area.

**e. Common Areas and Facilities**

Each development at a minimum shall have common areas/facilities to accommodate property management, maintenance, laundry, group/social service activities, and mail pick-up/delivery. Areas of common spaces shall be proportional to the number of units in the development. All common facilities provided for residents shall be accessible without passing through the lobby or lounge. If provided, medical and social services, central dining facilities, and similar common facilities (including trash removal) shall be grouped in close proximity to the main circulation elements but in such a way that it is not necessary for a resident to pass through the lobby or lounge to reach them. Proposed furnishings for common areas shall be appropriate for the spaces to be furnished and for the intended resident, with particular attention given to the needs of elderly and special needs residents.

▪ **Common Laundry Facilities**

There must be a minimum of one (1) washer and one (1) dryer per twelve (12) dwelling units if washer/dryer hookups are not available in each dwelling unit. If hookups are available in each dwelling unit, there must be a minimum of one (1) washer and one (1) dryer per twenty (20) dwelling units. If in addition to washer/dryer hookups, washers and dryers are provided in each unit, a common washer and dryer facility is not required. Where common laundry facilities are provided, such facilities shall include:

- A table or countertop for folding laundry;
- If feasible, a window to the exterior;
- Adequate entrance lighting, which must on from dusk to dawn to assist in greater security during evening hours;
- A floor drain; and
- A seating area within, or immediately adjacent to, or in the line of sight of the laundry room.

- **Community/Office Space**

- All special needs and elderly developments shall provide a community room, social service space, or other common area space for the provision of services, and group activities. Such space shall be sized to be proportional to the number units and number of residents utilizing such space and must sufficiently accommodate the type of services to be provided.

- For conversion projects, unoccupied dwelling space may be converted to community space to meet this requirement.

- All developments consisting of twenty (20) or more residential dwelling units or more must have site office of at least 200 square feet (inclusive of accessibility toilet facilities) and a maintenance room of at least 100 square feet.

- **Common Mail Area/Space**

Each dwelling unit shall have a designated mailbox provided in a centralized location onsite. If located outside, such location shall be protected from weather. Regardless of location, mail boxes shall be accessible to the mail carrier, convenient to inhabitants, handicapped accessible, and located, screened or related to other facilities so as not to be obtrusive.

**f. Pest Control/Extermination**

Visible pest infestation shall be properly exterminated. Termites can cause serious problems in the wood structural components of a dwelling and may go undetected for a long period of time. A pest inspection shall be required if the dwelling unit or other structures on the property show evidence of termite infestation. A termite inspection shall be required before notice to proceed to construction and a termite certificate will be required prior to project completion.

**6. Minimum Standards for Electrical Service and Lighting**

The dwelling shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

**a. Electrical Switches and Outlets**

- Every room shall have at least two duplex receptacle and one light fixture or three duplex receptacles.
- Large rooms or rooms with heavy current electrical loads may require four or more outlets.
- All electrical outlets and switches must be operating as intended.
- Readily accessible electrical outlets shall be randomly tested with a circuit tester to determine if outlets are wired correctly and operating as intended.

**b. Light Fixtures**

- Every habitable room must be provided with a light fixture, or one outlet controlled by a wall switch.
- Existing wall or ceiling lights with internal switches are acceptable.
- Common or internal stairways from one floor used as a living area to another must have at least one light controlled by a three-way switch.
- Exterior stairs with five risers or more shall have a light fixture.
- All lights fixtures shall be LED or equipped with LED bulbs.

**c. Ground Fault Circuits Interrupter (GFCI Electrical Outlets)**

Electrical outlets that are not GFCI protected must be replaced to comply with the 2017 National Electric Code as described in Appendix A.

**d. Appliance Outlets**

- Appropriate electrical outlets must be provided for all existing appliances.
- Appliances requiring 120 volts may be on a circuit with other outlets so long as there is no evidence the circuit is overloaded.
- Essential motors requiring 240 volts must have a separate dedicated circuit and outlet.

**e. Main Panel Board (Circuit Breaker Box)**

The service entrance must be intact, securely fastened, in good condition and sized to safely service all outlets, fixtures, and basic appliances.

- The service rating shall not be less than 150 amps for multi-family dwellings.
- Electric circuit breaker panel box shall be appropriately labeled. The use or purpose of all panel board circuits shall be legibly marked and identified on a circuit directory located on the face or inside the door of the enclosure.
- Panel box shall not be missing any knockouts.
- The panel box shall be grounded at the service.

**7. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

Heating and cooling systems must:

- Be safe to operate.
- Be protected from destructive elements.
- Have reasonable future utility, durability and economy.
- Have adequate capacity and quality.

**a. Thermostatic Controls**

A thermostat that controls both heating and cooling shall be present and operable within the unit and, if replacement is necessary, shall be replaced with a programmable thermostat.

**b. Heating**

The heating system must be capable of delivering enough heat to assure a healthy environment and a comfortable living condition.

**c. Duct Distribution System**

Existing circulating air ducts shall be insulated including those located in attics and crawl spaces.

**d. Air Conditioning**

The cooling system must be capable of delivering enough cool air to assure a healthy living environment and a comfortable living condition.

- The airflow around the existing condenser must not be obstructed.
- The existing condenser unit must be reasonably level and well supported with the housing intact.
- The unit refrigerant line (larger line) must have the insulation intact.
- An electric disconnect switch used for maintenance and repairs should be located within sight of the condenser unit. Circuit breaker in the service panel box is acceptable if located within sight of the unit.

**8. Minimum Standards for Interiors of Structures**

**a. Kitchens**

Every dwelling unit, except for Single Room Occupancy (SRO) shall have a kitchen room or kitchenette equipped with the following:

- **Kitchen Sink** - It shall contain one double bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen, properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and maintained in working order. Hot water tap should be located on the left side
- **Stove** - It shall contain a stove (gas or electric), properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended. Kitchen stoves or ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices.
- **Stove/range hoods** – shall vent to the outside and not to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling.
- **Refrigerator** - It shall contain a refrigerator with freezers, properly connected to

the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.

- **Countertops** – It must have laminate countertops or better and such countertops must be free of any irregularities.
- **Cabinets**- shall be leveled and securely fastened. Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled (no gaps present). Cabinets shall be free of any irregularities, and cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware shall operate smoothly.
- **Special built-in** spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to house. Stove/range and refrigerator are exempt.
- **All appliances** - where applicable, must be energy star rated, and all shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and Appendix A – Building Codes.

**b. Toilet Room Required**

Every dwelling unit, except as otherwise permitted for rooming houses and SROs, shall contain a room, which is equipped with a flush water closet and a properly installed lavatory. All lavatories shall be properly connected to both hot and cold running water, under pressure, and shall be properly maintained in working order.

All flush water closets shall be properly connected to the water supply, under pressure and shall be maintained in working order.

**c. Shared Toilet Facilities**

Shared toilet rooms shall be equipped with a flush water closet and lavatory basin and shall be connected and maintained as provided in the "Toilet Room Required" section above. In rooming house type structures, at least one (1) toilet and one (1) lavatory basin, properly connected as set forth above, shall be supplied for each eight (8) persons or fractions thereof, residing within a rooming house, including members of the operator's family, whenever they share the use of said facilities; provided, that in rooming houses where rooms are let only to males, flush urinals may be substituted for not more than 1/2 of the required number of toilets.

**d. Bath Required**

Every dwelling unit shall contain a bathtub and/or shower except in SROs without such facilities.

Potable water supply piping, water discharge outlets, backflow prevention devices or similar equipment shall not be so located as to make possible their submergence in any contaminated or polluted liquid or substance. Said bathtub and/or shower may be in the same room as the flush water closet and lavatory or said bathtub and/or shower may be in a separate room.

In all cases, these facilities shall be properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and shall be maintained in working order.

In rooming house type structures, at least one (1) bathtub and/or shower, properly connected as set forth above, shall be supplied for each eight (8) persons or fraction thereof residing within rooming house, including members of the operator's family whenever they share the use of said facilities.

**e. Bathroom Standards**

The bathroom shall be equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a tub and shower with hot and cold running water and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.

- Plumbing fixtures and other plumbing components shall be in good repair and operating as intended. Water leakage shall not be present.
- Bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Grab bars in shower areas shall be provided in all designated accessible units and in all units in developments exclusively for seniors or for special needs populations.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.
- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside by an exhaust fan or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. The vent window must open to the exterior of the unit. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling. An exception **shall be considered** on first floor 1/2 bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present and located below another room which is not the attic. In such a case the installation of an air circulating vent fan with a replaceable activated charcoal filter will meet this requirement. A bathroom without a bathtub, shower facilities or other bathing facilities shall be considered a ½ bathroom.
- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be intact and securely fastened.
- Bathroom vent window shall have a locking device (as referenced in the Windows Section of this MPS) and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall be consistent with the kitchen cabinetry standards.

**f. Privacy in Room Containing Toilet and Bath**

Every toilet and every bath shall be contained in a room or within separate rooms, which affords privacy to a person within said room or rooms.

Toilets and bathrooms shall have doors with a privacy-type lock and such doors, lock and hardware shall be operable and maintained in working order.

**g. Location of Communal Toilets and Baths**

Every communal bath required to be provided in accordance with other provisions, shall be located within a room or rooms accessible to the occupants of each dwelling unit sharing such facilities, without going through a dwelling unit of another occupant and without going outside of the dwelling.

In rooming houses, said room or rooms shall be located on the same floor as the dwelling unit, or on the floor immediately above or below the dwelling unit whose occupants share the use of such facilities.

**h. Hot and Cold Potable Water Lines to Bath and Kitchen**

Every dwelling shall have supplied water-heating facilities which are properly installed; are maintained in working condition and free of leaks; are properly connected to any required hot water lines; and are capable of heating water to be drawn for every bath as well as general usage.

Hot water storage associated with water heating facilities shall be not less than the following minimum capacities:

One (1) dwelling unit	30 gallons
Two (2) dwelling units	40 gallons
Three (3) or more dwelling units and rooming houses	50 gallons or more

Sizes and/or number of water heaters shall be based upon the number of units served. No water heaters shall be allowed in bathrooms or closets. All water heaters shall be properly vented and sealed and shall be equipped with a pressure relief valve and drip leg.

The local rehabilitation division/department and or the applicable local building inspection division/department may adjust the above-required capacities upwards or downwards based on the type and recovery time of the water heater being installed.

**i. Connection of Sanitary Facilities to Water and Sewer/Septic System**

Every kitchen sink, toilet, lavatory basin and bathtub/shower, shall be maintained in working condition and be properly connected to an approved water and sewer or septic system.

**j. Flooring**

- The kitchen and breakfast areas, dining area or dining room, bathrooms, entryways and utility rooms should be provided with no-wax vinyl flooring or flooring covered with water resistant material and rendered smooth and cleanable.
- The living room, bedrooms, family rooms and studies/dens must be provided with floor carpet covering except when:
  - Other flooring type is required to accommodate a mobility impaired tenant, or for designated accessible units.

- Existing higher-grade floor covering can be restored, such as ceramic floor tile, or wood flooring. Restoration of such higher-grade floor covering is an eligible and allowable costs; however, installation of new higher grade floor covering may not be an eligible cost for CSD funding but may be provided through other funds in the project budget.
- All floor coverings must be free of any irregularities.

**k. Interior Walls and Ceilings**

- Walls must be generally plumb, and the ceiling must be generally level.
- Walls and ceilings shall be uniformly painted and textured or have an appropriate covering (panel, wallpaper, etc.).
- Walls, ceilings and wall coverings shall be free of visible defects, such as poorly taped seams, nail dimples, inconsistent paint and texture, buckling, or any other irregularities.

**l. Utility Connections**

If Washer/Dryer connections are provided within individual dwelling units, such connections shall comply with the following:

- The water supply line housing shall be flush with the wall.
- The hot water connection shall be located on the left side.
- Dryer vents that pass-through walls or other combustible material shall be metal and vented to the outside.
- Enclosed washer and dryers shall be provided with an exhaust system, independent of all other systems and shall convey moisture to the outside of the unit.

**m. Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be accessed through a door shall have a door.
- Closet light fixtures shall not be located too close to the shelves.
  - Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

**n. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.

- Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.
- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

**o. Stairs**

Stairs will need to conform as close as possible to the below new construction standards. This requirement may be waived by Harris County CSD if in an existing structure it would be impossible or cost-prohibitive to meet the new construction requirement. In such cases, new stairs could be installed which have the same rise and run as the old.

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 ½") 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 or raised floor surfaces, including stairway riser and/or landing, located more than thirty (30") inches above the floor or grade, shall have guardrails installed that are not less than thirty-six (36") inches in height. Open guardrails and stair railings shall have immediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere of 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 ¾") and a tread depth of not less than eleven inches (11"). Treads less than eleven inches (11") requires nosing. 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.

**p. Elevators**

A minimum of two elevators shall be provided in all multi-story developments, and accessible units in such developments shall not be segregated all to one wing or floor. Where elevators are provided, one shall be a service elevator of a sufficient size (5' x 7' approx.) and be so located, as to facilitate tenant move-ins/outs and emergencies (accommodate evacuees in prone position on EMS stretchers/folding gurneys). Hooks and removable pads shall be provided in service elevators.

**q. Exits**

Every exit from every dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall comply with the following requirements:

- It shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair;
- It shall be unobstructed at all times;
- All stairways and steps of 2 or more risers shall have at least 1 handrail, and all stairways and steps, which are 5 feet or more in width, or which are open on both sides, shall have a handrail on each side;
- Every dwelling unit shall have two (2) independent means of egress;
- All handrails shall be not less than 30" vertically above the nose of the stair treads and not less than 36" above the stairway platform;
- All balconies and platforms, which are 30" or more above grade, shall have a protective railing not less than 36" in height above the balcony or platform level;
- All multiple dwellings, one- and two-family residences exempted, shall have a second exit stairway or approved fire escape available to all occupants from the second floor and above of all such structures;
- All stairs and steps shall have a rise height of not more than 8" and a tread width of not less than 9". This requirement may be waived by Harris County CSD if in an existing structure it would be impossible or cost-prohibitive to meet this requirement. In such cases, new stairs could be installed which have the same rise and run as the old.

**r. Interior Doors and Hardware**

- Bedroom, bathroom, closet doors and other interior doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance door to the primary bedroom and bathrooms shall be equipped with privacy door lock.
  - A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

**s. Window Coverings**

All windows in all buildings shall be furnished with window coverings for privacy and control of heat gain/solar shading.

**t. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

- The entry door shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.
- The doorbell chime shall be located in a central location, such as a hallway.
- The entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).
  - Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required.

**u. Ceiling Fans**

The unit shall be equipped with ceiling fans with light kits located:

- In the living room area.

- And in all the bedrooms.
- All light kits shall be LED or retrofitted with LED bulbs.

**v. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired telephone jacks. Generally located at the kitchen area and primary bedroom. Any existing telephone jacks shall be in good working order.

**w. Cable TV Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least one (1) pre-wired cable TV connections. Generally located at the living/family room.

**x. Internet (Broadband Infrastructure)**

The units must be equipped for internet service which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street.

**y. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- The Smoke Detector alarm system shall provide early notification to occupants of the unit in the event of fire. Single and multi-station smoke detectors shall be installed in the following locations:
  - In each sleeping room.
  - Outside of each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms (hallway area).
  - On each additional story of the dwelling.
  - When more than one smoke alarm is required in an individual dwelling unit the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
- A Smoke Detector alarm system designed for the hearing impaired shall be provided in the units required for accessibility, and made available as needed for hearing impaired tenants occupying any other unit not included in the minimum set aside for accessible units.

**z. Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

- Carbon Monoxide Detectors shall be installed in units where natural gas is present. At least one carbon monoxide detector shall be installed on each floor

level. If a floor level contains bedrooms at least one detector shall be located in the immediate vicinity but outside the bedrooms.

- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be listed and installed in accordance with their listings.
- Combination carbon monoxide/smoke detectors are acceptable as long as they meet all requirements.
  - Exceptions:
    1. Carbon Monoxide detectors are not required in dwelling units with no combustion appliances and without an attached garage.
    2. Carbon Monoxide detectors are not required in dwelling units with only direct vent combustion appliances and without attached garage.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm shall activate all of the alarms in the individual dwelling unit.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall receive their primary source of power from the building wiring and shall be equipped with a battery back-up. Wiring shall be permanent.

## **9. Minimum Standards for Exteriors of Structures**

### **a. Foundations and Structure**

- FOUNDATIONS- Foundations will be sound, reasonably level, and free from movement.
- STRUCTURAL WALLS- Structural framing and masonry shall be free from visible defects. Be adequately sized for current loads.

### **b. Windows and Doors**

- EXTERIOR DOORS- Doors shall be solid, weather-stripped, operate smoothly, and include a peep site, a dead bolt, and an entrance lock set.
- WINDOWS- All windows shall meet or exceed the International Energy Conservation Code. Operable windows shall have a locking device and mechanism to remain partially open.
- INTERIOR DOORS/PLACEMENT- All bedrooms, baths and closets shall have well-operating doors with locksets.

### **c. Roofing**

- PITCHED ROOFS- Fiberglass asphalt, 3-tab class A shingles with a prorated 20-year manufactured warranty with adequate ventilation.
- FLAT AND LOW SLOPE ROOFING- Built-up roofing flashing and accessories shall be installed to provide a 10-year warranty from a certified roofing company.

**d. Exterior Surfaces**

- EXTERIOR STEPS AND DECKS- Steps, stairways, and porch decks will be structurally sound, reasonably level, with smooth and even surfaces.
- EXTERIOR RAILINGS- Handrails will be present on one side of all interior and exterior steps or stairways with four or more risers, and around porches or platforms 30" or above ground level. Railing repairs will be historically sensitive.
- EXTERIOR CLADDING- Siding and trim will be intact and weatherproof. All exterior finish components will have full coverage of paint
- EXTERIOR HARDWARE - Every dwelling unit will have assigned mailbox on-site and minimum 3" high unit numbers on or near unit entry.

**10. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems**

All plumbing fixtures and plumbing components must be in good repair and in proper working condition free of leaks.

**a. Water Supply**

- The units must be provided with a continuing and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure and of appropriate quality for all household uses.
- Hot taps shall be located on the left side.
- One main water shut-off valve should be located near the entrance of the water service to each building.
- Hose connections shall be protected by backflow prevent devices (vacuum breakers).
  - This does not apply to water heater drain valves.
  - Nor water supply valves intended for connecting clothes washing machines.
- Water supply lines to the kitchen sink, lavatory basin, water heater and other water supply lines must have individual shut-off valves.
- Water line penetrations under kitchen sinks, lavatory basin, and at other locations must be adequately sealed. Clean-out penetrations located in the referenced areas or in other locations must be sealed.
- Sinks, basins or pipes shall not leak.
- The following water supply lines shall be appropriately insulated:
  - Water supply lines located in the attic.
  - Water heater cold water supply lines; also applies to water heaters located in the garage.
  - Water supply lines exposed to the weather.
- Electrical wiring under sinks/basins (usually from a garbage disposal) must meet NEC code for circuit isolation and not present a hazard or threat to the occupants. The wiring must not come in contact with water lines and possible water leakage.
- The main meter compartment shall be free of stagnated water and evidence of possible leakage.

#### **b. Drain, Waste, Vent Lines**

Units must have sanitary facilities and a safe method of sewage disposal.

- Existing drainage, waste, and vent system should be adequately sized to provide drainage and removal of wastes.
- Existing vents must prevent pressure build-up and sewer gas from entering the unit.
- Existing traps or other plumbing components that are broken or leaking shall be repaired or replaced as necessary with similar components and installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and current IRC.

#### **c. Water Heaters**

- The water heater (WH) shall provide an adequate supply of hot water at all taps and comply to all national plumbing codes.
- Each dwelling unit shall have a gas or electric WH with at least a minimum capacity of 30 gallons.
- A gas WH shall be connected to an appropriate flue, to vent combustion gases to the exterior.
- The WH shall be equipped with an appropriately sized temperature and pressure relief valve with discharge pipe properly installed.
- WH discharge line shall be directed approximately 6 inches above floor or to the exterior.
- A shut-off valve to the WH cold water supply line shall be present. The valve shall be located at or near the WH and shall be readily accessible.
- WH cold water supply line shall be completely insulated if located in the attic, garage and other locations in which the WH may be exposed to low temperatures which may result in the referenced line freezing.
- A WH installed where leakage of the WH tank or connections may cause damage, shall be installed in a galvanized drain pan or in other pans listed for such use.
- Gas and electric WH located in the garage and that have an ignition source shall be elevated 18 inches above the garage floor.
  - Exception: Elevation is not required if the WH is listed as "flammable vapor resistant" and "installation without elevation."
- The WH shall not be located in any room used or designed for sleeping purposes or in a clothes closet.
- Tank less water heaters may be used provided they meet applicable codes in appendix A.

### **11. Accessibility**

Multi-family structures shall comply with the applicable code as outlined in Appendix A and B for accessibility and visitability as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA Standards for Accessible Design.



## **VI. Minimum Acceptable Standards-New Construction of Housing and Acquisition of New Construction (No Rehabilitation)**

### **a. Single Family New Construction**

#### **1. Overview/Applicability**

The standards contained in this document establish the minimum property standards, which must be met for newly constructed housing that receives federal assistance in the purchase of or for the construction of new single-family residential housing. This document governs the inspection for compliance with these minimum property standards for homes assisted by the Downpayment Assistance Program (DAP) administered by CSD when the home to be assisted is newly constructed. This MPS also establishes the minimum standards to be met when funding is provided to a developer for the development and construction of single-family housing.

The following property standards apply to all newly constructed units that receive federal assistance through CSD. New modular units are acceptable and must conform to the same standards and requirements as units on slab foundations.

No single-family homes may be located within the 100 floodplain as shown on the current FIRM.

#### **2. Minimum Standard Features in all Homes**

##### **a. Exterior Features**

- Landscape package including trees and shrubbery consistent with comparable homes and surrounding neighborhoods with fully sodded front and sides to property line and recommended for the back lawn to property line
- Fully fenced in backyard
- Clay brick or fiber cement siding on exterior walls consistent with comparable homes
- Composition roof shingles, Class "A" Fire Rated
- Hollow metal, solid core wood, or fiberglass clad exterior doors
- Keyed lockset and deadbolt on all exterior doors

##### **b. Construction and Energy Features**

- Property must be outside the 100-year flood plain. All structures must meet the minimum requirements of the "Regulations of Harris County for Flood Plain Management as effective January 1, 2018.
- Site survey with base flood elevation noted showing compliance with above.
- Engineered concrete slab foundation *d*.

- Fully dry-walled attached garage (garages may be excluded if comparable homes within the immediate surrounding neighborhood do not include attached garages)
- Comply with codes in Appendix A

c. **Interior Features**

- No-wax vinyl flooring in kitchen/breakfast, baths, entry ways, and utility rooms
- Carpet flooring in all other rooms except on homebuyer's request
- Two (2) pre-wired telephone jacks
- Two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections
- Equipped for internet services, which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street
- GFCI outlets (Refer NEC 2020)
- Laminate kitchen countertops
- Appliances – refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, vent hood, cooking surfaces, and oven, all energy star rated where such rating is applicable
- Ice maker connection in kitchen
- Ceramic tile or ten-year warranty fiberglass molded tub and shower enclosure
- Shower tile must be installed over code approved backer board, use of "Green Rock" is prohibited.
- Cultured marble vanity tops or better in all bathrooms
- Fully painted walls and ceilings (including attached garage)
- Smoke and Carbon Monoxide combination detectors in all rooms required by IRC (Appendix A).

**3. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

- The property must be free of those foreseeable hazards and adverse conditions, which may affect the health and safety of the occupants, the structural soundness of the unit or which may impair the customary use and enjoyment of the property.
- The dwelling unit must be provided with space necessary to assure suitable living, sleeping, cooking and dining accommodations, sanitary facilities and facilities necessary to create a safe, functional, healthful, durable, and energy efficient living environment, including the following minimum structure requirements:
  - Units with three (3) or more bedrooms must have at least a two (2) car attached garage for parking.
  - Units with three (3) or more bedrooms must have at least two (2) full bathrooms. Note: At least one bathroom must be located at a hallway.

- Units with two (2) stories must have at least a one-half (½) bathroom located at the first floor. Note: The one-half (½) bathroom is in addition to any bathrooms provided solely for first floor bedrooms.
- First floor bedrooms must have a full bathroom. If first floor bathroom is dedicated solely for first floor bedroom(s) use, then a one-half (1/2) bathroom is required on the first floor.
- Defective construction, poor workmanship, evidence of continuing settlement, excessive dampness, leakage, decay, termites, or other conditions impairing the safety, sanitation or structural soundness of the dwelling shall render the property unacceptable, until the defects or conditions have been remedied and the probability of further damage eliminated.

**a. Property Elevation**

- A site survey with flood elevation noted shall be required.
- No properties may be in 100-year floodplain as shown on the effective FIRM.
- All structures must be meet the elevation requirements of the Regulations of Harris County for Floodplain Management as adopted January 1, 2018.

**b. Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all-weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and maintained by a Homeowners Association or joint maintenance agreement.
  - And (private streets) shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

**c. Access onto Property**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- The backyard shall be accessible without passing through any other unit.
  - For a row type dwelling, the access may be by means of alley, an easement, by passage through the dwelling or by other acceptable means.

**d. Service**

- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining properties.

- A single drain line in the building serves more than one unit such as a duplex, is not allowed.

**e. Utilities**

- Utilities must be independent for each dwelling unit except that common services, water, sewer, gas, and electricity, may be provided for the dwelling units under a single mortgage or ownership.
- Dwelling units shall have separate utility service shut-offs.
- Dwelling units shall have individual meters for individual utilities.
- Individual utilities shall not pass over, under or through another unit.
  - Unless provision is made for repair and maintenance of utilities without trespass on adjoining properties.
  - Or legal provision is made for permanent right of access for maintenance and repair of utilities.
- Other facilities must be independent for each dwelling unit, except common services such as laundry and storage space or heating, may be provided for two to four living unit buildings under a single mortgage.

**f. Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

- Power lines including low voltage power lines may not pass over the dwelling.
- Power lines may have to be removed or repositioned.
- Overhead wires from the street to the electrical service panel shall be no lower than 10 feet above ground and shall not come in contact with tree branches or other obstacles and shall not be reachable from nearby windows or other accessible areas.
- In the case of new subdivision developments (not in fill housing), power lines must be under ground. See housing design standards section of the Harris County Affordable Housing Standards.

**g. Landscaping, Lawn Areas, and Trees**

In general, shrubs, trees, and other landscaping shall be installed in a manner consistent with comparable homes.

- New landscaping shall conform to a low maintenance landscaping methods, that use indigenous species that are drought-tolerant to conserve water used for irrigation. Native plants should be used.
- Lawn shall be consistent with comparable units and fully sodded as described below.
- Sod (grass) shall be installed as necessary to establish consistency with comparable units.
  - The front and both sides of the unit to property line shall be fully sodded. Back yard sod is recommended.
  - Eroded areas shall be filled and graded as necessary before installing sod.
  - Sod shall be rolled and compacted to make contact with the soil for improved growth.

- The sod shall be reasonably level and reasonably free of depressions and holes.
- All concrete remnants and construction debris shall be removed.
- Lawn shall be appropriately mowed and trimmed at the time of inspection.
- Trees:
  - A minimum of one tree will be required in the front yard of each single-family units and be properly located on the site.
  - New trees required shall be 25-gallon size trees or larger and shall be appropriately planted and watered to ensure sustainability.
  - Existing trees too close to the structure or threaten the structure shall be trimmed or must be removed.
- Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.
  - Existing trees that could damage an adjacent structure above or below the foundation shall be removed.
  - Existing trees that present a safety hazard because electrical wiring runs through them shall be trimmed or the trees shall be removed.

#### **h. Backyard/Fence**

- The unit must have a fully fenced-in backyard with an access gate.
- The fence shall extend from the rear and side property lines to the rear of the structure.
- The fence must completely enclose the backyard and any structures located at the back of the property, including detached garage, storage and other structures.
- The fence shall provide security and privacy.
- The fence gate and gate hardware shall operate smoothly.
- The fence and fence gate must be free of any significant defects and irregularities.
- Fence planks and other fence components shall be securely fastened in place.

#### **i. Trash and Debris**

All trash, construction materials, discarded items and all other debris shall be completely removed from the interior and exterior of the premises prior to the final inspection.

#### **j. Drainage**

- Surface drainage shall be diverted to a storm sewer conveyance or other approved point of collection so as not to create a hazard.

- Lots shall be graded so as to provide positive, rapid drainage of surface water away from the perimeter walls of the dwelling and prevent ponding of water on the site.
  - The ground on all sides of the unit shall be elevated and should slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
  - Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the unit.
  - Drainage shall not be directed to any adjacent property.

**k. Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must operate as intended and be securely fastened, shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard, and shall direct water away from structure.
- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

**l. Paving**

- The front entrance to the unit shall have sidewalks that connects with other existing sidewalks or driveways to provide access to the dwelling.
- Walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be consistent with comparable units.
- Sidewalks on the property will be 3 feet wide minimum.

**4. Minimum Standards for Ventilation, Insulation and Attic Access**

**a. Adequate Ventilation Required**

Every habitable room shall have at least one window which can easily be opened, or other such device as will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size or minimum skylight type window size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

**b. Light and Ventilation Requirements for Bathrooms, Toilet Rooms, And Kitchens**

Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in

adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.

**c. Attic Ventilation**

Natural ventilation of structural space such as attics must be provided to reduce the effect of conditions of excess heat and moisture which are conducive to decay and deterioration of the structure.

Attics will be ventilated through the roof or through other appropriate areas.

**d. Attic and Wall Insulation**

An insulation certificate shall be posted and plainly visible in the attic at the time of the inspection, certifying the insulation has been installed in conformance with the requirements indicated on the certificate to provide thermal resistance. Insulation to meet codes outlined in Appendix A.

In the absence of the Insulation Certificate, the builder shall provide a copy of said certificate before rendering the unit acceptable.

**e. Attic Access and Attics Containing Appliances**

- Attic access shall be located in a hallway or other readily accessible location with pull-down stairs.
- Attic pull-down stairs are required to have a 250 pound weight limit, be insulated, weather stripped (living areas) and fire rated.
  - The attic pull-down stairs or scuttle shall also close to form a reasonably tight seal flush against the ceiling. This applies to pull-down stairs located in living areas and other areas (such as in a garage).
- If the primary access is located in the garage, pull-down stairs shall be provided. The pull-down stairs shall be readily accessible.
- Secondary attic accesses located in the garage may have a lid or device (scuttle) that shall be easily removed or operated, in lieu of the pull downstairs. Primary attic access shall have pull-down stairs regardless of the location.
- At least one lighting fixture shall be provided and controlled by a wall light switch or integral switch. The lighting shall be located near the equipment to be serviced.
- A convenience receptacle outlet shall be present to service appliances located in the attic.
- Attic containing appliances are required to be readily accessible with pull-down stairs. Scuttle panel may be installed in attics without appliances.
  - The clear access opening shall be a minimum of 20 inches by 30 inches where such dimensions are large enough to allow the removal of the largest appliance.

- The passageway to the appliances shall be continuous solid flooring and not less than 24 inches wide.
- A level service space at least 30 inches deep and 30 inches wide shall be present along all sides of the appliance where access is required.
- Cables and wiring located within the attic shall be housed in an electrical box with a cover plate and securely fastened.

## 5. Minimum Space, Use, and Location Requirements

### a. Minimum Ceiling Height

No room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 8'0".

### b. Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath, And Toilet Rooms

No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.

### c. Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities

Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.

### d. Minimum Storage and Counter Areas –

- Each bedroom shall have a storage floor area of at least 8 square feet per bedroom in room. Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor space in addition to the bedrooms' closets, located within the dwelling unit.
- Kitchens in dwelling units with three or fewer bedrooms shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of forty-eight (48) cubic feet. Each kitchen shall have a minimum of eight (8) linear feet of counter area.
- Kitchens in dwelling units with four or more bedrooms shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of sixty (60) cubic feet, and minimum ten (10) linear feet of counter area.

## 6. Minimum Standards for Electrical Service and Lighting

The dwelling shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

### a. Lighting Outlets

Habitable Room Lighting (Light Fixtures):

- At least one wall switch-controlled lighting fixture shall be installed in every habitable room and bathroom.
  - In other than kitchens and bathrooms, one or more receptacles controlled by a wall light switch shall be considered equivalent to the required lighting fixture.
- Additional locations:
  - At least one wall switch controlled lighting fixture shall be installed in hallways, stairways, and attached garages.
  - At least one wall switch controlled lighting fixture shall be installed to provide illumination on the exterior side of each outdoor egress door having grade level access.
  - Interior stairways: a wall switch at each floor level to control the lighting fixture where the stairway has six or more risers.
  - Exception: In hallway, stairways, and outdoor egress doors, remote, central, or automatic control of lighting shall be permitted.
- All common halls and stairways between living space must be well lighted with a fixture controlled by 3-way switches at both ends of the hall or stairway.
- In attics, under floor spaces, utility rooms, and basements, at least one lighting fixture shall be installed where these spaces are used for storage or contain equipment that requires servicing. The lighting fixture shall be provided at or near the equipment requiring servicing.
- All light fixtures shall be LED or have LED bulbs installed.

**b. Electrical**

All electrical shall be installed in accordance with the applicable codes in Appendix A.

**7. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

All components must comply with the applicable codes in Appendix A.

**8. Minimum Standards for Interiors of Structures**

**a. Kitchen Appliances and Countertop**

- Kitchens shall be equipped with a minimum of:
  - One double bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen. Hot water tap should be located on the left side.
  - A continuous and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure shall be provided for all kitchen applications.
  - Kitchen should have a refrigerator receptacle and an icemaker connection.
  - The kitchen must have laminate countertops or better and such countertops must be free of any irregularities.
- Stove/range hoods shall vent to the outside and not to the attic, crawl space or any area inside the dwelling. An exception may be considered for kitchens/bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present. When it is not

practical to vent exhaust to the outside, charcoal filtered non-vented hoods may be acceptable. A waiver must be granted.

- Kitchen stoves or ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices.
- Special built-in spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops and in other areas shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to house. Stove/Range and refrigerator are exempt.
- All appliances installed must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and Applicable codes in Appendix A.

**b. Kitchen Cabinetry**

- Kitchen cabinets shall be leveled and securely fastened.
- Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled.
- Cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Cabinets shall be free of any irregularities.

**c. Bathroom Standards**

- Bathrooms shall be equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a shower/tub unit with hot and cold running water, a shower curtain rod and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.
  - A continuous and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure provided shall be provided for all bathroom applications.
  - Bathroom fixtures shall have at least a ten (10) year manufacturer's warranty. Builder or other authority may have to provide said warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- All bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures. These enclosures can include ceramic tile or fiberglass molded enclosures.
  - Enclosures shall have at least a ten (10) year manufacturer's warranty. Builder or other authority may have to provide said warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Full bathrooms shall be equipped with a bathtub and a shower.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside via ducts or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall conform to the same standards as kitchen cabinetry.
- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be securely fastened.

**d. Flooring**

- The kitchen and breakfast areas, dining area or dining room, bathrooms, entryways and utility rooms should be provided with no-wax vinyl flooring or flooring covered with water resistant material and rendered smooth and cleanable.
- The living room, bedrooms, family rooms and studies/dens must be provided with floor carpet covering. Another flooring type may be provided to accommodate a handicap buyer.
- All floor coverings must be free of any irregularities.

**e. Interior Walls and Ceilings**

- Generally, walls must be plumb, and the ceiling must be level.
- Walls and ceilings shall be uniformly painted and textured or have an appropriate covering (panel, wallpaper, etc.).
- Walls, ceilings and wall coverings shall be free of visible defects, such as poorly taped seams, nail dimples, inconsistent paint and texture, buckling, or any other irregularities.

**f. Utility Room Standards**

- Washer/Dryer connections shall be provided. All appliances installed must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and Applicable codes in Appendix A.

**g. Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be accessed through a door shall have a door.
- Closet light fixtures shall not be located too close to the shelves.
  - Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

**h. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.
  - Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.

- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

**i. Stairs**

Stairs must conform to new construction standards. All newly constructed stairs shall comply with applicable codes in Appendix A.

**j. Interior Doors and Hardware**

- Bedroom, bathroom, closet doors and other interior doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance door to the primary bedroom and bathrooms shall be equipped with privacy door lock.
  - A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

**k. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

- The entry door shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.
- The doorbell chime shall be located in a central location, such as a hallway.
- The entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).
  - Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required.

**l. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired telephone jacks generally located at the kitchen area and primary bedroom.

**m. Cable TV Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections generally located at the living/family room and the primary bedroom.

**n. Internet (Broadband Infrastructure)**

The home must be equipped for internet service which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent

**o. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- The Smoke Detector alarm system shall be provided as required by applicable codes in Appendix A.

**p. Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

- Carbon monoxide detectors shall be installed in accordance with applicable codes shown in Appendix A.

**9. Minimum Standards for Exteriors of Structures**

**a. Foundations and Structure**

**Foundations** (slab and continuous spread footing)

Foundations shall be designed and sealed by a professional engineer. Foundations shall meet all applicable codes in Appendix A.

**Structural (Exterior) Walls**

- Exterior walls cladding/siding styles shall be consistent with comparable homes in the community is required.
- Structural framing and masonry shall be free from visible defects and adequately sized for current loads.
- Siding shall have at least a fifty (50) year manufacturer's warranty. Builder may have to provide warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- Exterior cladding – siding and trim will be intact and weather tight.
- Exterior wall components shall have a full and uniform coverage of paint.

**Roof Covering**

The roof covering shall prevent moisture from entering and shall provide future utility, durability and economy of maintenance.

- Roofing shall be fiberglass asphalt shingles with a prorated thirty (30) year manufactured warranty. Builder may have to provide warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- Flashing shall be installed at wall and roof intersections; and wherever there is a change in roof slope or direction; and around roof openings.
- Installation of gutters and downspouts shall be consistent with comparable homes.

**Chimney**

Chimneys shall be structurally sound, durable, smoke-tight and capable of conveying flue gases to the exterior safely.

- Chimney cap must be present.
- Proper flashing must be present.

- Masonry must be free of any defects or any irregularities.
- Fireplace damper shall operate as intended.
- Fireplace hearth shall be free from defects.
- Gas fireplace shall have a gas shut off valve in proximity.

#### **Stairways, Handrails, Decks and Guards (Exterior)**

- Exterior steps, stairways, and porch decks shall be structurally sound and reasonably level with smooth and even surfaces.
- Porches, balconies or raised floor surfaces located more than 30 inches above the floor or grade shall have handrails/guards not less than 36 inches in height.
- Stairways with three or more risers should have a handrail at least on one side of the stairway.
  - The handgrip portion of the handrail shall be rounded smooth and safe.

### **b. Exterior Doors and Windows**

#### **Exterior/Egress Doors**

Exterior/Egress doors include all doors leading to the outside from the inside and leading into the house or garage from the outside. Connecting doors leading from the inside of the dwelling into the garage shall not be considered an exterior/egress door. A vehicle door in a garage shall not be considered an outdoor egress door (exterior door).

- All exterior/egress doors shall be readily opened from the side from which egress is to be made without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort.
- Exterior/Egress doors:
  - Shall be solid core wood or metal/fiberglass clad.
  - Shall be weather-stripped and reasonably sealed.
  - Shall operate smoothly.
  - Shall be equipped with a single key deadbolt lock and entrance lock set or entry handle-set with a deadbolt. All door locks referenced above shall operate smoothly as intended.
  - Shall have all six sides uniformly painted with an appropriate paint.
- Glazed entrance doors including storm doors, sliding glass patio doors, and glazing immediately adjacent to these doors must be safe and securely fasten.

#### **Windows**

- All windows shall meet or exceed the applicable codes in Appendix A Energy Conservation Code.
- Double pane Low E windows shall be installed.
- Windows designed to open shall have a locking device and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Windows and window hardware shall operate smoothly.

- Windows must be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools or force greater than normal operation.
- All windows designed to be open shall have insect screens.

**c. Other Exterior Amenities**

**Mailbox**

- Units must have individual mailboxes.
- Or nearby cluster boxes.

**Address Numbers**

The unit must have a minimum of 4-inch high address numbers placed on the unit and plainly visible and legible from the street or road fronting the property.

**10. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems**

All components of the plumbing system shall meet the applicable codes in Appendix

**11. Garage**

Garage shall meet all applicable codes in Appendix A.

**12. Accessibility**

Single-family structures shall comply with the applicable code as outlined in Appendix A and B for accessibility and visitability.

**b. Multi-Family New Construction**

**1. Overview/Applicability**

The standards contained herein establish the minimum property standards (MPS) which must be met for newly constructed multi-family residential rental housing or for buildings undergoing conversion of land use with substantial rehabilitation to multi-family residential rental housing (projects proposing conversion activities should consult with CSD staff before application). This MPS establishes the minimum standards to be met when funding for land acquisition and/or construction is provided to an owner, developer or sponsor for the development and construction of multi-family rental housing, including rental housing exclusively for seniors, or special needs housing.

**2. Minimum Standard Features**

**a. Exterior Features**

- Landscape plan required and landscaping to include the use of low-maintenance landscaping methods and materials, and drought-tolerant,

indigenous species

- Clay brick, cementitious plaster, or fiber cement siding on exterior walls
- Composition Roof Shingles -Class "A" Fire Rated
- Hollow metal, solid core wood, or fiberglass clad exterior doors
- Single cylinder deadbolt and keyless deadbolt at all exterior doors
- Bar or pin lock at all exterior sliding doors if present
- Play areas required in all family developments, and outdoor recreation space for senior developments
- Perimeter fencing enclosing entire site with wrought iron at main entry and privacy fencing around the remainder with pedestrian and vehicular access gates for security

b. Construction & Energy Efficiency Features

- No building can be located in the 100-year floodplain, without a mitigation plan approved by Harris County CSD.
- The building must meet all applicable codes in Appendix A.
- The building must be elevated in accordance with the Regulation as of Harris County for Floodplain Management as effective January 1, 2018.

c. Interior Features

- No-wax vinyl flooring in Kitchen/Breakfast, Baths, Entry Ways, and Utility rooms
- Carpet flooring in all other rooms except accessible units may include no-way vinyl flooring throughout the unit
- Appliances – refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, vent hood, cooking surfaces, oven, washer and dryer (in unit or common), all energy star rated where such rating is applicable
- Ice maker connection in Kitchen
- Two (2) pre-wired telephone Jacks
- Two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections
- Equipped for internet services, which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street
- GFCI wiring in wet Areas
- Laminate kitchen countertops
- Ceramic tile or ten-year warranty fiberglass molded tub and shower enclosure
- Cultured marble vanity tops or better in all Bathrooms
- Shower over Tubs
- Ceiling Fans with Light Kits in Living Room and all Bedrooms
- Fully painted walls and ceilings
- Smoke detectors in all bedrooms and adjacent hallways

- Carbon Monoxide detectors in rooms with gas operating appliances (such as stoves and fireplaces)

### **3. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

- The property must be free of those foreseeable hazards and adverse conditions, which may affect the health and safety of the occupants, the structural soundness of the unit or which may impair the customary use and enjoyment of the property.
- The development must be provided with space necessary within each residential unit to assure suitable living, sleeping, cooking and dining accommodations, sanitary facilities and facilities necessary to create a safe, functional, healthful, durable, and energy efficient living environment.
- Defective construction, poor workmanship, evidence of continuing settlement, excessive dampness, leakage, decay, termites, or other conditions impairing the safety, sanitation or structural soundness of the dwelling shall render the property unacceptable, until the defects or conditions have been remedied and the probability of further damage eliminated.

#### **a. Property Elevation**

- A site survey showing compliance of Regulation of Harris County for Flood Plain Management as effective January 1, 2018, must be submitted.

#### **b. Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets within and that provide access to the project site must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all-weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and properly maintained.
  - And (private streets) shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

#### **c. Parking/Curbs**

- Unless stricter requirements apply, parking shall comply with the following minimum requirements and noted exceptions:
  - One (1) parking space for each 1-bedroom or larger dwelling unit;
  - Units may have less than one (1) parking space for each dwelling unit for special purpose housing (i.e., seniors, permanent supportive

housing or transitional housing developments). Such exceptions shall be reviewed on a case by case basis by CSD.

- Parking spaces shall be at least 8'-6" wide except at designated handicapped parking space(s) which shall be in compliance with applicable codes.
- Poured concrete curb at outer perimeter of onsite drive lanes and parking.

**d. Access and Service**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining units.

**e. Utilities**

Utilities shall be centralized wherever practicable to realize economies of efficiency in operation or maintenance. Layout of electrical distribution, and where possible of heat and water systems, shall be designed for separate metering whenever differential rates do not cause separate metering to be more expensive, in which case the installation shall be readily convertible to separate metering in the future. Whenever possible, electrical entrances shall be underground leading from a point where overhead service does not intrude upon the residential scale.

**f. Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

Powerlines must meet applicable provisions of codes in Appendix A.

**g. Landscaping, Lawn Areas and Trees**

In general, landscaping shall be installed to compliment the building and maximize the use of open space. A landscape plan prepared by an architect or landscape architect is required and shall include detailed drawings of landscaping, i.e. fencing, planting beds, trees and shrubs (species and sizes) retained and removed, play areas, lighting, seating, and all features adding to the exterior quality of the development. At minimum, landscape plans shall meet the following minimum standards:

- New landscaping shall conform to a low maintenance landscaping methods, that use indigenous species that are drought-tolerant to conserve water used for irrigation. Native plants should be used.
- Sod (grass) shall be installed at all unpaved surfaces and plantings along the existing building foundation at street facing elevations.
- Additional sod (grass) may also be installed to stop erosion. Eroded areas shall be filled and graded as necessary before installing sod.

- Lawn shall be appropriately mowed and trimmed at the time of the inspection.
- Sod shall not be installed at densely shaded areas and in extremely sloped areas. Add mulch or soil amendments as appropriate.

#### Trees

- New trees installed shall be 25-gallon size trees or larger and shall be appropriately planted and watered to ensure sustainability.
- Existing, healthy trees shall be preserved and maintained.
- Trees too close to the structure or threaten the structure shall be trimmed or removed.
  - Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.

#### **h. Fence**

- The site including all buildings on site must be fully fenced-in with access gate(s).
- Property shall be entirely fenced with wrought iron at main entry and privacy fencing around the remainder. Minimum fence height is 6ft.
- The fence must completely enclose all structures, including storage buildings and other structures.
- The fence shall provide security.
- All fence components including fence gate(s) and gate hardware shall operate smoothly.
- The fence and fence gate(s) must be free of any significant defects and irregularities.
- All fence components shall be securely fastened in place.
- Electronic access gates shall operate smoothly and appropriately.
- Emergency access shall be provided at mechanically operated gates.

#### **i. Play Areas/Play Equipment**

Play areas are required for all family developments. Play areas/play equipment shall comply with the following requirements:

- Entire play area must be filled with synthetic protective materials and equipped with reasonable play equipment for the size of the lot. The perimeter shall be designed to keep the play area material from spilling, such as curb and/or sidewalk.
- New play equipment shall be installed in compliance with equipment manufacturer requirements.
- Lumber treated with chromate copper arsenate shall not be used for play equipment.
- Provide drain beneath all permeable play area surface materials with outlet to nearest storm sewer or drainage ditch.

- Provide shade, seating, and trash receptacle near all play areas.

**j. Trash and Debris**

- The property shall be free from any accumulation of trash, rubbish and garbage, dead branches, discarded items, and other conditions conducive to infestation of insects, vermin and other pests.
- Appropriately sized and secure trash receptacles must be provided and be properly screened.

**k. Drainage**

- The site must be graded to provide positive drainage away from the perimeter walls of buildings and to prevent standing water (ponding) on the site.
- The ground on all sides of each building shall be elevated and shall slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
- Drainage on site shall drain away from buildings, but not directed to any adjacent housing or structures.
- Drainage of paved areas such as parking lots shall be designed to prevent ponding and directed to proper drainage facilities.
- Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the building.

**l. Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must operate as intended and be securely fastened, shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard, and shall direct water away from structure.
- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

**m. Paving and Walkways**

- Essential walks and drives shall be installed
- The front entrance to the unit shall have sidewalks that connects with other existing sidewalks or driveways to provide access to the dwelling.
- Walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be consistent with comparable units.

- Sidewalks on the property will be 3 feet wide minimum.

**n. Signage**

**Temporary signage** shall be erected prior to start of construction and shall remain in place until construction is completed. Such temporary signage shall be located on the project site most at a location most visible to the public. Such temporary signage shall meet the following specifications:

- 4' x 8" framed, single-face  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick grand plywood mounted on 4" x 4" members. Plywood to be Southern Yellow Pine AC Grade.
- Sign shall be fully painted front, back and sides with two (2) coats of waterproof enamel white paint before any graphics are printed on sign.
- Wood members used must be preservative treated.
- Sign must be capable of withstanding 50 mph gale winds.

**Permanent development sign** shall be provided and installed on site from materials consistent with those used in the construction of the main property. It shall provide name of development, Equal Housing Opportunity logo, and leasing information/phone number.

**Permanent bronze plaque** recognizing Harris County, and/or HUD as source of funding for the project shall be installed at the project site. Such plaque shall be installed at the main entrance to the property, usually in the common building where leasing offices are located, prior to construction completion. Specifications for plaque shall be found in project contract documents.

**4. Minimum Standards for Ventilation, Insulation and Attics**

All building must meet applicable provision of codes in Appendix A.

**5. Minimum Space, Use and Location Requirements**

**a. Minimum Ceiling Height**

No room in a dwelling unit or common spaces shall have a ceiling height of less than 8'0".

**b. Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath, And Toilet Rooms**

No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.

**c. Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities**

Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit or for SROs with communal facilities on the same floor as the dwelling units using the individual facilities.

**d. Minimum Storage and Counter Areas –**

- Each bedroom shall have a storage floor area of at least 8 square feet per bedroom in room. Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor space in addition to the bedrooms' closets, located within the dwelling unit.
- Kitchens in one-bedroom or larger units shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of forty-eight (48) cubic feet. Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 8 linear feet of counter area.
- Kitchens in efficiency (0-bedroom) units may have a minimum enclosed storage area of thirty-six (36) cubic feet, and a minimum of six (6) linear feet of counter area.

**e. Common Areas and Facilities**

Each development at a minimum shall have common areas/facilities to accommodate property management, maintenance, laundry, group/social service activities, and mail pick-up/delivery. Areas of common spaces shall be proportional to the number of units in the development. All common facilities provided for residents shall be accessible without passing through the lobby or lounge. If provided, medical and social services, central dining facilities, and similar common facilities (including trash removal) shall be grouped in close proximity to the main circulation elements but in such a way that it is not necessary for a resident to pass through the lobby or lounge to

reach them. Proposed furnishings for common areas shall be appropriate for the spaces to be furnished and for the intended resident, with particular attention given to the needs of elderly and special needs residents.

▪ **Common Laundry Facilities**

There must be a minimum of one (1) washer and one (1) dryer per twelve (12) dwelling units if washer/dryer hookups are not available in each dwelling unit. If hookups are available in each dwelling unit, there must be a minimum of one (1) washer and one (1) dryer per twenty (20) dwelling units. If in addition to washer/dryer hookups, washers and dryers are provided in each unit, a common washer and dryer facility is not required. Where common laundry facilities are provided, such facilities shall include:

- A table or countertop for folding laundry;
- If feasible, a window to the exterior;
- Adequate entrance lighting, which must on from dusk to dawn to assist in greater security during evening hours;
- A floor drain; and
- A seating area within, or immediately adjacent to, or in the line of sight of the laundry room.

▪ **Community/Office Space**

- All special needs and elderly developments shall provide a community room, social service space, or other common area space for the provision of services, and group activities. Such space shall be sized to be proportional to the number units and number of residents utilizing such space and must sufficiently accommodate the type of services to be provided.
- All developments consisting of twenty (20) or more residential dwelling units or more must have site office of at least 200 square feet (inclusive of accessibility toilet facilities) and a maintenance room of at least 100 square feet.

▪ **Common Mail Area/Space**

Each dwelling unit shall have a designated mailbox provided in a centralized location onsite. If located outside, such location shall be protected from weather. Regardless of location, mailboxes shall be accessible to the mail carrier, convenient to inhabitants, handicapped accessible, and located, screened or related to other facilities so as not to be obtrusive.

**6. Minimum Standards for Electrical Service and Lighting**

Each dwelling unit shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

- a. Electrical switches and outlets shall be installed in accordance with applicable codes in Appendix A.
- b. All light fixtures shall be LED or equipped with LED bulbs.
  - Electrical switches and outlets shall be installed in accordance with applicable codes in Appendix A.

## **7. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

### **a. Thermostatic Controls**

Minimum standards for heating and cooling all systems and components must meet applicable codes in Appendix A.

## **8. Minimum Standards for Interior of Structures**

### **a. Kitchen Standards**

Every dwelling unit shall have a kitchen room or kitchenette equipped with the following:

- **Kitchen Sink** - It shall contain one double bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen, properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and maintained in working order. Hot water tap should be located on the left side
- **Stove** - It shall contain a stove (gas or electric), properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended. Kitchen stoves or ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices.
- **Stove/range hoods** – shall vent to the outside and not to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling.
- **Refrigerator** - It shall contain a refrigerator with freezers, properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
- **Countertops** – It must have laminate countertops or better and such countertops must be free of any irregularities.
- **Cabinets**- shall be leveled and securely fastened. Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled (no gaps present). Cabinets shall be free of any irregularities, and cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware shall operate smoothly.
- **Special built-in** in spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to

house. Stove/range and refrigerator are exempt.

- **All appliances** - where applicable, must be energy star rated, and all shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and Appendix A – Building codes.

#### **b. Bathroom Standards**

- All units shall have private bathrooms equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a shower/tub unit with hot and cold running water, a shower curtain rod and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.
  - A continuous and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure provided shall be provided for all bathroom applications.
  - Bathroom fixtures shall have at least a ten (10) year manufacturer's warranty. Builder or other authority may have to provide said warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- All bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures. These enclosures can include ceramic tile or fiberglass molded enclosures.
  - Fiberglass molded enclosures shall have at least a ten (10) year manufacturer's warranty. Builder or other authority may have to provide said warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Full bathrooms shall be equipped with a bathtub and a shower.
- Grab bars in shower areas shall be provided in all accessible units and in all units in developments exclusively for seniors or for special needs populations.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside via ducts or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall conform to the same standards as kitchen cabinetry.
- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be securely fastened.

#### **c. Privacy in Room Containing Toilet and Bath**

Every toilet and every bath shall be contained in a room or within separate rooms, which affords privacy to a person within said room or rooms.

Toilets and bathrooms shall have doors with a privacy-type lock and such doors, lock and hardware shall be operable and maintained in working order.

**d. Hot and Cold Potable Water Lines to Bath and Kitchen**

Every dwelling shall have supplied water-heating facilities which are properly installed; are maintained in working condition and free of leaks; are properly connected to any required hot water lines; and are capable of heating water to be drawn for every bath as well as general usage.

Hot water storage associated with water heating facilities shall be not less than the following minimum capacities:

One (1) dwelling unit	30 gallons
Two (2) dwelling units	40 gallons
Three (3) or more dwelling units and rooming houses	50 gallons or more

Sizes and/or number of water heaters shall be based upon the number of units served. No water heaters shall be allowed in bathrooms or closets. All water heaters shall be properly vented and sealed and shall be equipped with a pressure relief valve and drip leg.

**e. Connection of Sanitary Facilities to Water and Sewer/Septic System**

Every kitchen sink, toilet, lavatory basin and bathtub/shower, shall be maintained in working condition and be properly connected to an approved water and sewer or septic system.

**f. Flooring**

- The kitchen and breakfast areas, dining area or dining room, bathrooms, entryways and utility rooms should be provided with no-wax vinyl flooring or flooring covered with water resistant material and rendered smooth and cleanable.
- The living room, bedrooms, family rooms and studies/dens must be provided with floor carpet covering except when:
  - Other flooring material is required to accommodate a mobility impaired tenant.
  - Higher-grade floor covering is installed, such as ceramic floor tile, laminate or wood flooring. Such higher-grade floor covering may not be eligible costs for CSD funding but may be provided through other funds in the project budget.
- All floor coverings must be free of any irregularities.

**g. Interior Walls and Ceilings**

- Walls must be generally plumb, and the ceiling must be generally level.

- Walls and ceilings shall be uniformly painted and textured or have an appropriate covering (panel, wallpaper, etc.).
- Walls, ceilings and wall coverings shall be free of visible defects, such as poorly taped seams, nail dimples, inconsistent paint and texture, buckling, or any other irregularities.

#### **h. Utility Connections**

If Washer/Dryer connections are provided within individual units, such connections shall comply with applicable codes in Appendix A.:

- The water supply line housing shall be flush with the wall.
- The hot water connection shall be located on the left side.
- Dryer vents that pass through walls or other combustible material shall be metal and vented to the outside.
- Enclosed washer and dryers shall be provided with an exhaust system, independent of all other systems and shall convey moisture to the outside of the unit.

#### **i. Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be accessed through a door shall have a door.
- Closet light fixtures shall not be located too close to the shelves.
  - Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

#### **j. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.
  - Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.
- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

#### **k. Stairs**

Stairs must conform to new applicable codes in Appendix A

#### **l. Elevators**

A minimum of two elevators shall be provided in all multi-story developments, and accessible units in such developments shall not be segregated all to one wing or floor. Where elevators are provided, one shall be a service elevator of a sufficient size (5' x 7' approx.) and be so located, as to facilitate tenant move-ins/outs and emergencies (accommodate evacuees in prone position on EMS stretchers/folding gurneys). Hooks and removable pads shall be provided in service elevators.

**m. Exits**

Every exit from every dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall comply with the applicable codes in Annex A.

**n. Interior Doors and Hardware**

- Bedroom, bathroom, closet doors and other interior doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance door to the primary bedroom and bathrooms shall be equipped with privacy door lock.
  - A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

**o. Window Coverings**

All windows in all buildings shall be furnished with window coverings for privacy and control of heat gain/solar shading.

**p. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

- The entry door shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.
- The doorbell chime shall be located in a central location, such as a hallway.
- The entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).
  - Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required.

**q. Ceiling Fans**

- The unit shall be equipped with ceiling fans with light kits located:
  - In the living room area.
  - And in all the bedrooms.
  - All light kits shall be LED or retrofitted with LED bulbs.

**r. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired telephone jacks generally located at the kitchen area and primary bedroom. Exception for efficiency units, one (1) pre-wired telephone jack is allowed.

**s. Cable TV Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections generally located at the living/family room and the primary bedroom. Exception for efficiency units, one (1) pre-wired cable TV connection is allowed located in living/sleeping area.

**t. Internet (Broadband Infrastructure)**

The units must be equipped for internet service which includes wiring, broadband infrastructure, and utility/off site connections from the property line to the adjacent street.

**u. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- The Smoke Detector alarm system shall be in accordance with applicable codes in Appendix A.
- A Smoke Detector alarm system designed for the hearing impaired shall be provided if it is known that the unit shall be occupied by a hearing-impaired occupant(s).

**v. Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

- Carbon Monoxide Detectors shall be installed in accordance with applicable codes in Appendix A.

**9. Minimum Standards for Exterior of Structures**

**a. Foundations and Structure**

**Foundations** (slab and continuous spread footing)

Foundations shall be designed and sealed by a professional engineer and meeting the requirements of the geotechnical.

### **Structural (Exterior) Walls**

- Foundations shall meet all applicable codes in Appendix A and be free from visible defects.
- Clay brick, cementitious plaster, or fiber cement siding on exterior walls is required.
- Structural framing and masonry shall be free from visible defects and adequately sized for current loads.
- Siding shall have at least a fifty (50) year manufacturer's warranty. Builder may have to provide warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- Exterior cladding – siding and trim will be intact and weather tight.
- Exterior wall components shall have a full and uniform coverage of paint.

### **Roof Covering**

The roof covering shall prevent moisture from entering and shall provide future utility, durability and economy of maintenance.

- Roofing shall be fiberglass asphalt shingles with a prorated thirty (30) year manufactured warranty. Builder may have to provide warranty before the unit is rendered acceptable.
- Flashing shall be installed at wall and roof intersections; and wherever there is a change in roof slope or direction; and around roof openings.
- Installation of gutters and downspouts shall be consistent with comparable homes.

### **Chimney**

Chimneys shall be structurally sound, durable, smoke-tight and capable of conveying flue gases to the exterior safely.

- Chimney cap must be present.
- Proper flashing must be present.
- Masonry must be free of any defects or any irregularities.
- Fireplace damper shall operate as intended.
- Fireplace hearth shall be free from defects.
- Gas fireplace shall have a gas shut off valve in proximity.

### **Stairways, Handrails, Decks and Guards (Exterior)**

- Exterior steps, stairways, and porch decks shall meet applicable codes in Appendix A.

### **b. Exterior Doors and Windows**

## **Exterior/Egress Doors**

Exterior/Egress doors include all doors leading to the outside from the inside and leading into the house or garage from the outside. Connecting doors leading from the inside of the dwelling into the garage shall be considered an exterior/egress door. A vehicle door in a garage shall not be considered an outdoor egress door (exterior door).

- All exterior/egress doors shall be readily opened from the side from which egress is to be made without the use of a key or special knowledge or effort. This applies to connecting doors leading from the inside into the garage.
- Exterior/Egress doors:
  - Shall be solid core or metal/fiberglass clad.
  - Shall be weather-stripped and reasonably sealed.
  - Shall operate smoothly.
  - Shall be equipped with a single key deadbolt lock and entrance lock set or entry handle-set with a deadbolt. All door locks referenced above shall operate smoothly as intended.
  - Shall have all six sides uniformly painted with an appropriate paint.
- Glazed entrance doors including storm doors, sliding glass patio doors, and glazing immediately adjacent to these doors must be safe and securely fasten.

## **Windows**

- All windows shall meet applicable codes in Appendix A. or exceed the International Energy Conservation Code.
- Windows designed to open shall have a locking device and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Windows and window hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Windows must be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys or tools or force greater than normal operation.
- All windows designed to be open shall have insect screens.

### **c. Other Exterior Amenities**

#### **Building/Unit Numbers**

Each residential building in a development shall be clearly labeled identifying the range of dwelling unit numbers contained in each building. Such building signage shall be designed to be clearly visible emergency personnel for purpose of responding to security and safety calls.

Each dwelling unit in the development shall have clearly identified unit numbers measuring at least 3 inches in height placed near the unit's main entry and plainly visible and legible.

**10. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems**

Water supply shall meet applicable codes in Appendix A.

**11. Accessibility**

Multifamily structures shall comply with the applicable code as outlined in Appendix A and B for accessibility and visitability as well as Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and ADA Standards for Accessible Design.

**12. Minimum Codes, Inspections and Submittals**

- All new construction covered by this document shall meet all provisions of the applicable codes in Appendix A unless specifically approved in writing by the Office of the County Engineer.
- Plans shall clearly detail compliance with Section 11 on a separate sheet labeled "Accessibility".
- Inspections as required by the applicable codes shall be conducted by individuals qualified by those codes to conduct the inspection submittals of plans for review for compliance with this document shall be made to the Office of the County Engineer through Harris County CSD.
- Upon approval, the County Engineer will issue a letter indicating approval for construction proposed. Said letter shall be brought to the Harris County Permit Office in order to obtain applicable permits at no charge.

## Appendix A: Building Codes

2015 International Residential Code (with Houston Amendments)	ICC	February 1, 2016
2015 International Building Code (with Houston Amendments)	ICC	February 1, 2016
2015 International Fire Code (with Houston Amendments)	ICC	February 1, 2016
2015 International Mechanical Code (with Houston Amendments)	IAPMO	February 1, 2016
2015 International Plumbing Code (with Houston Amendments)	IAPMO	February 1, 2016
2020 National Electrical Code (State Mandated)	NFPA	September 15, 2017
2015 International Fuel Gas Code	IFGC	
2015 International Existing Building Code	IEBC	
2018 National Fire Protection Agency	NFPA	
Sign Code	COH	
2015 International Energy Conservation Code (with Houston Amendments) <i>For One and Two-Family Dwellings and Multi-Family 3 stories or less.</i>	ICC	October 24, 2016
2015 International Energy Conservation Code (with Houston Amendments) <i>For commercial Structures, including residential Structures more than 3 stories</i>	ICC	December 9, 2016
ASHRAE 90.1-2013 (with Houston Amendments) <i>For commercial Structures, including Residential Structures more than 3 stories</i> HUD Fair Housing Accessibility Guidelines – Design Guidelines for Accessible/Adoptable Housing	ASHRAI	December 9, 2016

## Appendix B: Single-Family Accessibility and Visitability Requirements

SINGLE FAMILY ACCESSIBILITY AND VISITABILITY REQUIREMENTS (CONSTRUCTION PACKAGE)	
Construction Standards: Applicable to Recon./New Const., Rehab. All Types.	SINGLE FAMILY ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS BY IMPAIRMENT (CONSTRUCTION PACKAGE)
Mobility Impairment	
	The following construction standards apply to any single-family dwelling, including rental, that is built using Harris County and federal funding, in part, or as a whole. The housing unit must be constructed so that it includes the following:
All	1.1 Accessible route 3-4 ft. Provided from street, driveway, or parking pad to one entrance door.
Recon/New Const.	1.2 Ramp: max 8.33%; handrails both sides if greater than 5%; clear width tween handrails is 36"; landing every 30' of run and same width as ramp and 5' long; if ramp changes direction landing is provided min. 5x5'; handrails continuous, or extend 12" beyond top and bottom of ramp segment; ramps non-skid material; wooden ramps treated wood.
Recon/New Const.	1.3 No step entrance door at front, side or rear is on accessible route w/max 1/2" threshold height.
All	1.4 Entrance door width is min. 36".
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	1.5 Interior doors provide clear 32" clear opening when door is open 90 degrees, unless providing access to closet of less than 15 sf area.
All	1.6 Hallway(s) width min 36"; level; bevel edge thresholds.
Recon/New Const.	1.7 Breaker box located on first floor in utility room installed max 48" to highest operable part; if no utility room breaker box located where easily accessible outside common areas such as living/dining/hallway.
Recon/New Const.	1.8 Highest operable part is max 48" for each first floor light switch, thermostat and other control devices.
Recon/New Const.	1.9 Electrical receptacles provided min 15" above finished floor.
Recon/New Const. Rehab. as requested.	1.10 Door pulls/faucet handles are lever type operable with closed fist.
BATHROOM	
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	2.1 Grab bar 36" in length provided behind toilet 12" max from adjacent sidewall. If wall space doesn't allow 36" grab bar, then 24" grab bar centered on toilet is acceptable.
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	2.2 Grab bar 42" in length provided at side of toilet 12" from back wall extending min 54" from back wall.
All	2.3 Toilet seat provided 16-19" above floor; toilet installed in corner of bathroom so that toilet centerline is 18" from wall; non-grab bar side of toilet min. 15" from wall, vanity, front approach lavatory or 24" side approach lav.

All	2.4 Toilet flush valve controls provided on open (wide) side of toilet.
Recon/New Const.	2.5 Front approach lavatory installed with centerline of fixture min 15" horizontally from wall; side approach lavatory installed 24" from wall; rim height is max 34"; knee clearance provided min 27" high with 17" deep for front approach lavatory exposed hot water supply lines and p-trap insulated.
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	2.6 Maneuver space min 30" x 48" provided to position wheelchair beyond swing of door.
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	2.7 If bathtub/shower located in bathroom, a clear access aisle adjacent to lav is provided 30" x 48" measured from foot of tub.
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	2.8 Stall showers provided min 36" x 36"; clear floor space provided min 30" x 48" outside stall; if min 36"x36" configuration used then blocking in wall for installation of shower seat opposite shower controls is provided; threshold at edge of stall max 1/2".
KITCHEN	
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	3.1 Clear floor space of 30" x 48" provided parallel to range or cooktop and sink and either a parallel or forward approach at oven and refrigerator/freezer.
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	3.2 Clearance between opposing base cabinets, counters, countertops, appliances, or walls is min 40".
Recon/New Const. Rehab as feasible.	3.3 60" turning radius provided in U shaped kitchens.
VISUAL IMPAIRMENT	
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	LIGHTING FIXTURES: Any lighting fixtures provided in the unit should be equipped with receptacles capable of handling 150- watt bulbs for occupants with residual vision.
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	COOKTOP/STOVE CONTROLS: Cooktop controls should be mounted on the front or side of the range and controls with tactile markings should be available for installation if required by the occupant.
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	BASEBOARDS/DOORS/DOOR FRAMES/WINDOWS: Baseboards, doors and door frames, and window frames should be painted to contrast with the wall and floor color for occupants with residual vision.
SENSORY IMPAIRMENT	
	The following construction standards apply to any single-family dwelling, including rental, that is built using Harris County and federal funding, in part, or as a whole. The housing unit must be constructed so that it includes the following:
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	ALARMS: Visual alarms should be available. Alarms should be installed in accordance with UFAS 4.28.4 (either connected to the building emergency alarm system or plugged into a standard 110-volt electrical receptacle).
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	TELEPHONE: If telephone wiring is installed in the unit as a standard practice an electrical outlet should be provided adjacent to the telephone to permit use of a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD). The outlet may be one of the units required outlets.
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	DOORS: Peep sights should be available for installation on all doors leading into the unit.
Recon/New Const/Rehab.	DOORBELL & BUZZER: If the unit has a buzzer or doorbell, unit should be wired to provide a flashing light signal.

VISITABILITY STANDARDS	
	The following construction standards apply to any single-family dwelling, including rental, that is built using federal funding that are administer and pass through the State of Texas, in part, or as a whole. The housing unit must be constructed so that it includes the following:
Recon/New Const.	(1) at least one entrance door, whether located at the front, side, or back of the building;
Recon/New Const.	(A) is on an accessible route served by a ramp or no-step entrance; and
All	(B) has at least a standard 36-inch door;
	(2) on the first floor of the building;
Recon/New Const.	(A) each interior door is at least a standard 32-inch door, unless the door provides access only to a closet of less than 15 square feet in area;
Recon/New Const.	(B) each hallway has a width of at least 36 inches and is level, with ramped or beveled changes at each door threshold;
Recon/New Const.	(C) each bathroom wall is reinforced for potential installation of grab bars;
Recon/New Const.	(D) each electrical panel, light switch, or thermostat is not higher than 48 inches above the floor; and
Recon/New Const.	(E) each electrical plug or other receptacle is at least 15 inches above the floor; and
Recon/New Const.	(3) if the applicable building code or codes do not prescribe another location for the breaker boxes, each breaker box is located not higher than 48 inches above the floor inside the building on the first floor.