

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF SNOHOMISH COUNTY

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SUMMARY OF SECTION 8 HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS

1. Water, power and/or gas must be on and maintained in good working order per Washington State Landlord-Tenant laws.
2. Only legal rental dwellings (approved by the County/city through the standard permitting process) will be placed on the HCV program.
3. Relatives and/or caregivers may not operate a business from any unit being subsidized by the Section 8 program. If tenants wish to operate a business from a subsidized unit, prior approval must be obtained from the Housing Authority.
4. **Chipping and Peeling Paint - Lead-Based Paint** - All Owners must inform a family of any lead-based paint on the surfaces of their unit of which they have knowledge prior to requesting the Housing Authority to inspect the unit. The interior and exterior of all units built prior to 1978 and which will be occupied by a pregnant woman or children under the age of 6 must be free of chipping and peeling paint.

Contractors, renovators, electricians, HVAC specialists, plumbers, painters, maintenance staff and owners of rental property doing repairs and maintenance that might disrupt more than six square feet of paint in pre-1978 homes, schools, day care centers and other places where children spend time must be EPA Lead Safe Certified. Landlords doing repairs and paint stabilization on a rental property are covered under this rule.

Exterior

5. House or unit numbers must be on property and must be clearly visible from the street.
6. The roof, foundation, gutters and downspouts must be in good condition.
7. If the unit is a house or duplex with a yard, it is the tenant's responsibility to own or have access to a lawn mower and/or lawn equipment to maintain the yard on a regular basis. Yard maintenance (including at the initial inspection) is required for all inspections throughout the growing season.
8. There must be a hand rail when there are extended lengths of steps (generally four or more consecutive steps) and a railing around a porch or balcony which is approximately 30 inches or more above the ground. Decks must also be in good condition with no dry rot.

Security

9. Operational locks must be installed on all exterior doors and lower level windows or windows that are accessible from the outside.
10. Managers should provide the Housing Authority with codes for entry doors for units that are in secured buildings.

Interior

11. **ALL UNITS must be thoroughly cleaned, including walls, windows, floors, carpets professionally cleaned, appliances, etc. Unit must be ready to be occupied prior to the inspection.**
12. All walls and ceilings must be free of large holes. Minimum ceiling height is 7 feet 6 inches or local Uniform Building Code.
13. All **wood burning or pellet stoves** must be Environmental Protection Agency certified and properly installed.
14. **Smoke detectors** - must have at least one battery operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, **on each level of the unit** (i.e., **town house would need two smoke detectors**) must be located in a hallway adjacent to any bedrooms. A rambler with bedrooms at opposite ends of the unit must have two smoke detectors even though on one level. All smoke detectors must have a test button.

- a. It is recommended that Landlords add the following clause to their lease: **"Tenant(s) must notify Landlord if smoke detector fails to work."**

15. Per RCW 19.27.530 a carbon monoxide alarm must be installed outside each separate sleeping area on each level of the unit. If all bedrooms are located off a common hallway, the carbon monoxide alarm should be located at the opening of the hall. Alarms should not be installed within 15 feet of heating, cooking or other fuel-burning appliances. The carbon monoxide alarm may be installed on the wall or the ceiling. Combined carbon monoxide and smoke alarms are permitted.

Windows

16. Window assembly must be intact. No broken windows. Cracked windows with an uneven or large crack will not meet Housing Quality Standards. Windows that have lost their seal and are "fogged" must be replaced. Windows that are designed to open must open.
17. There must be at least one window in the living room and in each sleeping room.
18. It is strongly encouraged that the landlord provide non-sheer window coverings such as mini-blinds, shades, curtain or draperies for all windows except those with frosted glass.

Bathrooms and Plumbing

19. All bathrooms must have a safe, working vent system or an operational window. Plumbing must also be in good condition with no broken pipes or leaking faucets.
20. The hot water tank must have pressure relief valve and a discharge pipe vented to within 6 inches of the floor, or plumbed outside the unit. The electric cable must be covered with metal flex conduit or electrical grade conduit.
21. The bathroom requires at least one permanent ceiling or wall light fixture.

Bedrooms

21. Bedrooms must have 100 square feet of living space, a window for emergency egress per County Code and a built in closet.
22. For privacy, direct access to a bedroom is required. Passing through one bedroom to reach another is not acceptable.
23. Bedrooms may not have padlocks or key locks installed.
24. Rooms directly off a garage may not be used as a sleeping room.

Electrical

25. There must be cover plates on electrical outlets and light switches. All outlets and light switches must be in proper operating condition. Cover plates must not be cracked.
26. Three-pronged outlets must be properly grounded. Outlets in the kitchen and bathroom that are near a water source must have a GFI outlet installed and must operate as designed.
27. Electrical panels that have missing knock outs must have blanks installed to cover exposed wiring.
28. Garbage disposal, dishwasher and range hood vent electrical wiring that is hard wired must be enclosed in electrical grade conduit.

MOBILE HOMES MUST ALSO HAVE:

1. Tie-downs - must be stationary, cannot have wheels. Tie-downs must be verified.
2. Skirting must be installed around base of the mobile and in good condition.
3. Smoke Detectors - must have a smoke detector installed at each end of mobile home.
4. Any outside steps or deck must be stationary, and securely attached to the mobile home.
5. Camping trailers, motor homes and park model trailers are not considered mobile homes.

Units located in flood plain zones classified as high-risk (typically in "A" or "V" flood zones) will not be allowed on the Section 8 program.