



# Guide to Residential Rental Inspection

The purpose of this form is to provide rental property owners a guide when inspecting their properties to ensure compliance with the standards set forth in the State Landlord Tenant Act, Title 59, Section 59.18.060 and that the property does not present conditions that endanger or impair the health or safety of the tenants.

\*\*Building permits may be required for the repair of the building. Contact Community and Economic Development Department/Building and Land Use Services Division at (253) 591-5030 to verify whether permits are required for any work being performed.

**Please Note:** The first page of this guide primarily applies to residential properties; please see reverse side for additional requirements for apartments and commercial units.

## GENERAL

1.  Junk vehicles in the yard.
2.  Garbage, Junk, or Debris in the yard.
3.  Overgrown ground cover, grass, weeds, trees or unmaintained shrubbery over one foot in height which constitutes a health safety or welfare violation.
4.  Lack of, or inadequate garbage and rubbish storage for disposal.
- 5a.  Exterior stairways (in yards) need handrails/guardrails.
- 5b.  Exterior sidewalks broken, buckled or deteriorated.

## LIFE SAFETY

1.  Missing or unreadable address numbers or apartment numbers.
- 2a.  Exit stairs need to be repaired or replaced.
- 2b.  Exit stairs are missing or have improper landings.
- 2c.  Exit stairs have incorrect rise and run.
- 2d.  Exit stairs need to be provided with handrails/guardrails, or handrails/guardrails need repair or replacement.
- 2e.  Stairs width is too narrow.
3.  Door locks missing, inoperative, or illegal.
4.  Window locks missing or inoperative.
- 5a.  Porch, deck, or balcony needs to be repaired, replaced or removed.
- 5b.  Porch, deck or balcony needs guardrail.
6.  Room and space dimensions less than required.

## EXIT(S)

1.  Exterior doors and/or door framework need to be repaired or replaced.
- 2a.  Exit windows from sleeping rooms not provided.
- 2b.  Exit windows from sleeping rooms too small in area or dimension.
3.  Overcrowding: Any building or portion thereof, where the exiting is insufficient in number, width, or access for the occupant load served, or where the number of occupants in sleeping rooms exceeds the number permitted by the area of sleeping.

## STRUCTURAL

- 1a.  Roofing needs repair.
- 1b.  Roofing needs replacement.
- 1c.  Chimney(s) needs to be repaired or removed.
- 1d.  Ceiling and/or roof framing needs repair.
- 2a.  Foundations need replacing.
- 2b.  Foundations need repair.
- 3a.  Wall framing needs repair.
- 3b.  Exterior walls need siding repaired.
- 4a.  Window glass needs replacement.
- 4b.  Window frames need repair or replacement.
5.  Floor framing needs repair or replacement.
- 6a.  Peeling or absence of paint or weather protection on exterior walls, decks, stairs, porches, and other exterior surfaces.
- 6b.  Deteriorated or crumbling plaster or gypsum board.

## FIRE

- 1a.  Missing or inoperative smoke detectors in bedrooms.  
**Note:** By January 1, 2013, carbon monoxide alarms must be installed in existing dwelling and sleeping units in hotels, motels, apartments and single family residential units where an attached garage or fuel-fired heat source is present.
- 1b.  Smoke detectors are not centrally located outside of sleeping areas, and/or are not on each floor.
2.  Improper storage, building clutter, or other fire hazards.

## ELECTRICAL

1.  Improper or hazardous wiring.
- 2a.  Access to electrical panels is adequate.
- 2b.  If there are fuses, are the circuits properly fused.
- 3a.  Electrical convenience outlets or switches do not have plates.
- 3b.  Burnt or painted outlets that need to be replaced.
- 3c.  Inadequate number of electrical convenience outlets.
- 3d.  Ground fault circuit interrupters not installed in the bathrooms and kitchens.
4.  Missing or damaged light fixtures, receptacles or switches.

## PLUMBING/HEATING LIGHT & VENTILATION

- 1a.  Improper toilets, lavatories, bathtubs, showers or other plumbing fixtures as required by the size or occupant load of the occupancy.
- 1b.  Any lavatories, sinks, bathtubs or similar fixtures where the spigot outlet is below the level of the basin rim, and any other fixtures where cross-connection or back-siphonage is possible.
  - 1c.  Plumbing piping or fixtures of non-approved materials.
  - 1d.  Leaking plumbing piping (supply and/or waste).
  - 1e.  Sagging or improperly supported piping.
  - 1f.  Clogged or inoperative plumbing piping.
  - 1g.  Missing temperature/pressure relief valve on water heater.
2.  Substandard Laundry Facility.  
All residential buildings shall provide facilities for the washing of clothes in accordance with the provisions of the codes in force at the time the building was constructed. In an apartment house, where laundry facilities are not provided for each unit, means such as laundry trays or washing machines shall be provided elsewhere on site and shall be available to tenants.
3.  Inadequate or deteriorated heating or mechanical equipment.
- 4a.  Inadequate supply of combustion air for fuel fired equipment.
- 4b.  Improper gas piping.
- 5a.  Inadequate or no ventilation (either natural or mechanical ventilation)
- 5b.  Windows painted shut.
6.  Unlisted wood stoves or other appliances have been illegally installed.
7.  Appliances, including solid-fuel-burning appliances, have been installed without proper clearances to combustible materials.
8.  No windows or inadequate windows to provide natural light.

## SANITATION

1.  Substandard Kitchen: Each dwelling unit shall be provided with a kitchen. The kitchen area shall contain:
  - A sink with hot and cold running water.
  - Space for a stove, microwave or hot plate.
  - Space for a refrigerator.
  - Adequate counter space for food preparation and dish washing.
  - Adequate storage space for kitchen utensils and food.
  - Adequate floor space.
  - Communal kitchens shall be permitted only in rooming house or boarding homes. Such communal kitchens shall be located within a room accessible to the occupants of each guest rooms sharing the use of the kitchen without going outside the rooming house or boarding home, or going through a unit of another occupant.
2.  Broken or plugged sewer.
- 3a.  Dampness, mold and/or mildew within the building.
- 3b.  Flaking, scaling, or peeling of wallpaper, paint or other interior wall coverings.
4.  Floor surfacing needs to be thoroughly cleaned or replaced.
5.  Wall surfacing needs to be thoroughly cleaned or replaced.
6.  Ceiling surfacing needs to be thoroughly cleaned or repaired.
7.  Infestation of vermin.



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**Please Note:** This side of the guide are additional requirements that apply to apartments and commercial units. Please use both side when inspecting your properties.

- The highlighted code requirements primarily apply to apartments and commercial units.

## EXIT(S)

- 4a.  Exit signs are not provided with two sources of power.
- 4b.  Exit path lighting is not provided with two sources of power.
- 4c.  Exit paths are not properly illuminated
- 4d.  Required exit signs are missing.
- 4e.  Required exit signs are not illuminated.
- 5.  To ensure that fire escapes work properly, they must be visually inspected every year by owner/agent and provide documentation to the Tacoma Fire Department.

## FIRE

- 3.  Missing or inoperative fire extinguishers.
- 4.  Required fire sprinkler system inoperative or missing.
- 5.  Lack of, inoperable, or inadequate fire alarm systems.
- 6a.  Doors to stair enclosures do not meet required fire assembly requirements, or fire assembly needs, replacement or repair.
- 6b.  Doors to stair enclosures are missing or are blocked open.
- 6c.  Stair enclosures are not of the proper fire rating.
- 6d.  Corridor doors are not properly rated (or equivalent)
- 6e.  Corridor doors don't have closers.
- 6f.  Corridor doors have improper hold open devices.
- 6g.  Corridor doors don't have gasketing.
- 6h.  Corridor door frames need to be repaired or replaced.
- 6i.  Transoms above corridor doors are not sealed or fire-rated.
- 6j.  Required corridors are not of one-hour construction.
- 7.  Exit doors have improper hardware.
- 8.  Fire resistive construction needs repair or replacement.
- 9.  Required fire doors are missing or damaged.
- 10.  Stairs need to be enclosed in a fire rated shaft.