

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing Program



HPRP Inspection Requirements



Sponsored by:
Office of Special Needs Assistance Programs (SNAPS)
U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

Partners

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FORMAT

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- Call will last approximately 75 minutes
- Presenters will walk through the material and then answer questions posed by the moderator
- All callers are “muted” due to the large number of participants
- Call will be recorded for future use and made available for viewing/download

Submitting Questions During the Webinar...

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- Audience members who would like to pose a question can do so via the “questions” function in the “Go to Webinar” toolbar
- Questions will be taken directly by HPRP resource advisors standing by
- We will not have time to answer every question. If your question is not answered, please submit it to HUD’s Virtual Help Desk at <http://hudhre.info/HPRP>

Materials and Evaluation

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- Materials referenced during this webinar can be found on HUD's Homelessness Resource Exchange at <http://hudhre.info/HPRP/>
- Evaluation questions to measure the effectiveness of this call will be emailed out following the call to all participants.

Webinar Purpose

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- Explain unit standard requirements under HPRP:
 - Housing Habitability Inspections
 - Lead-Based Paint Visual Assessments
- Discuss when and how inspections should be done
- Provide tips to ensure compliance and ease administration

Why do we care about unit inspections?

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- HUD resources must only be spent on units that are safe, sanitary, and decent.
- Requirements are designed to protect the people we serve from unsafe or unhealthy living conditions.
- Without the inspections, we are
 - Putting the client at risk
 - Putting the grantee/subgrantee at risk
 - Putting HUD at risk

What are the Housing Habitability Standards?

- HUD-subsidized housing must meet certain standards for health and safety
- Under HPRP, we use the Housing Habitability Standards
- Specific standards are detailed in Appendix C of the HPRP Notice

What are the Habitability Standards?

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1. Structurally sound
2. Access/alternate means of egress
3. Adequate space and security
4. Air quality (each room must have natural or mechanical ventilation)
5. Potable water

What are the Habitability Standards?

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6. Properly operating and private sanitary facilities
7. Adequate/functioning heating and cooling facilities
8. Adequate natural and/or artificial lighting and sufficient electrical sources
9. Suitable/sanitary food preparation and storage

What are the Habitability Standards?

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10. Housing maintained in sanitary condition.

11. Fire safety

- 1+ working smoke detectors on each level of unit
- Public and common areas must also have adequate number (1+) of working smoke detectors.

How do the Habitability Standards differ from HQS?

- HQS more detailed, stringent than habitability standards
- HQS requires a certified inspector, habitability standards do not
- HPRP grantees may use HQS (grantees may always use a higher standard)

What about State and local housing codes?

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- Habitability standards do not replace state and local housing codes.
- Likewise, compliance with local code does not replace the need for a habitability inspection.
- Typically, building will have a certificate of occupancy or other documentation that demonstrates compliance with local code.

When must habitability inspections be conducted?

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- Anytime a program participant is receiving financial assistance and moving into a new/different unit.
 - Applies to both prevention and re-housing participants that are moving.
 - Does NOT apply to prevention participants remaining in an existing unit.
 - Does NOT apply to a participant receiving services only (e.g., legal assistance).

Who can conduct the inspections?

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- No specific training or certification required.
- Grantees have flexibility:
 - HPRP program staff
 - Other agency staff
 - Vendor (hired by grantee or subgrantee)

Are inspection costs an eligible expense?

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- Costs incurred conducting the inspections are HPRP-eligible expenses and may be charged under the Financial Assistance category.
 - Typically charged as Rental Assistance unless providing security deposit or utility-only assistance.

Timing the Habitability Inspection

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- HUD recommends that inspections be scheduled prior to the tenant signing the lease.
 - But MUST be completed upon occupancy (i.e., move-in).
- Habitability inspections must be conducted annually during the term of HPRP assistance.

What if the unit does not meet all of the standards?

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■ Three options:

- Landlord addresses deficiencies and a second inspection is conducted (this must happen before assistance can be provided).
- The client locates a different unit.
- You are unable to assist the client.

Documentation

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- Documentation must be maintained in case file.
- Grantees have flexibility; use of a specific form is not required.
 - However, inspection form should be signed and dated.
- Sample checklist is available on the HRE.

Polling Question

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Of those on today's call, how many

- A) Use HPRP program staff to conduct inspections?
- B) Contract out to have inspections completed?

Lead-Based Paint Requirements

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- Different from the habitability inspections
- Required under Lead-Based Paint Poisoning Prevention Act of 1973
 - 24 CFR 35, Parts A, B, M, and R
- Intention is to protect vulnerable families from potential health hazards.

When must a visual assessment be conducted?

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- Visual Assessment must be completed for all units that meet the following three conditions:
 - Housing living in a unit that is being assisted with HPRP financial assistance;
 - Unit was constructed prior to 1978; AND
 - A child under the age of 6 or a pregnant female is living in the unit.
- Applies to persons moving into new/different unit or remaining in existing unit.
- Prior to assistance, and annually thereafter

Unit Exemptions

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- Zero-bedroom/SRO unit
- X-ray or laboratory testing of painted surfaces by certified lead professional and unit is certified to be lead-free
- The property has had all lead-based paint identified and removed in accordance with HUD regulations
- Other exemptions described at 24 CFR Part 35.115(a)

Visual Assessments vs. Inspections

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- Visual assessments sometimes referred to as inspections, but....
 - Terms should not be used interchangeably.
 - Imply different levels of rigor.
- Visual assessments must be done by a HUD-Certified Visual Assessor.
 - Not equivalent to a Certified Lead Professional
 - Various titles will be used: Certified Paint Inspector, Certified Risk Assessor, Sampling/Clearance Technician, etc.

Becoming a HUD-Certified Visual Assessor

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- Completing a 20-minute online training on HUD's website at
 - <http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/training/visualassessment/h00101.htm>.
- Training walks through how to identify deteriorated paint and how deteriorated paint must be treated.
- May use program staff or hire a contractor/vendor.

Conducting the Visual Assessment

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- Conduct walk-through of the property to identify problems with paint surfaces.
- If there are no signs of deteriorated paint, the unit can be approved for assistance.

When Deteriorated Paint is Identified....

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- Problems with paint surfaces repaired/stabilized.
 - Costs involved in repair of paint surfaces are not eligible under HPRP.
- Paint tested to confirm presence of lead.
 - Costs related to laboratory testing also not eligible.
- Client can be assisted with relocation.

Paint stabilization and the “de minimis” level

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- Assessor must compare any problems with paint surfaces to the “de minimis” level:
 - 20 square feet on exterior surfaces;
 - 2 square feet in any one interior room or space; or
 - 10 percent of the total surface area on an interior or exterior component with a small surface area, like window sills, baseboards, and trim.

Paint Stabilization

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- If area of paint to be stabilized exceeds de minimis level...
 - Use of lead safe work practices and clearance is required.
 - Point at which Certified Lead Professional will be required.
- If area of paint is below de minimis level
 - Paint must be repaired but specific practices and clearance is not required.

Determining How to Proceed: Questions to Ask Yourself

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- What type of assistance is being provided to the client?
- If prevention in an existing unit...
 - how much time is there to “save” the housing?
 - How much work is required and what is the cost involved? (de minimis level exceeded?)
 - What is the relationship with the landlord?
- Conditions of local housing market?

Documentation

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- Grantees have flexibility; use of specific forms not required.
- Every case file must include documentation that:
 - a) The unit was exempt; OR
 - b) The unit was not exempt, but a visual assessment was conducted and no problems were identified; OR
 - c) The unit was not exempt, a visual assessment was conducted, problems were identified, but they were repaired in accordance with HUD regulations.

Documentation

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- See Lead-Based Paint Screening Worksheet on HRE:
<http://www.hudhre.info/HPRP/index.cfm?do=viewHPRPTools>
- See also HPRP Lead-Based Paint Documentation Checklist:
http://www.hudhre.info/documents/HPRP_LeadPaintChecklist.doc

Polling Question

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- Which of the following is an eligible HPRP expense?
 1. Costs related to stabilization of deteriorated paint.
 2. Costs related to testing paint for the presence of lead.
 3. Costs related to becoming a Certified Lead-Based Paint Professional.
 4. Costs related to conducting a clearance exam.

Tips for Complying with the Lead Requirements

- Immediately determine if lead-based paint assessment will be required.
 - Pre-1978 with child under 6?
- Determining the age of the unit:
 - Use Online Public Records (e.g., property tax database)
 - Look up property address; print copy of screenshot for file.

Tips for Complying with the Lead Requirements

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- Instruct your case managers to talk with clients about the lead requirements upon application for assistance.
 - Ensure they have received the disclosure form and pamphlet from their landlords.
 - Available at <http://www.hud.gov/offices/lead/enforcement/disclosure.cfm>
- Informed tenants are more likely to watch for potential problems and proactively work with landlords.

Tips for Complying with the Lead Requirements

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- If working with a Prevention client in an existing unit: Contact the landlord immediately to discuss the lead requirements.
 - Landlord may tell you paint has been tested for lead. (Obtain documentation.)
 - Landlord may choose to repair areas of deteriorated paint prior to your assessment.

Tips for Complying with the Lead Requirements

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- If working with Prevention or Re-Housing client moving into another unit:
 - Instruct clients on what to look for as they view units.
 - Instruct clients to contact you to schedule the assessment prior to lease being signed.
 - Depending on staff availability, have staff accompany client when he/she returns to sign lease.

Tips on Complying with the Inspection Requirements

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Different models may work depending on case volume and program design:

1. Dedicated inspector(s)
 - Offer evening and weekend inspections
2. Each case manager/housing search specialist conduct inspections
 - Block out specific days/time slots for inspections to increase efficiency.

Tips on Complying with the Inspection Requirements

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- Train same staff persons to conduct both habitability inspections and lead visual assessments.
 - Staff should be able to conduct both at same time (as applicable).
 - Don't make clients wait and risk losing units.

Resources

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- HPRP Unit Inspection Requirements Fact Sheet
- HPRP Housing Habitability Inspection Checklist
- Understanding the Lead-Based Paint Requirements: Guidance for HPRP Grantees
- HPRP Lead-Based Paint Screening Worksheet
- Lead-Based Paint Resident Instructions Template
- Lead-Based Paint Property Owner Instructions
- All are available on the HRE at:
http://www.hudhre.info/HPRP/index.cfm?do=view_HPRPTools

Additional Trainings – June 2010

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- HPRP Financial Management
 - Thursday, June 10th, 1-2:30 ET
 - Tuesday, June 15th, 4-5:30 ET
- HPRP: Beyond the Basics
 - Wednesday, June 23rd, 3-4:30 ET
 - Tuesday, June 29th, 11-12:30 ET

Save the Date

HUD Conference on Homelessness

September 14-17 - Denver

September 27-30 - Atlanta

Covering topics on:

HPRP HEARTH HMIS