

Housing Practice Guidance During COVID-19 Crisis

Between March 13, 2020 and January 31, 2021, Housing Quality Standards (HQS) inspections will not be performed on occupied units. However, where there is an urgent circumstance or reason to believe that there is a threat to life or property at a specific location, DHHS may require an HQS inspection be completed in compliance with CDC guidelines and protocol below.

ANNUAL INSPECTION

DHHS is waiving the requirement of annual HQS inspections for occupied units receiving TCLV effective March 13, 2020 through January 31, 2020. However, where there is an urgent circumstance or reason to believe that there is a threat to life or property at a specific location, HQS inspections should be conducted in compliance with CDC guidelines and protocol below.

MOVE-IN INSPECTION ON UNOCCUPIED

Move-in inspection is always required after the TCLV tenancy set-up has been approved. Between March 13, 2020 and December 31, 2020, the following types of housing inspections will be acceptable. LME-MCOs are granted permission to complete either a virtual inspection with the landlord/owner representative using habitability checklist (see attached) OR an HQS inspection at the unit.

HQS Inspection	Virtual Habitability Inspection
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed by certified HQS inspector• If the unit does not pass HQS inspection for reasons other than health and safety, LME-MCO may provide a conditional approval for the unit• If a landlord/owner receives a conditional approval, repairs must be completed between July 1st and August 31st or the landlord/owner payments will be terminated until repairs are made• If a unit fails an inspection for deficiencies, the inspector will be required to reinspect the unit before it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completed by landlord or landlord representative via video• Landlord or landlord representative will video each room with respect to each standard on the Habitability checklist• LME-MCO will review video and indicate, for each item on the Habitability Checklist whether the property is approved or deficient• If the unit does not pass Habitability inspection, the individual cannot move into unit• Inspection will be valid until annual inspection is due

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<p>can pass, and before payments can be re-instated for landlord/owner</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) Agreement should include an addendum that allows tenant to terminate lease early and HAP to cease if unit does not pass HQS inspection and owner does not correct deficiencies within 30 days of inspection• Inspection will be valid until annual inspection is due• The reimbursement rate for an initial move-in inspection is up to \$250, inclusive of all necessary re-inspections.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The reimbursement rate for an initial move-in inspection is up to \$100.
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HOME VISIT PROTOCOLS

- Before entering anyone's home, sanitize your hands so you don't bring germs in
- Before entering, ask about each of the following specific symptoms consumer and others may have (fever, cough, shortness of breath) at the doorway when you arrive
- Keep face-to-face visit as brief as possible
- Keep 6 feet away from all individuals in the home
- Wash hands immediately upon exit of the home
- Have the following supplies with you for your home visit:
 1. Hand sanitizer if available
 2. Clorox/cleaning wipes OR disinfectant spray/paper towels
 3. Garbage bags to dispose of dirty gloves/tissues/wipes
 4. Masks to be worn by staff and to be given to people who are actively coughing or feverish
 5. Water bottle for yourself to stay hydrated
 6. Soap, toilet paper, & garbage bags if available for consumers who don't have these supplies

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Housing Assistance Type	ORDER UNDER SECTION 361 OF THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT (42 U.S.C. 264) AND 42 CFR 70.2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Covers federally funded, LIHTC or private landlords Evictions are halted for monies owed (rent and late fees) NOTE: Can still evict for other lease violations 	Effective Until
Key	X	December 31 st
Project-Based Section 8	X	December 31 st
Rural Development	X	December 31 st
Housing Opportunities for Persons with AIDS (HOPWA)	X	December 31 st
Housing Choice Voucher	X	December 31 st
Section 811 Mainstream Voucher	X	December 31 st
Shelter Plus Care	X	December 31 st
Veterans Administration Supportive Housing (VASH)	X	December 31 st
Transition to Community Living Voucher (TCLV)	X	December 31 st

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Notes:

- **The halt on evictions does not mean a tenant does not owe rent; it only delays the eviction process until the “effective until” date.**
- Households must meet all requirements outlined in the declaration and an official declaration form must be signed by the tenant and provided to the landlord/property manager (see attached).
- Although property managers cannot evict for nonpayment or charge late fees through the “effective until” date, **property managers may evict due to other lease violations.**
- ***To decrease safety issues and/or separations from permanent housing maintain contact with tenants via frequent telehealth sessions and a monthly video call which allows opportunity to view the condition of the tenant’s apartment.***

Utilities:

- Contact local City and County offices for Rental and Utility Assistance Relief Program for available utility assistance.