PREPARING FOR HOUSING QUALITY STANDARDS (HQS) INSPECTIONS

The Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) Program is dedicated to assisting low-income families and individuals access decent, safe and sanitary housing. To help Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) accomplish this, HUD implemented the Housing Quality Standards (HQS) to provide guidance on minimum criteria necessary for the health and safety of program participants.

What are the 13 key aspects of housing quality covered by performance requirements and acceptability criteria in the HQS?

- Sanitary Facilities
- Food preparation and refuse disposal
- Space and security
- Thermal environment
- Illumination and electricity
- Structure and materials
- Interior air quality
- Water supply
- Lead-based paint
- Access
- Site and neighborhood
- Sanitary condition
- Smoke detectors

More details regarding HQS inspections can be found in Chapter 10 of the HCV Guidebook, or by visiting hud.gov. JCHA utilizes HUD Inspection Checklist, HUD form 52580, for all HQS inspections.

What are the most common HQS defects?

- Inoperable, missing, or incorrectly mounted smoke detectors and/or carbon monoxide detectors
- No locks and/or screens on windows
- Broken or inoperable windows
- Windows and doors that are not weathertight
- Exterior doors that do not lock properly
- Lack of sufficient fire exit(s)
- Lack of handrails on interior/exterior stairs
- Lack of adequate ventilation, especially in bathrooms
- Inoperable light fixtures and improperly wired electrical outlets
- Exposed wires
- Improper discharge line on water heater relief valves
- Signs of pest infestation
- Deteriorated and unstable paint surfaces in units built prior to 1978 where children under the age of 6 will reside
- Holes and large gaps of more than ¼" on walls, ceilings, and floors
- Cutting hazards: broken or cracked glass, jagged metal edges, deteriorated sheet metal, etc