

# NSPIRE-V Landlord Pre-Inspection Checklist

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

## Outside

Item	Inspectable Item	Yes	No	Remarks/Location
1	Guardrails on all elevated surfaces			
2	Double handrails on ramps			
3	Handrails "grippable" top to bottom			
4	Proper signage on buildings and property			
5	GFCI(s) installed			
6	Electrical wires properly protected			
7	Paint fully intact (rails, siding, etc.) <small>pre1978</small>			

## Unit

1	Handrails "grippable" top to bottom			
2	Water Heater: TPR discharge line correct			
3	Carbon Monoxide installed (if required)			
4	Smoke detector installed in all bedrooms			
5	Electrical wires properly protected			
6	GFCI(s) installed			
7	Outlets wired correctly			
8	Fire rated doors in near perfect condition			
9	Bathrooms have venting/window			
10	Dryer vent non-plastic/not kinked			
11	Refrigerator shelves, drawer, handle intact			
12	Paint fully intact (walls, doors, etc.) <small>pre1978</small>			

## Inside

1	Handrails "grippable" top to bottom			
2	Water Heater: TPR discharge line correct			
3	Carbon Monoxide installed in "classrooms"			
4	Fire extinguishers installed each floor			
5	Exit signs properly lit			
6	Electrical wires properly protected			
7	GFCI(s) installed			
8	Fire rated doors in near perfect condition			
9	Paint fully intact (walls, doors, etc.) <small>pre1978</small>			

This is not intended to be an all-inclusive list of NSPIRE concerns but rather the most common potential improvements needed to be "NSPIRE Compliant".

## OUTSIDE

**Guardrails on all elevated area of 30 inches or more** All surfaces (porches, patios, retaining walls with walking areas above, etc.) must have guardrails that are at least 30" tall.

**Double handrail requirement for ramps** All ramps (even resident builds) if 6" tall **or** 72" long must have rails on BOTH sides. Those rails must be between 28" and 42" tall and have a diameter that is "reasonably grasped". If walk/ramp doesn't elevate above grade, likely it's not considered a ramp.

**Single handrail on steps** Like UPCS, 4 steps or more must have at least 1 rail. However, that rail must be between 28" and 42" tall and have a diameter that is "reasonably grasped" Additionally, the handrail must run continuously from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

**Property and building signage** Think "first responders". Can an ambulance driver quickly find the development and the correct building? If property or building signage is missing or has damage (faded, vegetation grown over it, etc.) that might lead to a delay in response time, it's a defect.

**GFCI installed in all "wet/damp" locations** Using a GFCI tester to verify all required locations are protected. GFCI MUST be installed at **ALL** exterior locations. Either style (outlet or breaker) is allowable (keeping in mind that a single GFCI protects the entire circuit).

**Electrical Wire** All wiring must be "protected" either by conduit or at least by the Romex jacketing/sheathing. Be sure to check closely the conduit near the air conditioning units for damaged or loose areas.

**Paint (pre-1978)** Any damaged (peeling, bubbled, scratched, rubbed, etc) should be eliminated. This includes walls, trim, windows, foundations, handrails, porch posts, etc.

## INSIDE

**GFCI installed in all "wet/damp" locations** Using a GFCI tester to verify all required locations are protected. GFCI protect must be available at **ALL** outlets within 6' of a water source (sink, tub, washing machine, etc). 3 Exceptions;

- Outlets used or designed for use by a major appliance (fridge, stove, etc.)
- Outlets technically in a different room
- Outlets beneath the countertop and inside an enclosed cabinet

Either style (outlet or breaker) is allowable.

**Single handrail on steps** Like UPCS, 4 steps or more must have at least 1 rail. However, that rail must be between 28" and 42" tall and have a diameter that is "reasonably grasped" Additionally, the handrail must run continuously from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

**TPR discharge proper material & correct length** The TPR discharge pipe MUST be constructed of an "approved material". Additionally, the length must not be closer than 2" but no greater than 6" from the floor/pan (or to the exterior or other "system" that would prevent scalding). Additionally, the discharge line must not have any "upward" slope to it.

**Exit Signs** All exit signs are required to be lit for 90 minutes in case of power loss (for example – a paper exit sign would be allowed but **ONLY** if there was an operable auxiliary light shining on it nearby).

**Electrical Wires** All wiring must be "protected" either by conduit or at least by the Romex jacketing/sheathing (so, if maintenance strips the sheathing back too far on electrical Romex, this is a citable defect).

**Fire Doors** Any door that is fire rated (evidence of tag or fire plug) must be in near perfect condition. Hardware, weatherstripping, surface, etc. Also, important to note; no fire door can be propped open (no kickstand or wedges allowed). Magnetic closers activated by the fire alarm are the exception.

**Paint (pre-1978)** Any damaged (peeling, bubbled, scratched, rubbed, etc.) should be eliminated. This includes walls, ceilings, trim, windows, doors, handrails, etc.

## UNITS

**GFCI installed in all "wet/damp" locations** Using a GFCI tester to verify all required locations are protected. GFCI protect must be available at **ALL** outlets within 6' of a water source (sink, tub, washing machine, etc). 3 Exceptions;

- Outlets used or designed for use by a major appliance (fridge, stove, etc.)
- Outlets technically in a different room
- Outlets beneath the countertop and inside an enclosed cabinet

Either style (outlet or breaker) is allowable.

**Carbon Monoxide detectors** HUD requires CO to be installed according to the International Fire Code 2018. Generally, CO Detectors must be installed in units being serviced by a fuel burning device (water heater, furnace, stove, etc.) or that have an attached garage with a door that leads to the space.

**TPR discharge proper material & correct length** The TPR discharge pipe MUST be constructed of an "approved material". Additionally, the length must not be closer than 2" but no greater than 6" from the floor/pan (or to the exterior or other "system" that would prevent scalding). Additionally, the discharge line must not have any "upward" slope to it.

**Single handrail on steps** Like UPCS, 4 steps or more must have at least 1 rail. However, that rail must be between 28" and 42" tall and have a diameter that is "reasonably grasped" Additionally, the handrail must run continuously from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

**Smoke detectors in all sleeping rooms** All sleeping rooms require an operable smoke detector both within the bedroom and outside the bedroom within 21 feet to the bedroom door (no hardwire or interconnectivity requirement).

**Electrical Wire** All wiring must be "protected" either by conduit or at least by the Romex jacketing/sheathing (so, if maintenance strips the sheathing back too far on electrical Romex, this is a citable defect).

**Outlets** 3 prong outlets should be checked using an outlet tester, for proper grounding and polarity (ensuring the hot and neutral aren't reversed)

**Bathroom venting or window in all baths** All bathrooms must have ventilation – either an operable window or a mechanical fan.

**Dryer Vents** White plastic flex venting is not allowed for dryer venting. Additionally, proper venting that is "kinked" is a defect.

**Fire Doors** Any door that is fire rated (evidence of tag or fire plug) must be in near perfect condition. Hardware, weatherstripping, surface, etc. Also, important to note; no fire door can be propped open (no kickstand or wedges allowed). Magnetic closers activated by the fire alarm are the exception.

**Refrigerator** Unlike the UPCS, every component of the appliance is now inspectable. The gasket, handle, shelves, crispers, door guards, etc.

**Paint (pre-1978)** Any damaged (peeling, bubbled, scratched, rubbed, etc.) should be eliminated. This includes walls, ceilings, trim, windows, doors, handrails, etc.

# Preparing for NSPIRE-V Inspections

## National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate

NSPIRE-V replaces the previous inspection model HQS. The good news is that Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority has already implemented many of the NSPIRE-V standards during inspection process.

### What's the same?

Inspections based on pass/fail  
Inspections are done annually/biennially  
While inspectable areas are different, looking at similar components

### What's different?

Greater emphasis on:  
Health, safety, and functionality defects

Less emphasis on:  
Condition and appearance defects  
Non-Health and Safety items

Replaces “decent, safe, and sanitary, and in good repair”  
With “safe, habitable dwellings” that are “functionally adequate, operable, and free of health and safety hazards”

Objective deficiency criteria:  
Adds affirmative habitability requirements

Removes the “Site and Neighborhood” requirement for Housing Choice Voucher

Life-threatening deficiencies  
Increased number

Criteria is clearer and more objective:  
Example: carbon monoxide alarms and ventilation  
Example: smoke alarms

More stringent requirements regarding:

Heating	Call-for-aid systems
GFCI/AFCI	Electrical outlets
Mold-like substances	Infestation
Structural systems	Fire doors
Smoke alarms	Carbon monoxide alarms
Gas-fueled appliance exhaust	Guardrails

**Inspectors will not cite:**

Countertops

Water stains that aren't wet (i.e., previous leaks)

Non-safety/security fencing

**There are three inspectable areas under NSPIRE-V.**

**Unit** – Interior components of an individual dwelling where the tenant lives.

**Inside** – Common areas and building systems within the interior of the building but not inside the unit.

**Outside** – Building site, building exterior components and any building systems located outside of the building or unit.

**Affirmative Habitability Requirements:**

New regulation at 24 CFR 5.703

What is an affirmative requirement?

Basic requirements for an assisted unit and property that must be met for participation

Establishes minimum requirements for habitability

**One of the most significant changes relates to smoke detectors.**

**EFFECTIVE December 29, 2024 – All smoke detectors which are solely battery-operated will have to have sealed, tamper-proof batteries. It will not be an NSPIRE deficiency until that time.**

Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority is committed to providing tenants with a safe and habitable living environment.

Please feel free to call Charleston-Kanawha Housing Authority and speak with either Julie Wells, Inspections Coordinator 304-348-6451 extension 264 or Jim Cox, Director of Voucher Management 304-348-6451 extension 260, with any questions you may have.