



Rental Property Safety Inspection Checklist

The intent of this checklist is to provide a reasonable level of predictability for owners, residents and inspection personnel. No checklist can encompass every possible scenario and not all apparent violations present a threat to the health or safety of tenants. Accordingly, inspectors are required to use significant professional judgement at times. The severity of violations along with the willingness of the building owner to abate inspection findings of violations will weigh heavily in the course of action taken by inspectors.

The safety inspection is designed to acknowledge the standards that were in place at the time of the building's construction, provided there has been no remodel or changes made in deference to codes other than that under which the building was constructed. It is not the intent to bring Ankeny rental properties into full compliance with current construction codes. Remodels and changes shall be permitted and must be constructed in accordance with the Ankeny Property Maintenance and Housing Code. Below are some examples in which non-compliance with current codes could be allowed, provided no threat to life-safety exists.

Example - Emergency Escape Openings: Bedroom egress windows per current code are required to have an openable area of 5.7 square feet with opening dimensions of no less than 20 inches wide and 24 inches high. Egress windows at grade may be 5.0 square feet. Those dimensions are generally consistent with building construction from May 1965 to present. Maximum sill heights above the floor is 48 inches from May 1965 to June 1978 and thereafter is limited to a maximum of 44 inches above the floor. Bedroom windows in buildings constructed before June 1965 may be maintained or replaced in accordance with the following paragraph.

Emergency escape opening replacement windows shall be the manufacturer's largest standard size window that will fit within the existing frame or existing rough opening. The replacement window shall be permitted to be of the same operating style as the existing window or a style that provides for an equal or greater window opening area than the existing window. Emergency escape windows, other than replacement(s), shall meet the requirements for Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings of the Ankeny Building Code.

Example – Stair Rise & Run: Stairs from May 1965 to November 2004 are limited to a maximum rise of 8 inches and a minimum run of 9 inches. Stairs from November 2004 to present are limited to a maximum rise of 7-3/4 inches and a minimum run of 10-3/4 inches.

Building constructed under old codes or before there was an adopted building code may be maintained 'as-is' until such time as said building is remodeled or changed.

1. Exterior Structure, Shelter and Maintenance

Roof, chimney, foundation, stairs and decks reasonably free of decay (e.g. severe cracks, soft spots, loose pieces, deterioration or other indications that repair is needed); maintained in a safe, sound and sanitary condition; capable of withstanding normal loads and forces. The building, its components, including windows, should be reasonably weatherproof and damp-free.

- 1.1) **Address Numbers** are plainly legible and visible from the street fronting the property
 - Address numbers are missing or concealed from view.
 - Unit numbers are not on or adjacent to primary entrance of each dwelling.
- 1.2) **Roof** must be maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair based on visual observation
 - Roof has holes and/or structural member is broken or decayed.
 - Roof is not weatherproof or has clear evidence of leaking.
- 1.3) **Foundation** is weatherproof, maintained and structurally sound
 - Foundation is failing ; leaning, crumbling, missing pieces or deflected.
 - Openings in foundation are larger than ¼" (potential for insect infestation).
- 1.4) **Exterior Walkways** are free from hazardous conditions
 - Vertical separation ¾" or more
 - Horizontal separations 1"
- 1.5) **Exterior stairs and decks** are safe
 - Structural members are leaning, decayed or detached.
 - Exterior decks or other platforms are broken, loose, decayed or missing pieces.
 - Exterior stairs are broken, loose, decayed or missing pieces.
 - Guardrails/intermediate rails on any landing, deck or platform that are more than 30 inches or more above grade or other surfaces are missing, loose or broken.
 - Handrails, intermediate rails on any flight with more than three risers (two or more risers if serving two or more dwelling units) are missing, loose or broken.
- 1.6) **Door and window components and assemblies** are weatherproof, safe, secure and maintained in good condition.
 - Weather stripping is missing or allowing air to enter.
 - Sills or frames have decayed wood or separated joints.
 - Windows or doors have missing pieces or are cracked and allowing weather or water to get inside.
 - Insect screens are missing or have openings larger than 1/4" (April 1 thru October 31).

2. Interior: Structure, Shelter and Maintenance

Walls, floors, stairs and other structural components are free of decay, maintained in a safe and sound condition and capable of withstanding normal loads and forces. Natural and mechanical lighting and ventilation is adequate and maintained in good working order for each habitable room in the unit.

- 2.1) **Ventilation:** all habitable rooms, bathrooms and laundry rooms have operable windows, or passive or mechanical ventilation in good working order and vented to the exterior
 - Any habitable room, bathroom or laundry room does not have an openable window or other approved ventilation.

- Kitchen fan, if used in place of operable windows, is not operable or pulling air.
- Bathroom and laundry room fan, if used in place of openable windows or operable passive ventilation, is not operable, pulling air or vented to the exterior.

2.2) Structural Components such as walls and floors are maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair. Wall, floor and ceiling coverings

- Wall, floor or ceiling coverings are broken such that framing members are visually exposed.
- Walls, floors or ceilings that are soft, spongy or wet to the touch.
- Interior load-bearing walls are not maintained in a safe and sound condition.
- Floors are not maintained in a safe and sound condition.

2.3) Interior stairs and landings must be maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good repair

- Joists or posts are leaning, decayed or detached.
- Landings or other platforms are broken, loose decayed or missing pieces.
- Interior stairs are loose, broken or missing pieces.
- Floors are not maintained in a safe and sound condition.
- Handrails, intermediate rails on any flight with more than three risers (two or more risers if serving two or more dwelling units) are missing, loose or broken.

2.4) Fire-resistance-rated assemblies (including opening protectives) must be intact, properly maintained and in operable condition

- Fire-resistance-rated assemblies (including opening protectives) are not intact, properly maintained in operable condition.

3. Emergency Escape Windows and Doors

Every sleeping room built or permitted after April 1965 must have an emergency escape window or door with at least 5.7 square feet (5.0 square feet if at grade) with a minimum openable dimension of 24" high and at least 20" wide. Maximum sill height shall be 48" for buildings constructed between May 1965 and May 1978. Maximum sill height for shall be 44" for buildings constructed from June 1978 to present. Buildings constructed prior to June 1965 shall maintain existing emergency and escape windows. Bedrooms illegally converted after building construction shall be required to meet current standards.

3.1) Emergency Escape and Rescue Openings

- Emergency escape window or door is missing, blocked or inaccessible.
- Emergency escape window(s) does not meet size or sill height requirements.

4. Room Size and Condition

All rooms used as living or sleeping rooms shall meet minimum requirements for square footage.

4.1) Dimensions

- Dwelling unit does not have at least one habitable room that is 120 square feet, with all other habitable rooms at least 70 square feet (kitchens and bedroom are not considered habitable rooms). Studio units (efficiency dwelling units require 200 square feet minimum in a single room).

4.2) Habitable Rooms

- Any habitable room except the kitchen or bathroom measures less than 7' in any direction.

4.3) Sleeping Rooms

- Any sleeping room for no more than 2 persons measures smaller than 70 square feet.
- Where more than 2 persons occupy a bedroom the floor area shall be increased at a rate of 50 square feet for each occupant.

5. Heating System

Every bathroom and habitable room must have a functioning, properly ventilated, and permanently-installed heat source. If heat is not permanently installed in every habitable room and bathroom, then the heating system must be capable of maintaining a temperature of at least 68°F measured 3 feet above the floor in each room when the outside temperature is -5°F or higher.

5.1) Heat Source is the unit permanent, working and in good repair.

- Required permanently-installed heating equipment/device is defective or missing in any habitable room or bathroom.

5.2) Temperature can be maintained at a minimum of 68°F (measured 3' above the floor and 2' from the exterior walls) when the exterior temperature is -5°F or higher.

- Permanently installed heater is not capable of maintaining required temperature in any habitable room or bathroom.

6. Electrical Standards

All electrical equipment and wiring must be approved and maintained in a safe and sound condition and in good working order.

6.1) Exposed Unprotected Wiring

- Exposed unprotected wiring is evident in any room.

6.2) Dwelling unit service size

- Dwelling unit is not served by 3-wire 120/240 volt single phase electric service of at least 60 amperes.

6.3) Electrical Equipment

- Any electrical equipment (meter bays, service panel, subpanel, shutoff/disconnect) is improperly installed or connected, tampered with or unsafe.

6.4) Habitable room lighting and receptacles

- Any habitable room including kitchen, does not have either an operable light fixture and an electrical outlet or two electrical outlets.

6.5) Lighting fixture

- Any bathroom, laundry room, utility room, common hallway, stairway or porch does not have an operable light fixture

6.6) Ground Fault Circuit Interrupter protection

- Any outlet/receptacle within 6' of a sink or water source is not GFCI protected.

6.7) Laundry Area receptacle

- Laundry area receptacle is not grounded or GFCI protected.

7. Plumbing and Hot Water

Plumbing systems must be properly installed, functional, sanitary and maintained in good condition. Water temperature must reach at least 110°F after running hot water.

7.1) Water Temperature

- Running hot water temperature is below 110°F.

7.2) Water Heater Set Point

- Any individual unit water heater is set above 120°F.

7.3) Plumbing Function

- Evidence that plumbing is not connected to an approved sewer or not functioning properly. Evidence includes for example: strong sewer gas smell in the basement or outside of unit, major leaking of plumbing pipes, clogged or very slow drains.

8. Sanitation Standards: Bathrooms

Every unit has at least one directly accessible bathroom (primary bathroom) that includes operable sink and tub or shower, all in safe, sound condition and sanitary working order. Does not apply to legally established rooming house/boarding house that does not have individual bathrooms, although any associated common or shared bathroom must meet these standards.

8.1) Proper Function

- Not fully functional or properly functioning bathroom (includes sink, toilet, tub and/or shower).

8.2) Access

- The only access from a bedroom to the only bathroom is through another bedroom.

8.3) Toilet

- Toilet does not flush, is broken, leaks at the base or is not secure to the floor.

8.4) Sink Is Functional, not leaking and does not have sharp edges or concealed places for bacterial growth.

- Dripping faucets, significantly cracked or chipped porcelain or broken but operable handles or knobs.
- Is not operable, such as cracked through, faucet can't be turned on or no hot and/or cold water.
- Under sink plumbing pipes or connectors are leaking.

8.5) Shower or Bathtub Is Functional, not leaking and does not have sharp edges or concealed places for bacterial growth.

- Dripping faucets, significantly cracked or chipped porcelain or broken but operable handles or knobs.
- Is not operable, such as cracked through, faucet can't be turned on or no hot and/or cold water.
- Plumbing pipes or connectors are leaking.

8.6) Wall, Floor or Ceiling Coverings

- Broken such that floor, wall or ceiling studs or joists are visually exposed.
- Soft, spongy or wet to the touch.

9. Sanitation Standards: Kitchen

Every unit has a kitchen, counter, cabinets, cooking appliance and refrigerator maintained in a safe, sound condition and sanitary working order. This does not apply to units comprised of a single habitable room such as a rooming house/boarding house that does not have individual kitchens, although any associated common or shared kitchen must meet these standards.

9.1) Dwelling Unit - No Kitchen

- Dwelling unit must have kitchen and must include sink, counter, cabinets, cooking appliance and refrigerator.

9.2) Kitchen Counter

- Kitchen counter is missing tile, pieces are broken, is made of porous material or is pulling away from the wall.

9.3) Refrigerator/Freezer (if provided by landlord)

- Missing a handle or seal is compromised.
- Is inoperable or not in good working condition.

9.4) Cooking Appliance (if provided by landlord)

- One or more parts are inoperable or missing but appliance still has food cooking capability.
- Not rated for indoor use or entire appliance is inoperable.

9.5) Sink is functional, not leaking and does not have sharp edges or concealed places for bacterial growth.

- Dripping faucets, significantly cracked or chipped porcelain or broken but operable handles or knobs.
- Is not operable, such as cracked through, faucet can't be turned on or no hot and/or cold water.
- Under sink plumbing pipes or connectors are leaking.

9.6) Gas Piping

- Gas piping is leaking, kinked, crushed or pulling away from the wall or floor (NOTE: if leak detected, evacuate and call 911 immediately).
- Gas shutoff valve not located within 3' of appliance.

9.7) Wall, floor or ceiling coverings

- Broken such that floor, wall or ceiling studs or joists are visually exposed.
- Soft, spongy or wet to the touch.

10. Mechanical/Laundry Rooms

Mechanical' rooms shall be maintained in a fire-safe condition.

10.1) Gas Piping

- Gas piping is leaking, kinked, crushed or pulling away from the wall or floor (NOTE: if leak detected, evacuate and call 911 immediately).
- Gas shutoff valve not located within 3' of appliance.

10.2) Water Heater

- Discharge pipe shall extend to within 6" from the floor.

- Floor drain shall be adjacent or drip pan provided and directed to a floor drain.

10.3) Combustible storage

- There shall be no combustible storage located within 3' of any fuel burning appliance.

10.4) Appliances

- Appliance venting shall be maintained in a safe and sound condition with positive venting provided to the exterior of the building.
- Combustion air for fuel burning appliances shall be maintained and provided at all times.

10.5) Clothes Dryer Duct shall be UL 2158A listed metallic (plastic or tin-foil slinky not allowed).

- Clothes dryer duct is non-metallic and/or exceeds 8' in length and/or is concealed within construction.

11. Owners' Obligations

Property owners are responsible for ensuring the property is free of excess trash; insects and rodents have been exterminated; unit and building doors lock with a deadbolt or dead-latch; and working smoke and/or heat alarms, CO detectors, portable fire extinguishers, fire alarms systems, emergency lighting and exit signage as applicable.

11.1) Smoke-Heat Alarms missing, not functional or not located in correct places.

If any detector is replaced or added, it needs to be of the dual sensor type.

*After June 30, 2021, a battery-powered smoke alarm listed in accordance with UL 217 that is newly installed or replaces an existing battery-powered smoke alarm must be powered by a non-removable, non-replaceable battery that powers the alarm for at least 10 year.

- Not functioning.
- Within dwelling units – smoke alarms not in each bedroom and not centrally located outside the bedroom(s) area.
- Within common areas – smoke alarms not within 15' of corridor ends and/or not spaced 30' apart thereafter.
- Multi-family buildings within common areas – laundry rooms, mechanical rooms and electrical rooms connected to a common corridor not provided with heat detection or not functioning properly.
- Multi-family buildings manual fire alarm does not have a current compliance tag.

11.2) Doors, Locks, Frames or Jambs allow unit or building doors to close and lock securely.

- Door locks, frames or jambs are broken or do not close and lock securely.
- Exterior doors are not capable of being locked from the inside without the use of a key.

11.3) Carbon Monoxide Alarms This can be a dual sensor type.

- Missing, not functional or not centrally located outside the bedroom area(s).

11.4) Exit Signs and Emergency Lights in multi-family buildings.

- Exit signs not lit/not functioning.
- Emergency lighting not functional.

- 11. 5) Portable Fire Extinguishers** - single family, one & two family and townhome dwelling units
- Non-sprinklered Single Family, One & Two Family or Townhome Dwelling unit not provided with a charged and operable minimum 5 lb. 2-A:10-B:C portable fire extinguisher in an accessible location.
 - Sprinklered Single Family, One & Two Family or Townhome Dwelling unit not provided with a charged and operable minimum 5 lb. 1-A:10-B:C portable fire extinguisher in an accessible location.
- 11. 6) Portable Fire Extinguishers** - multi family dwelling units and buildings.
- Each non-sprinklered dwelling unit is not provided with a charged and operable minimum 5 lb. 2-A:10-B:C portable fire extinguisher in an accessible location **-OR-**
 - Non-sprinklered building common area(s) not provided with charged and operable/currently tagged minimum 5 lb. 2-A:10-B:C portable fire extinguishers in conspicuous and readily accessible locations within 75' travel distance from all dwelling units.
 - Each sprinklered dwelling unit is not provided with a charged and operable minimum 5 lb. 1-A:10-B:C portable fire extinguisher in an accessible location **-OR-**
 - Sprinklered building common area(s) not provided with charged and operable/currently tagged minimum 5 lb. 2-A:10-B:C portable fire extinguishers in conspicuous and readily accessible locations within 75' travel distance from all dwelling units.
- 11.7) Garbage/Rubbish**
- Garbage/rubbish is accumulated outside of trash receptacles.
- 11.8) Rodents or Insects**
- Visible evidence of rodents or insects such as bedbugs, ants, cockroaches or silverfish.