



**Housing Authority
City of Pittsburgh**

LANDLORD GUIDE TO NSPIRE

**Virtual Information Session
September 29, 2025**

www.HACP.org



A person wearing a white hard hat and safety glasses is shown from the side, looking down at a clipboard. They are holding a blue pen and writing on a form. The background is a blurred view of a building with large windows. The entire image has a blue color overlay.

Introducing NSPIRE

**National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate
to Replace Housing Quality Standards**

HQS

Housing Quality Standards

- **Focus**
 - HQS focus is to ensure rental properties in Housing Choice Voucher Program and Low-Income Housing Programs are identified as decent, safe, and sanitary
- **13 key focus areas**
 - Living room, kitchen, bathroom, bedroom other rooms used for living
- **2 Deficiency Types**
 - Health and safety
 - Non-health and safety



NSPIRE

National Standards for
the Physical Inspection of
Real Estate

- **Resident Focus**
 - Designed to focus on resident health and safety
 - The transition is to modernize HUD inspections that prioritize health and safety over appearance and to improve consistency nationwide.
- **3 Inspection Areas**
 - Inspectable Areas
 - Outside
 - Inside
 - Unit
- **3 Deficiency Categories**
 - Low = Pass w/comment
 - Moderate = Fail, 30-day repair
 - Severe - Life Threatening = Repair within 24 Hrs



Goals of NSPIRE

- Improve Resident Health and Safety
- Strengthen Physical Standards
- Enhance Inspection Efficiency
- Promote Year-Round Maintenance
- Consolidate the housing standards and inspection processes to ensure HUD-assisted properties are safe, habitable, and well-maintained for all residents
- Align all forms of housing programs under one set of standards
 - Used for **Housing Choice Voucher** (HCV), **Project-Based Voucher** (PBV), multi-family, **Low-Income Housing Tax Credit** (LIHTC), **HOME**, **Rural Development**, and **Low-Income Public Housing** (LIPH)



A person wearing a white hard hat and a safety vest is shown in profile, looking upwards and to the left. They are holding a clipboard and a pen, appearing to be taking notes. The background shows a building with large windows. The entire image has a blue tint overlay.

INSPECTIONS

NSPIRE Protocols

NSPIRE “Threes”

3 Categories of Deficiencies

Low, Moderate, and Severe — with several of the *Severe* also being *Life Threatening*. Each category will ideally require certain timeframes for repair:

- Low — Minor issues with little or no impact on safety or living conditions.
 - PASS: No repairs required or PASS w/comment
- Moderate — Affects the habitability or the quality of the living environment but doesn't pose an immediate danger to health or safety.
 - FAIL: Repairs in 30 days.
- Severe - Poses a high risk of permanent disability, serious injury or illness that compromises the physical security or safety of a resident
 - FAIL: 24 Hour Repair





NSPIRE “Threes”

3 Inspectable Areas

- Outside: Building site, building exterior components, and any building systems located outside of the building or unit
- Inside: Common areas and building systems that can generally be found within the building interior and are not inside a unit
- Unit: Interior components of an individual unit

Key Outside Deficiencies

The following are examples of common fail items:

- **Litter** — Food, Paper and/or Trash discarded incorrectly
- **GFCI** — Ungrounded/incorrectly wired outlet, or outlet not energized
- **Exposed Wires**
- **Guardrails** — Missing from heights elevated 30 or more inches
- **Exterior Sprinkler Heads** — Corrosion
- **Fire Extinguishers** — Missing, Expired, Damaged
- **Sharp Edges** — Within normal path of travel and severe enough to require treatment from a medical professional
- **Infestation - Evidence of rodents**
- **Handrails** — Missing from continuous run of stairs/steps with 4 or more risers
- **Sidewalks** — Obstructed sidewalks, walkways, and/or ramps
- **Tripping Hazards**



Key Inside Deficiencies

The following are examples of common fail items:

- **Bathroom Ventilation** — Bathroom does not have operable fan or window
- **Refrigerator** — Damage that impacts function
- **Drains** — Clogged drains in sink and bathtubs
- **Toilets** — Base is not secure, or toilet runs continuously after being flushed
- **Egress** — Doors and windows utilized for egress do not open fully
- **Foundation** — Evidence of water infiltration
- **Electrical Gaps** — Gaps in electrical panels
- **Dryer Vent** — Detached dryer vent in a community laundry room or apartment
- **Auxiliary Lights** — Lights do not work or are missing
- **Exit Signs** — Loose exit sign
- **Fire Sprinklers** — Items are stored within 18" of sprinkler head
- **Lead-Based Paint**
- **Lights** — Fixtures are not securely attached to wall or ceiling



Key Unit Deficiencies

The following are examples of common fail items:

- **Grab Bars** — Attachment not secure, if present in shower or bathtub
- **Cooking Range** — Component missing, 100% of burners or oven do not produce heat
- **Kitchen Ventilation** — Vent inoperable or blocked, exhaust duct not attached securely
- **GFCI** — Ungrounded/incorrectly wired outlet, or outlet not energized
- **Water Heater** — No hot water noted
- **Egress** — Unit does not have at least one unblocked egress or window
- **Carbon Monoxide Detector** — Missing, inoperable, or obstructed
- **Smoke Detector** — Missing, not installed in proper location, or obstructed
- **Infestation** — Evidence of roaches, bedbugs, rodents and other pests
- **Mold-Like** — Warped walls or other evidence of high moisture levels



Outside Deficiencies



Above/Right: Foundation is spalling, flaking, or chipping.



Above: Broken sidewalk/walkway.

Outside Deficiencies



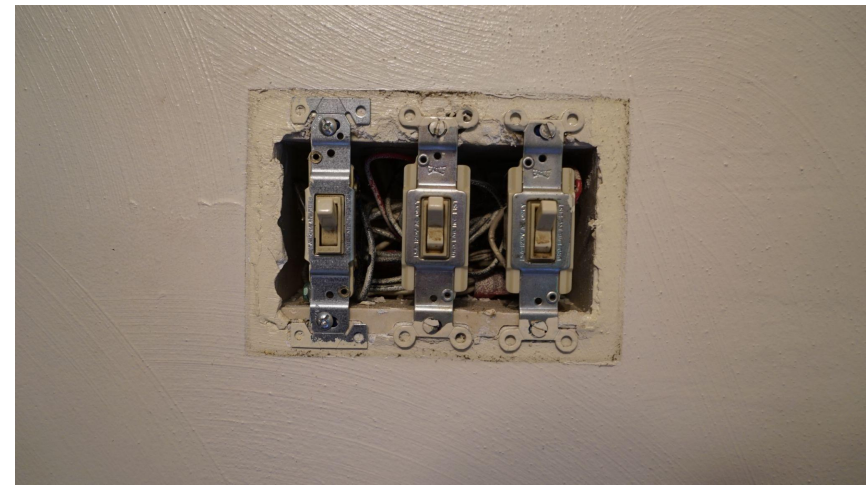
Above/Right: Trash piled up, chipped window pane/frame

Above/Left: Broken porch, damaged entryway

Inside Deficiencies



Above: Damaged light fixture pulled away from the ceiling



Top: Missing outlet cover
Bottom: Damaged or peeling banister, stairs

Inside Deficiencies



Left: Door is not attached to wall.



Above: Storage component is damaged, inoperable, or missing.

TENANT DAMAGES

Under HUD's NSPIRE, tenants can be held responsible for damages they cause especially when the damage is due to neglect, abuse, or intentional behavior and beyond normal wear and tear.

Landlords must maintain the property according to NSPIRE standards however, they are NOT responsible for fixing issues caused by the tenant.



Tenant Damages

Intentional or Negligent Damage

- Punching holes in walls
- Broken windows or doors
- Damaging appliances through misuse
- Tampering with smoke or CO detectors
- Disconnecting electrical systems or plumbing
- Graffiti or defacing property



Tenant Damages

Fire or Water Damage

- Leaving the stove or oven unattended causing a fire
- Overflowing a bathtub or sink
- Blocking ventilation
- Smoking in a non-smoking unit and causing smoke damage



Tenant Damages

Pest Infestations Caused by Unsanitary Conditions

If a pest issue (like roaches or rodents) is due to unclean living conditions, the tenant may be held partially responsible.



Tenant Damages

Obstruction or Tampering with Safety Systems

- Removing or covering smoke detectors
- Blocking fire exits
- Disabling carbon monoxide detectors



Tenant Damages

Lost or Damaged Locks/Keys

- Replacing lost keys
- Paying for lock changes due to tenant-related issues





Under **NSPIRE** HUD Emphasizes

- The property owner/manager is responsible for maintaining units in good repair —regardless of who caused the issue.
- Tenants may be billed or held accountable for damages they caused, but landlords cannot use that as an excuse to delay repairs.
- If repairs are needed, they must still be made promptly, and disputes over responsibility can be settled separately.



For more information on NSPIRE, visit:
<https://hud.gov/reac/nspire>

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