

**TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE
HOUSING CODE CERTIFICATE**

PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Housing Code Certificates must be obtained by the owner of any dwelling or dwelling unit when a transfer of title or change of occupancy occurs.

A Township Housing Inspector will issue a Housing Code Certificate (Certificate of Inspection) after an inspection certifies that such dwelling or dwelling unit complies with the standards of the township housing code. The Certificate of Inspection expires one year from the original inspection date.

The following list provides homeowners with a general guideline of the housing code requirements. All items marked with an asterisk (*) are life safety violations and must be corrected before occupancy of the dwelling will be permitted.

Please note: All services to the residence (i.e. electrical, water, etc.) must be on at the time of inspection.

EXTERIOR OF PROPERTY

- All fences/gates, sheds and outbuildings must be in good repair.
- All sidewalks, driveways and aprons must be in good condition.
- Garage doors must work freely.
- * All porches, balconies, etc. thirty (30) inches above the ground require railings.
- * All stairways having four or more steps require handrails. (A step is determined by its riser; therefore four (4) risers or more require a handrail.
- Grass, brush and weeds shall be no higher than ten (10) inches.
- All fire wood must be stacked twelve (12) inches off of the ground.

EXTERIOR OF HOUSE

- * Approval is needed for any alteration to the electric or plumbing.
- All sliding doors and screen attachments must open freely.
- Remove all rubbish and debris from around the structure.
- Make sure foundation is moisture proof. Cellars and basements are to be dry. Correct any moisture problems.
- All exterior surfaces of the structure should be in good repair. Repair, remove, or paint all cracked, chipped, and peeling paint and rotted wood.
- There should be no torn or ripped screens. They can be removed if air conditioning is present.
- The roof, roof gutter, flashing, rain conductor and roof cornice should be in good repair; showing no signs of leaks or deterioration. A roof certification may be required from a New Jersey licensed contractor.
- All leaders and gutters should be securely fastened and in good repair.
- * All exterior doors and windows shall be reasonably weather tight, water tight, and open and close easily.
- Glass windows must be free of cracks.
- All thermo pane windows and doors must not have broken seals (moisture).

- All fences shall be maintained in good repair, no broken posts, broken supporting members nor have holes or voids in the fence. No peeling or chipped paint surfaces.
- * Fences enclosing swimming pools must meet pool barrier requirements.
- * All bedrooms shall have at least one operable (opens and closes) emergency escape and rescue window.

INTERIOR OF DWELLING

- * An operable smoke detector is required in every residence, on every level of a dwelling including the basement, and within ten feet of any sleeping area.
- * An operable carbon monoxide detector is required outside the sleeping areas. Carbon monoxide detectors may be battery operated or the plug-in type.
- * At least one portable fire extinguisher shall be installed in all one and two family dwellings (except seasonal rental units) upon change of occupancy. See last sheet for instructions.
- There should be no cracked or broken windows.
- All bathrooms not having a window must have an exhaust fan.
- * Handrails are needed on stairs with four (4) or more steps. This includes stairwells to basements and attics.
- All interior walls and ceilings must be free of cracks, holes, voids and properly painted, wallpapered or paneled. No holes, large cracks, peeling paint or paper. In a rental unit, they must be clean.
- All flooring shall be in good repair – no cracked or missing tiles.
- Carpets shall be clean and in good repair in rental units.
- * All doors and windows are to open freely from the inside.
- * Dryer vents must be aluminum flex instead of plastic.
- All doors separating a garage from living space must be a solid wood door, a hollow core metal door or a 20 minute rated fire door. If there is a hollow core wood door it must be replaced with one of the above.
- All windows in the bathtub/shower/jacuzzi area of a bathroom are required to have safety (tempered) glass. Safety film may be applied to interior.

HEATING

- * Furnace or heat source to be in good working order and comply with the required codes. All furnaces and hot water heaters are to be connected to an approved chimney.
- * A recent furnace inspection report may be required. Must be done by a New Jersey licensed contractor.
- * Chimneys shall be well constructed and in good repair. A fireplace/chimney certification will be required and must be performed by a New Jersey licensed contractor.

ELECTRIC SERVICES

- * GFI outlets are **mandatory** within six (6) feet of a wet bar sink, or kitchen and bathroom sinks, exterior outlets where there is direct grade level access to the receptacles, crawl spaces at or below grade level and in unfinished basements.
- Every room used for living, sleeping, cooking, or eating purposes should have two (2) electrical outlets. A ceiling or wall fixture can be considered as one of these. Extension cords do not qualify.

- * Electrical fixtures and outlets must be properly wired and maintained. No exposed wiring, broken light covers or improperly wired electrical outlets.
- * Safety plates or covers are needed for all receptacles and wall switches.
- Garage door openers must have their own outlet – no extension cords.

PLUMBING

- Sump pumps are not permitted to be connected into the sewer lines.
- * Provide a safe and potable water supply.
- Well Water Certification: When a well is used as a source of potable water, a test must be conducted on the water by a certified laboratory, which will draw the water sample themselves. The water must be tested for bacteriological, pH, iron, manganese, nitrate and coliform levels. Copies of the well water certification must be forwarded to the Division of Housing, Health Department, and to the buyers of the property.
- Septic System: A New Jersey DEP recognized inspection shall be conducted which follows the New Jersey DEP protocol as noted in N.J.A.C. 7:9A-12.6.
- Hot and cold running water must be provided.
- All bathroom fixtures and ceramic tile walls must be properly caulked and/or grouted to eliminate any voids or cracks.
- Plumbing fixtures and floors, walls and ceilings in bathroom and kitchen must be kept sanitary.
- All plumbing fixtures must function properly and be connected to a public sewer or properly functioning septic system.
- Garbage disposals are allowed if a dwelling is connected to public sewer. If the dwelling is connected to a septic system, then the system needs to be tested to see if it can adequately handle the disposal.
- The toilet must be securely anchored to the floor.
- Plumbing fixtures shall not leak.
- Any chipped or cracked bathroom fixtures (e.g. tub, sink, toilet) must be repaired or replaced.

OUTSTANDING PERMITS

- An outstanding permit is any permit that has not been issued a final Certificate of Approval or Certificate of Occupancy by the Construction Official. There may need to be an inspection performed by the Construction Department or they may require additional paperwork.
- The Division of Housing will check the Construction Department records for any open permits. If there is an open permit it will be listed as a violation on the Certificate of Inspection and will remain a violation until it is closed by the Construction Department. Any questions regarding open permits must be directed to the Lawrence Township Construction Department at 609-844-7056.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER

1. The extinguisher must be located within 10 feet of the kitchen;
2. The top of the extinguisher must not be more than 5 feet above the floor;
3. The extinguisher must be visible and in a readily accessible location free from being blocked by furniture, storage, or other items;
4. The extinguisher must be near a room exit or travel path that provides an escape route to the exterior;
5. At least one portable fire extinguisher shall be installed in all one and two family dwellings (except seasonal rental units) upon change of occupancy;
6. The extinguisher shall be listed, labeled, charged and operable;
7. The size shall be no smaller than 2A:10B:C, rated for residential use and weigh no more than 10 pounds;
8. The hangers or brackets supplied by the manufacturer must be used;
9. The extinguisher must be accompanied by an owner's manual or written information regarding the operation, inspection, and maintenance of the extinguisher; and
10. The extinguisher must be installed with the operating instructions clearly visible.

New extinguishers are not required to be serviced or tagged, as long as the seller or agent can provide proof of purchase or receipt.

Certificate of Inspection expires one year from original inspection date.

Compliance with all of these items does not guarantee a Certificate of Inspection, since this is not intended as a comprehensive or all-inclusive list. It is meant as a general outline only.