

**TOWNSHIP OF LAWRENCE
DIVISION OF HOUSING
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Lawrence Township, New Jersey 08648
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CERTIFICATE OF INSPECTION

PRE-INSPECTION CHECKLIST

A Certificate of Inspection 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 Certificate of Inspection after an inspection certifies that such dwelling or dwelling unit complies with the standards of the township housing code.

The inspection is required prior to the closing on the property. If a property is being purchased in as-is condition, short sale, or foreclosure, an inspection is still required before the transfer of ownership.

A buyer may assume any of the violations listed below by sending a signed letter to our office stating which violations will be assumed and stating a time frame for when the violations will be corrected. A buyer may request up to six (6) months to make the repairs. If any violations with an asterisk (*) are listed, occupancy of the property will not be permitted until the corrections are made.

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. 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.

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.

PERMITS

- **All homeowners, realtors, and buyers are advised to verify with the Lawrence Township Construction Department (609-844-7056) or the Division of Housing (609-844-7032) that all permits for work have been issued and are closed prior to the transfer of the property. Permits may be taken out after the application is received or the Certificate of Inspection has been issued.**
- A Government Records Request (OPRA) form can be found on the township website www.lawrencetwp.com under Forms & Documents in the Administration folder. This form can be submitted to the Clerk's Office who will forward it to the appropriate departments to do a search for records. This form can be used to check for outstanding permits, violations, liens, etc. on a property.
- When an application is received, the Division of Housing will check the Construction Department records to see if there are any outstanding permits. If there are open permits, they will be listed as violations on the Certificate of Inspection. If any permits are taken out after the date of the application they may not be listed on the Certificate of Inspection.
- The permit records stay with the property and the current homeowner is responsible for any open permits.
- The housing inspector cannot perform inspections for outstanding permits. The Construction Department has licensed electrical, fire, building, plumbing and mechanical inspectors that will perform the required inspections for permits. You must contact their office at 609-844-7056 if you need to schedule inspections to close a permit.

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 firewood 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 alarm is required in every residence, on every level of a dwelling including the basement, and within ten feet of any sleeping area. **Effective January 1, 2019 all single station battery operated smoke alarms must be replaced with Ten-year sealed battery power units. Any units that do not have a sealed battery must be replaced regardless of their age. (This does not apply to Uniform Construction Code approved hard wired installations).**
- * 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 page 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, and toilet) must be repaired or replaced.

PORTABLE FIRE EXTINGUISHER REQUIREMENTS

Portable fire extinguishers **must be** installed as follows:

- The fire extinguisher **must be** installed within 10 feet of the kitchen and located in the path of egress.
- The fire extinguisher **must be** readily accessible and not obstructed from view.
- The fire extinguisher **must be** mounted on the bracket. (It cannot be placed under a sink or in a cabinet)
- The fire extinguisher **must have** a minimum rating of 2A-10B:C and weight under ten (10) pounds.
- The fire extinguisher **must have** the receipt of purchase taped to it for the inspection. If the receipt is not attached or the date on the receipt exceeds one year, the extinguisher will need to be inspected and tagged by a company that performs inspections on fire extinguishers.

****If the fire extinguisher is listed as a violation on the Certificate of Inspection the owner/agent will need to schedule a reinspection so that the housing inspector can verify that the above requirements are met. Receipts can no longer be submitted to satisfy the violation as they do not prove that the fire extinguisher is mounted properly.**