

## Minimum Acceptable Standards – Rehabilitation of Housing

### a. Single Family Rehabilitation

#### 1. Overview/Applicability

This document consists of standards, which must be met for rehabilitating a single-family home. It is applicable only to substantial rehabilitation as opposed to a new construction. The standards are **performance standards**--for example, specifying that units must be habitable and in functional condition with maximum life expectancy. The performance standards are similar to codes governing the quality of new construction of housing. This minimum standard applies to all substantial rehabilitation of owner-occupied single family housing funded through CSD.

#### 2. Applicability of Standards to Minor Home Repairs and Emergency Repairs

Minor home repairs and emergency repairs may meet these standards on a selective basis. When applying these standards to minor and emergency repairs for single-family housing where funding may be limited, not all standards are expected to be met; however, the items to be repaired shall be repaired to the applicable standard for such item. For example, if the roof is to be repaired, it shall be repaired according to the standard found in this document. To the maximum extent economically feasible, all housing addressed under a minor repair program shall first make repairs in the following order of greatest need:

- Repairs to protect the health, safety, and security of the occupant and his/her family,
- Repairs to preserve or restore the structural integrity of the building to assure its continued fitness for use as a single family dwelling, and
- Repairs to improve the energy efficiency of the dwelling in a cost effective manner; and
- Repairs to address other work deemed necessary to accomplish work items identified above.

Such minor/emergency repair work will be funded to be completed to the maximum amount of funding available to address minor or emergency repairs. When performing minor repairs, repairs to these standards will only address items to remove or reduce hazards and not necessarily designed to meet or exceed Housing Quality Standards (HQS), or local expected building codes. Since minor or emergency repairs may not bring the housing units into compliance with all codes, and use of HOME program funds requires compliance with all applicable codes, funding for such repairs are restricted to Community Development Block Grant or other grant, or local funds.

#### 3. Minimum Standard Features in All Homes

The following minimum standard features shall be met when rehabilitating single family units if existing materials, and/or appliances are hazardous to the health and safety of the occupants, inoperable, or irreparable, and must be replaced:

### **Exterior Features**

- Clay brick or fiber cement siding on exterior walls consistent with comparable, neighboring homes
- Fiber cement siding on rear and 2nd floor level exterior walls
- Composition Roof Shingles -Class "A" Fire Rated
- Hollow metal, solid core wood, or fiberglass clad exterior doors
- Keyed lockset and deadbolt at all exterior doors

### **Construction & Energy Efficiency Features**

- Foundation (*above base flood elevation*)
- R-13 (or above) fiberglass insulation in exterior walls
- R-22/R-30 fiberglass insulation in ceiling areas
- 13 SEER (or above) air conditioning system with programmable thermostat
- Double pane aluminum frame Low E windows with screens on all operable windows
- Adequate roof ventilation

### **Interior Features**

- No-wax vinyl flooring in Kitchen/Breakfast, Baths, Entry Ways, and Utility rooms
- Carpet flooring in all other rooms except accessible units for mobility impaired may include no-wax vinyl flooring throughout unit
- Ice maker connection in Kitchen
- Two (2) pre-wired telephone Jacks
- Two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections
- GFCI wiring in wet Areas
- Laminate kitchen countertops
- Appliances – refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, vent hood, cooking surfaces, and oven, all energy star rated where such rating is applicable
- Ceramic tile or ten-year warranty fiberglass molded tub and shower enclosure
- Cultured marble vanity tops in all bathrooms
- Shower over Tubs
- If replaced, ceiling Fans with Light Kits (2) in Living Room and Bedrooms
- Fully painted walls and ceilings when funds are available
- Smoke detectors in all bedrooms and adjacent hallways
- Carbon Monoxide detectors in rooms with gas operating appliances (such as stoves and fireplaces)

#### **4. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

##### **a. Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and maintained by a Homeowners Association or joint maintenance agreement.
  - And (private streets) shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

##### **b. Access onto Property**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- The backyard shall be accessible without passing through any other unit.
  - For a row type dwelling, the access may be by means of alley, an easement, by passage through the dwelling or by other acceptable means.

##### **c. Service**

- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining properties.
- If a single drain line in the building serves more than one unit, the building drain clean-outs must be accessible from the exterior. Exterior clean-outs shall be installed in an area and in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard.

##### **d. Utilities**

- Utilities must be independent for each dwelling unit except that common services, water, sewer, gas, and electricity, may be provided for the dwelling units under a single mortgage or ownership.
- Dwelling units shall have separate utility service shut-offs.
- Dwelling units shall have individual meters for individual utilities.
- Individual utilities shall not pass over, under or through another unit.
  - Unless provision is made for repair and maintenance of utilities without trespass on adjoining properties.
  - Or legal provision is made for permanent right of access for maintenance and repair of utilities.
- Other facilities must be independent for each dwelling unit, except common services such as laundry and storage space or heating, may be provided for two to four living unit buildings under a single mortgage.

##### **e. Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

- Power lines including low voltage power lines may not pass over the dwelling.
- Power lines may have to be removed or repositioned.
- Overhead wires from the street to the electrical service panel shall be no lower than 10 feet above ground and shall not come in contact with tree branches or other obstacles and shall not be reachable from nearby windows or other accessible areas.

**f. Landscaping, Lawn Areas and Trees**

In general, landscaping including lawn, shrubs, trees, and plantings should be protected and restored if damaged.

Trees

- Trees too close to the structure or threaten the structure shall be trimmed or removed.
- Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.

**g. Backyard/Fence**

If funding is available, existing fence will be repaired or as needed replaced.

**h. Trash and Debris**

The property shall be free from any accumulation of trash, rubbish and garbage, dead branches, discarded items, and other conditions conducive to infestation of insects, vermin and other pests.

**i. Drainage**

If funds are available, the site shall be free of ponding.

- The site must be graded to provide positive drainage away from the perimeter walls of the unit and to prevent standing water (ponding) on the site.
- The ground on all sides of the unit shall be elevated and shall slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
- Drainage on site shall drain away from the house, but not directed to any adjacent housing or structures.
- Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the unit.

**j. Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- If funds are available, existing gutters will be repaired or as needed replaced.
- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must be operating as intended and securely fastened and shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard and shall direct water away from structure.
- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

**k. Paving**

- Badly deteriorated walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Non-essential deteriorated paving shall be removed.

**5. Minimum Standard for Ventilation, Insulation and Attic Access**

**a. Adequate Ventilation Required**

Every habitable room shall have at least one window or skylight which can easily be opened, or other such device as will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size or minimum skylight type window size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

**b. Light and Ventilation Requirements for Bathrooms, Toilet Rooms and Kitchens**

Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.

**c. Attic Ventilation**

Natural ventilation of structural space, such as attics and crawl spaces, must be provided to reduce the effect of conditions of excess heat and moisture which are conducive to decay and deterioration of the structure.

- Attics must have adequate ventilation to allow moisture and excessive heat to escape.

- Attics will be ventilated through the roof or by other appropriate methods.

#### **d. Attic Support Structure**

The attic support structure must be structurally sound and not damaged; must not have evidence of leakage (visible daylight); and must not have significant water damage visible from the attic or the interior of the dwelling.

#### **e. Attic Insulation**

- Attic areas will be insulated over living area.
- Insulation shall be flush with joist.
- If the existing insulation is not flush with the joist, the attic insulation shall be increased to at least an R 26 rated insulation (flush with the joist).
- Attic insulation shall not be required over the garage.

#### **f. Attic Access and Attics Containing Appliances**

- Attic access must be located in a hallway or other readily accessible location with pull down stairs.
- Attic pull down stairs or scuttle panels located in a living area shall be insulated to reduce heat penetration into the home.
  - The attic pull-down stairs or scuttle shall also close to form a reasonably tight seal flush against the ceiling. This applies to pull down stairs located in living areas and other areas (such as in a garage).
- At least one lighting outlet must be provided in the attic, controlled by a wall light switch or integral switch. The lighting must be located near the equipment to be serviced.
- A convenience receptacle outlet shall be present to service appliances located in the attic.
- Attic containing appliances requiring access:
  - The clear access opening shall be a minimum of 20 inches by 30 inches where such dimensions are large enough to allow the removal of the largest appliance.
  - The passageway to the appliances shall be continuous solid flooring and not less than 24 inches wide.
  - A level service space at least 30 inches deep and 30 inches wide shall be present along all sides of the appliance where access is required.
    - ❑ Exception: On units built before 2000, a working platform need not be provided when the furnace can be serviced from the required access opening.
- Cables and wiring located within the attic shall be housed in an electrical box with a cover plate and securely fastened.

### **6. Minimum Space, Use, and Location Requirements**

#### **a. Minimum Ceiling Height**

Wherever possible, no habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 7'6". At least 1/2 of the floor area of every habitable room located above the 1st floor shall have a ceiling height of 7'6", and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than 5' shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining maximum floor area;

- A ceiling height of a minimum of 7' is acceptable in bathrooms, toilet rooms, hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.
- All rooms, except kitchen and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of 7'.

**b. Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath and Toilet Rooms**

No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.

**c. Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities**

Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.

**d. Minimum Storage and Counter Areas**

- Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6'-0", located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two (2) or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least 4 square feet per bedroom. This storage requirement does not necessarily have to be located in the bedrooms.
- All kitchens shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of eight square feet with a minimum vertical clearance of 12" and a horizontal width of at least 12". Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 4 square feet of counter area.

**e. Pest Control/Extermination**

Visible pest infestation shall be properly exterminated. Termites can cause serious problems in the wood structural components of a dwelling and may go undetected for a long period of time. A pest inspection shall be required if the dwelling unit or other structures on the property show evidence of termite infestation. A termite inspection shall be required before notice to proceed to construction and a termite certificate will be required prior to project completion.

## 7. Minimum Standard for Electrical Service and Lighting

The dwelling shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

### a. Electrical Switches and Outlets

- Every room shall have at least two duplex receptacle and one light fixture or three duplex receptacles.
  - Large rooms or rooms with heavy current electrical loads may require four or more outlets.
- All electrical outlets and switches must be operating as intended.
- Readily accessible electrical outlets shall be randomly tested with a circuit tester to determine if outlets are wired correctly and operating as intended.

### b. Light Fixtures

- Every habitable room must be provided with a light fixture or one outlet controlled by a wall switch.
- Existing wall or ceiling lights with internal switches are acceptable.
- Common or internal stairways from one floor used as a living area to another must have at least one light controlled by a three-way switch.
- Exterior stairs with five risers or more shall have a light fixture.

### c. Ground Fault Circuits Interrupter (GFCI Electrical Outlets)

Electrical outlets that are not GFCI protected must be replaced as necessary with GFCI protected outlets to comply with the below referenced requirements.

- Kitchens shall have at least two (2) GFCI protected outlets.
- Bathrooms must have at least one (1) GFCI protected outlet.
- Bar sink must have at least one (1) GFCI protected outlet.
- At least one (1) GFCI electrical outlet must be present in the garage, if applicable.
- All exterior outlets shall be GFCI protected.

### d. Appliance Outlets

- Appropriate electrical outlets must be provided for all existing appliances.
- Appliances requiring 120 volts may be on a circuit with other outlets so long as there is no evidence the circuit is overloaded.
- Essential motors requiring 240 volt must have a separate dedicated circuit and outlet.

**e. Main Panel Board (Circuit Breaker Box)**

The service entrance must be intact, securely fastened, in good condition and sized to safely service all outlets, fixtures, and basic appliances.

- The service rating shall not be less than 150 amps for multi-family dwellings.
- Electric circuit breaker panel box shall be appropriately labeled. The use or purpose of all panel board circuits shall be legibly marked and identified on a circuit directory located on the face or inside the door of the enclosure.
- Panel box shall not be missing any knockouts.
- The panel box shall be grounded at the service.

**8. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

**a. Thermostatic Controls**

A thermostat that controls both heating and cooling shall be present and operable within the unit and, if replacement is necessary, shall be replaced with a programmable thermostat.

**b. Heating**

Gas and oil fired plants shall be rated at 78 AFUE or better. Heat pumps shall comply with the requirement of ARI-240 and UL-559. Units shall be tested, rated and listed accordingly.

**c. Distribution System**

Duct coverings shall not flame, glow, smolder or smoke when tested in accordance with ASTM C 411 at the temperature to which they are exposed in service. The test temperature shall not fall below 250 degrees Fahrenheit. External duct installation and factory installed flexible ducts shall be legibly printed or identified at intervals not greater than 36” with the name of the manufacturer; thermal resistance R-value at the specified installed thickness. All duct insulation product R-values shall be based on insulation only.

**d. Air Conditioning**

Air conditioning equipment shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer’s instructions. Unless the equipment is listed for installation on a combustible surface such as a floor, or unless the surface is protected in an approved manner, equipment shall be installed on a surface of noncombustible construction with noncombustible material.

**9. Minimum Standards for Interiors of Structures**

**a. Kitchen Standards**

- The kitchen must provide suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve foods in a sanitary manner.

- Kitchens shall be equipped with a minimum of one (1) single bowl sink with hot and cold running water. Hot water tap should be located on the left side.
- A continuous and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure shall be provided for all kitchen applications.
- Kitchen plumbing fixtures shall function as intended and free of water leakage.
- Stove and refrigerator receptacles shall be present.

**b. Kitchen Appliances And Countertop**

- Kitchen appliances, fixtures and other components shall be in good repair and function as intended.
- Kitchen must have refrigerator and stove receptacles with appropriate appliance connections.
- If present, garbage disposer shall be labeled and shall have a smooth sounding operating noise.
- Stoves and ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices, leveled and free of movement.
- A means to vent the stove to the outside shall be present, either by a stove vent hood or a kitchen window located in proximity to the stove.
- Countertop shall be leveled, structurally sound and free of significant warping, deterioration or other irregularities.
- Special built-in spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops and in other areas shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to house. Stove and refrigerator are exempt.

**c. Kitchen Cabinetry**

- Kitchen cabinets shall be leveled, structurally sound and securely fastened.
- Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled.
- Cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Cabinets shall be free of defects, irregularities, and deterioration.
- Cabinet decking shall be leveled and free of significant warping, deterioration or other irregularities.

**d. Bathroom Standards**

The bathroom shall be equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a tub and shower with hot and cold running water and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.

- Plumbing fixtures and other plumbing components shall be in good repair and operating as intended. Water leakage shall not be present.
- Bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.
- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside by an exhaust fan or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. The vent window must open to the

exterior of the unit. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling. An exception **shall be considered** on first floor 1/2 bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present and located below another room which is not the attic. In such a case the installation of an air circulating vent fan with a replaceable activated charcoal filter will meet this requirement. A bathroom without a bathtub, shower facilities or other bathing facilities shall be considered a ½ bathroom.

- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be intact and securely fastened.
- Bathroom vent window shall have a locking device (as referenced in the Windows Section of this MPS) and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall be consistent with the kitchen cabinetry standards.

**e. Floor Covering**

- Floor coverings must be free of any significant defects and conditions that may cause a tripping hazard.
- Complete replacement of existing floor tile may be necessary if some tiles do not match.
- Floor coverings in the bathroom and kitchen area shall be of water resistant material rendered smooth and easily cleanable.
- Carpet floor covering shall be reasonably clean and safe. Significantly damaged or worn carpet or defects causing tripping hazards shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- Complete replacement of existing carpet flooring may be allowable to accommodate accessibility requirements.

**f. Interior Walls And Ceilings**

Ceilings and walls must not have significant defects such as bulging, leaning, holes, loose surface materials, buckling, missing parts or other damage that may result in air infiltration or vermin infestation.

- Walls must be reasonably plumb and the ceiling must be reasonably level.
- Walls and ceilings shall be reasonably clean.
- Paint finishes or other appropriate coverings (wallpaper, paneling) shall be reasonably uniform and in reasonably good condition.
- Solid plaster or wallboard that is slightly uneven but sound shall be acceptable.
- Cracks more than one sixteenth (1/16) of an inch on existing walls and ceilings shall be repaired, painted and textured to match existing.

**g. Utility Room/Washer And Dryer Connections**

- Washer and dryer connections shall be provided.
- Existing washer water connections shall be free of water leakage, intact and securely fastened and function as intended.
- Hot water tap shall be on the left side.
- The water supply line housing shall be intact and flush with the wall.

- Dryer vents that pass through walls or other combustible material shall be metal and vented to the outside.
- Enclosed washer and dryer shall be equipped with an exhaust system, independent of all other systems, and shall convey moisture to the outside.

**h. Bedroom Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be access through a door shall have a door.
  - Door and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Closet light fixtures shall not be located too close to the shelves.
  - Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

**i. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.
  - Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.
- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of a fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

**j. Interior Doors And Hardware**

- Doors and door components shall be free of significant defects, deterioration, and irregularities.
- Bedroom, bathroom, and closet doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance doors to the master bedrooms and bathrooms doors shall be equipped with privacy door locks.
  - A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

**k. Stairs**

If replacing existing stairs, stairs will need to conform as close as possible to new construction standards, but replacement stairs do not need to be in compliance with new codes. All newly constructed stairs shall comply with the following:

1. All stairways and steps of four (4) or more risers shall have at least one (1) handrail. All stairways and steps which are five (5) feet or more in width shall have a handrail on each side.
2. All handrails shall be installed not less than thirty four inches (34") nore more than thirty-eight inches (38"), measured plumb, above the nosing of the stair treads. Handrails adjacent to a wall shall have a space of not less than one and one-half inches (1 ½") between the wall and the handrail. All handrails shall be turned back into the wall on railing ends. The size of a round railing must be a minimum of 1.25 inches, but not more than 2 inches. Railings must be continuous from the top riser to the bottom riser.
3. Porches, balconies or raised floor surfaces, including stairway riser and/or landing, located more than thirty (30") inches above the floor or grade, shall have guardrails installed that are not less than thirty-six (36") inches in height. Open guardrails and stair railings shall have immediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere of four inches (4") in diameter cannot pass through.
4. All stairs and steps shall have a riser height of not more than eight inches (8") and a tread depth of not less than nine inches (9"). All newly constructed stairs, not replacement stairs, shall have a riser height of not more than seven and three quarters (7 ¾") and a tread depth of not less than ten inches (10"). Risers and treads cannot be different in size by more than 3/8 of an inch from the top to the bottom of the stairs.

**I. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

The unit shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.

The front entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).

- Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required.

**m. Ceiling Fans**

Existing ceiling fans shall be intact, securely fastened and free of vibration. If fixtures are to be replaced, light fixtures in the living room and bedrooms shall be replaced with a combination ceiling fan/light fixture.

**n. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two pre-wired telephone jacks.

**o. Cable TV Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired cable TV connections, generally located at the living/family room and the master bedroom to allow access to required digital television connections.

**p. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- Smoke detectors shall be installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and provided in the following locations:

- A smoke detector in each room used for sleeping.
  - Outside of each bedroom or sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms or sleeping area (hallway area).
  - If bedrooms or sleeping areas are located on different (usually on opposite) sides of the unit, the reference above applies to bedrooms and sleeping areas on each side.
  - On each additional story of the dwelling.
  - The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
  - On units built after 2000, when more than one smoke alarm is required in an individual unit the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be installed in rooms where natural gas is present.

## 10. Minimum Standards for Exteriors of Structures

### a. Foundations And Structure

**FOUNDATIONS-** Foundations shall be above base flood elevation and will be sound, reasonably level, and free from movement.

**STRUCTURAL WALLS-** Structural framing and masonry shall be free from visible defects. Be adequately sized for current loads.

### b. Windows And Doors

**EXTERIOR DOORS-** Doors shall be solid, weather-stripped, operate smoothly, and include a peep site, a dead bolt, and an entrance lock set.

**WINDOWS-** All windows shall meet or exceed the International Energy Conservation Code. Operable windows shall have a locking device and mechanism to remain partially open.

**INTERIOR DOORS/PLACEMENT-** All bedrooms, baths and closets shall have well-operating doors with locksets

### c. Roofing

**PITCHED ROOFS-** Fiberglass asphalt, 3 tab class A shingles with a prorated 20 year manufactured warranty with adequate ventilation.

**FLAT AND LOW SLOPE ROOFING-** Built-up roofing flashing and accessories shall be installed to provide a 10-year warranty from a certified roofing company.

**d. Exterior Surfaces**

**EXTERIOR STEPS AND DECKS-** Steps, stairways, and porch decks will be structurally sound, reasonably level, with smooth and even surfaces.

**EXTERIOR RAILINGS-** Handrails will be present on one side of all interior and exterior steps or stairways with more than two risers, and around porches or platforms over 30" above ground level. Railing repairs will be historically sensitive.

**EXTERIOR CLADDING-** Siding and trim will be intact and weatherproof. All exterior wood hardi components will have full coverage of paint

**EXTERIOR HARDWARE-** Every dwelling unit will have a mailbox, or mail slot, and minimum 3" high address numbers visible from the street.

**11. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems**

- a. **WATER SUPPLY-**all fixtures must be: supplied with 3-gallons/minute water flows.
- b. **DRAIN, WASTE, VENT LINES-**Waste and vent lines must function without losing the trap seal. Lines shall be installed in accordance with the most recently approved version of the International Plumbing Code.
- c. **PLUMBING MINIMUM EQUIPMENT-**Every dwelling unit shall have a minimum of one double bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen and bathrooms containing a vanity with a sink, and a shower/tub unit, both with hot and cold running water, and a toilet.
- d. **PLUMBING FIXTURES -**Metal faucets and shower diverters, ceramic toilets, double bowl stainless steel sinks, fiberglass tub surrounds and steel enameled 5' tubs.
- e. **WATER HEATERS-**Each dwelling unit shall have a gas-fired or electric water heater. The minimum capacity for units with two bedrooms or less shall be 30 gallons; larger units shall have a minimum capacity of 40 gallons. The discharge pipe shall be installed so as to drain by gravity flow and shall terminate atmospherically not more than 6" above the floor. The end of the discharge pipe shall not be threaded.

## **12. Garages**

- An attached garage shall have drywall installed on common walls to livable space and fully painted walls and ceilings.
- Attached garage interior walls shall be consistent with the same standards as interior walls.
- A detached garage may not have fully painted walls and ceilings or sheetrock completely installed. Exposed wiring shall be intact, securely fastened and safe.
- An attached garage vehicle doors and hardware shall operate smoothly.

## **13. Detached Structures**

Detached buildings (storage, sheds, or other structures) that have deteriorated and are unsound causing a hazard to the site or primary residence shall be removed.

## **b. Multi-Family Rehabilitation**

### **1. Overview/Applicability**

The following standards must be met for rehabilitating multi-family rental housing. These standards are applicable only to substantial rehabilitation as opposed to a new construction or buildings undergoing conversion of land use with substantial rehabilitation to convert them to residential use (projects proposing conversion activities should contact CSD staff prior to application). The standards are performance standards--for example, specifying that units must be habitable and in functional condition with maximum life expectancy. The performance standards are similar to codes governing the quality of new construction of housing. This minimum standard applies to all substantial rehabilitation of multi-family housing funded through CSD.

The intent of these requirements is to establish minimum property standards and criteria for the health and safety of the occupants upon completion of rehabilitation, and to ensure the value and the durability of the property and all improvements. The property and improvements are the collateral for loans/deferred loans provided to finance improvements and the lack of durability can increase the financial risk in the event of default.

More specifically, the model codes do not contain any minimum requirements for the durability of such items as doors, windows, gutters and downspouts, painting and wall coverings, kitchen cabinets and carpeting. This MPS includes minimum standards for these and other items to ensure the value of the property is not decreased by the deterioration of these components but are enhanced via restoration and installation of sustainable materials and equipment.

CSD requires developers/owners of multi-family rental housing to ensure compliance with these minimum standards when designing the project, developing the project budget and when submitting applications to CSD for funding of such projects. However, CSD acknowledges that each project may face unique site, design, and financing challenges, and will accept and review waivers of specific standards on a case by case basis.

### **2. Minimum Standard Features in All Units**

The following minimum standard features shall be met when rehabilitating multi-family rental units if existing materials, and/or appliances are hazardous to the health and safety of the occupants, inoperable, or irreparable, and must be replaced. If existing materials, and/or appliances meet code, are in good condition, and offer a reasonable remaining life expectancy, these minimum features may not apply:

#### **a. Exterior Features**

- Existing landscaping shall be restored and maintained.
- Clay brick, cementuous plaster, or fiber cement siding on exterior walls

- Fiber cement siding on rear and 2nd floor level exterior walls
- Composition Roof Shingles -Class "A" Fire Rated
- Hollow metal, solid core wood, or fiberglass clad exterior doors
- Single cylinder deadbolt and keyless deadbolt at all exterior doors
- Bar or pin lock at all exterior sliding doors
- Perimeter fencing enclosing entire site with pedestrian and vehicular access gates

**b. Construction & Energy Efficiency Features**

- Foundation (*above base flood elevation*)
- R-13 (or above) fiberglass insulation in exterior walls
- R-22/R-30 fiberglass insulation in ceiling areas
- 14 SEER (or above) air conditioning system with programmable thermostat
- Double pane aluminum frame Low E windows with screens on all operable windows
- Adequate roof ventilation

**c. Interior Features**

- No-wax vinyl flooring in Kitchen/Breakfast, Baths, Entry Ways, and Utility rooms
- Carpet flooring in all other rooms except accessible units may include no-wax vinyl flooring throughout the unit
- At least one (1) pre-wired telephone Jack
- At least one (1) pre-wired cable TV connection
- GFCI outlet in wet Areas
- Laminate kitchen countertops
- Appliances – refrigerator, dishwasher, disposal, vent hood, cooking surfaces, and oven, all energy star rated where such rating is applicable, except for SROs
- Ceramic tile or ten-year warranty fiberglass molded tub and shower enclosure
- Cultured marble vanity tops in all Bathrooms
- Shower over Tubs
- Ceiling Fans with Light Kits in Living Room and every Bedroom
- Fully painted walls and ceilings
- Smoke detectors in all bedrooms and adjacent hallways
- Carbon Monoxide detectors in rooms with gas operating appliances (such as stoves and fireplaces)

**3. Minimum Standards for Property and Site**

**a. Streets**

- The property must be provided with a safe and adequate pedestrian or vehicular access from a public or private street.
- All streets within and that provide access to the project site must have an all-weather surface and usable during run off.
  - An all weather surface is a road surface over which emergency vehicles can pass in all types of weather.
- Private streets must be protected by permanent easements and properly maintained.
  - And (private streets) shall provide access to all of the property for essential and emergency use.

**b. Parking/Curbs**

- Unless stricter requirements apply, parking shall comply with the following minimum requirements and noted exceptions:
  - One (1) parking space for each 1-bedroom or larger dwelling unit;
  - Units may have less than one (1) parking space for each dwelling unit for special purpose housing (i.e., seniors, permanent supportive housing or single room occupancy developments). Such exceptions shall be reviewed on a case by case basis by CSD.
  - Parking spaces shall be at least 8'-6" wide except at designated handicapped parking space(s) which shall be in compliance with applicable codes.
- Poured concrete curb at outer perimeter of onsite drive lanes and parking.

**c. Access and Service**

- Dwelling units shall have a means of access in which it is not necessary to pass through any other unit.
- Dwelling units shall have the capacity to be maintained individually without trespassing on adjoining properties.

**d. Utilities**

Utilities shall be centralized wherever practicable to realize economies of efficiency in operation or maintenance. Layout of electrical distribution, and where possible of heat and water systems, shall be designed for separate metering whenever differential rates do not cause separate metering to be more expensive, in which case the installation shall be readily convertible to separate metering in the future. Whenever possible, electrical entrances shall be underground leading from a point where overhead service does not intrude upon the residential scale.

**e. Power Lines/Overhead Wires**

- Power lines including low voltage power lines may not pass over dwellings.
- Power lines may have to be removed or repositioned.

- Overhead wires from the street to the electrical service panel shall be no lower than 10 feet above ground and shall not come in contact with tree branches or other obstacles and shall not be reachable from nearby windows or other accessible areas.

**f. Landscaping, Lawn Areas and Trees**

Landscaping shall maximize the use of open space and existing landscaping shall be reasonably restored and maintained.

- New landscaping to be installed shall conform to a low maintenance landscaping methods and materials that use indigenous species that are drought-tolerant to conserve water used for irrigation. Native plants should be used.
- Sod (grass) shall be installed at all unpaved surfaces and plantings along the existing building foundation at street facing elevations.
- Additional sod (grass) may also be installed to stop erosion. Eroded areas shall be filled and graded as necessary before installing sod.
- Lawn shall be appropriately mowed and trimmed at the time of the inspection.
- Do not install sod at densely shaded areas and in extremely sloped areas. Add mulch or soil amendments as appropriate.

Trees

- Existing, healthy trees shall be preserved and maintained.
- Trees too close to the structure or threaten the structure shall be trimmed or removed.
  - Generally, trees that require trimming shall have the branches cut back to the main trunk.
- New trees to be installed shall be minimum 25 gallon size trees or larger and shall be appropriately planted and watered to ensure sustainability.

**g. Fence**

- The development must be fully fenced-in with access gate(s).
- The fence must completely enclose all structures, including storage buildings and other structures.
- The fence shall provide security.
- All fence components including fence gate(s) and gate hardware shall operate smoothly.
- The fence and fence gate(s) must be free of any significant defects and irregularities.
- Deteriorated, defective or missing fence components shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.
- All fence components shall be securely fastened in place.
- Electronic access gates shall operate smoothly and appropriately.

- Emergency access shall be provided at mechanically operated gates.

#### **h. Play Areas/Play Equipment**

Play areas are required for all family developments. Play areas are not required to be preserved/maintained if any of the following conditions apply:

- Development contains only 1-bedroom or small dwelling units;
- Public park with play equipment is located within 1000 feet of the development (measured from the closest property line to the public park as straight line distance, not travel distance); or
- Preservation of such an amenity is not economically feasible or viable.

Play areas/play equipment shall comply with the following requirements:

- Entire play area must be filled with synthetic protective materials and equipped with reasonable play equipment for the size of the lot. The perimeter shall be designed to keep the play area material from spilling, such as curb and/or sidewalk.
- An existing play area/play equipment scheduled to remain shall be in good repair and in compliance with all applicable safety regulations.
- New play equipment shall be installed in compliance with equipment manufacturer requirements.
- Lumber treated with chromate copper arsenate shall not be used for play equipment.
- Provide drain beneath all permeable play area surface materials with outlet to nearest storm sewer or drainage ditch.
- Provide shade, seating, and trash receptacle near all play areas.

#### **i. Trash and Debris**

The property shall be free from any accumulation of trash, rubbish and garbage, dead branches, discarded items, and other conditions conducive to infestation of insects, vermin and other pests.

Appropriately sized and secure trash receptacles must be provided and be properly screened.

#### **j. Drainage**

- The site must be graded to provide positive drainage away from the perimeter walls of buildings and to prevent standing water (ponding) on the site.
- The ground on all sides of each building shall be elevated and shall slope away from all sides of the property for drainage.
- Drainage on site shall drain away from buildings, but not directed to any adjacent housing or structures.
- Drainage of paved areas such as parking lots shall be designed to prevent ponding and directed to proper drainage facilities.

- Drainage shall be directed towards the street, alley, or easement, facilitated by elevation around the building.

**k. Splash Blocks/Gutters**

- Existing gutter and downspouts shall be properly maintained and in working order, or shall be repaired or as needed replaced.
- Gutter downspouts shall require splash blocks and gutter extensions to carry water away from the structure.
- Gutters, gutter extensions and downspouts must be operating as intended and securely fastened and shall be located and installed in a manner that does not create a tripping or accident hazard and shall direct water away from structure.
- Splash blocks shall be correctly installed with open end facing away from the structure.
- Pavestones, gravel or other materials or combination of materials cannot be substituted for splash blocks or gutter extensions.

**l. Paving and Walkways**

Deteriorated walks, driveways and other essential paving shall be repaired or replaced as necessary.

**m. Signage**

**Temporary signage** shall be erected prior to start of construction and shall remain in place until construction is completed. Such temporary signage shall be located on the project site most at a location most visible to the public. Such temporary signage shall meet the following specifications:

- 4' x 8" framed, single-face ¾" thick grand plywood mounted on 4" x 4" members. Plywood to be Southern Yellow Pine AC Grade.
- Sign shall be fully painted front, back and sides with two (2) coats of waterproof enamel white paint before any graphics are printed on sign.
- Wood members used must be preservative treated.
- Sign must be capable of withstanding 50 mph gale winds.

**Permanent development sign** shall be provided and installed on site from materials consistent with those used in the main property. It shall provide name of development, Equal Housing Opportunity logo, and leasing information/phone number.

- For conversion projects involving conversion from commercial to residential, existing signage shall be removed and replaced with permanent signage appropriate to the scale and new use of the

property. Existing signage may be modified and remain upon express written approval by CSD.

**Permanent bronze plaque** recognizing Harris County, and/or HUD as source of funding for the project shall be installed at the project site. Such plaque shall be installed at the main entrance to the property, usually in the common building where leasing offices are located, prior to construction completion. Specifications for plaque shall be found in project contract documents.

#### **4. Minimum Standards for Ventilation, Insulation and Attics**

##### **a. Adequate Ventilation Required**

Every habitable room shall have at least one window, which can easily be opened, or other such device as will adequately ventilate the room.

The total operable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50% of the minimum window area size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording adequate ventilation.

##### **b. Light and Ventilation Requirements for Bathrooms, Toilet Rooms and Kitchens**

Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen, and other similar rooms (i.e. laundry room) shall have a window area of not less than 4 square feet. Every bathroom, toilet room, and kitchen shall comply with the light and ventilation requirements for habitable rooms contained above, except that no window shall be required in adequately ventilated bathrooms, toilet rooms or kitchens equipped with a ventilation system installed in accordance with the current building code.

##### **c. Attic Ventilation**

Natural ventilation of structural space, such as attics and crawl spaces, must be provided to reduce the effect of conditions of excess heat and moisture which are conducive to decay and deterioration of the structure.

- Attics must have adequate ventilation to allow moisture and excessive heat to escape.
- Attics will be ventilated through the roof or by other appropriate methods.

##### **d. Attic Support Structure**

The attic support structure must be structurally sound and not damaged; must not have evidence of leakage (visible daylight); and must not have significant water damage visible from the attic or the interior of the dwelling.

##### **e. Attic Insulation**

- Attic areas will be insulated over living area.
- Insulation shall be flush with joist.

- If the existing insulation is not flush with the joist, the attic insulation shall be increased to at least an R 26 rated insulation (flush with the joist).
- Attic insulation shall not be required over garage areas.

## 5. Minimum Space, Use and Location Requirements

### a. Minimum Ceiling Height

Wherever possible, no habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than 7'6". At least 1/2 of the floor area of every habitable room located above the 1st floor shall have a ceiling height of 7'6", and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than 5' shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room for the purpose of determining maximum floor area;

- A ceiling height of a minimum of 7' is acceptable in bathrooms, toilet rooms, hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.
- All rooms, except kitchen and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of 7'.

### b. Maintenance of Sleeping, Bath and Toilet Rooms

No dwelling or dwelling unit containing 2 or more sleeping rooms shall have such room arrangement that access to a bathroom or toilet room intended for use by the occupants can be had only by going through another sleeping room or bathroom or toilet room.

### c. Occupants to Have Access to Sanitary Facilities

Every occupant of every dwelling unit shall have unrestricted access to a toilet, to a bath, and to a kitchen sink and lavatory basin located within that dwelling unit.

### d. Minimum Storage and Counter Areas

Each dwelling unit shall have at least one (1) closet with a minimum of 6 square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6'-0", located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two (2) or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least 4 square feet per bedroom. This storage requirement does not necessarily have to be located in the bedrooms.

- Except in SROs, all kitchens shall have a minimum enclosed storage area of eight square feet with a minimum vertical clearance of 12" and a horizontal width of at least 12". Each kitchen shall have a minimum of 4 square feet of counter area.

**e. Common Areas and Facilities**

Each development at a minimum shall have common areas/facilities to accommodate property management, maintenance, laundry, group/social service activities, and mail pick-up/delivery. Areas of common spaces shall be proportional to the number of units in the development. All common facilities provided for residents shall be accessible without passing through the lobby or lounge. If provided, medical and social services, central dining facilities, and similar common facilities (including trash removal) shall be grouped in close proximity to the main circulation elements but in such a way that it is not necessary for a resident to pass through the lobby or lounge to reach them. Proposed furnishings for common areas shall be appropriate for the spaces to be furnished and for the intended resident, with particular attention given to the needs of elderly and special needs residents.

▪ **Common Laundry Facilities**

There must be a minimum of one (1) washer and one (1) dryer per twelve (12) dwelling units if washer/dryer hookups are not available in each dwelling unit. If hookups are available in each dwelling unit, there must be a minimum of one (1) washer and one (1) dryer per twenty (20) dwelling units. If in addition to washer/dryer hookups, washers and dryers are provided in each unit, a common washer and dryer facility is not required. Where common laundry facilities are provided, such facilities shall include:

- A table or countertop for folding laundry;
- If feasible, a window to the exterior;
- Adequate entrance lighting, which must on from dusk to dawn to assist in greater security during evening hours;
- A floor drain; and
- A seating area within, or immediately adjacent to, or in the line of sight of the laundry room.

▪ **Community/Office Space**

- All special needs and elderly developments shall provide a community room, social service space, or other common area space for the provision of services, and group activities. Such space shall be sized to be proportional to the number units and number of residents utilizing such space, and must sufficiently accommodate the type of services to be provided.
  - For conversion projects, unoccupied dwelling space may be converted to community space to meet this requirement.
- All developments consisting of twenty (20) or more residential dwelling units or more must have site office of at least 200 square feet (inclusive of accessibility toilet facilities) and a maintenance room of at least 100 square feet.

▪ **Common Mail Area/Space**

Each dwelling unit shall have a designated mail box provided in a centralized location onsite. If located outside, such location shall be protected from weather. Regardless of location, mail boxes shall be accessible to the mail carrier, convenient to inhabitants, handicapped accessible, and located, screened or related to other facilities so as not to be obtrusive.

**f. Pest Control/Extermination**

Visible pest infestation shall be properly exterminated. Termites can cause serious problems in the wood structural components of a dwelling and may go undetected for a long period of time. A pest inspection shall be required if the dwelling unit or other structures on the property show evidence of termite infestation. A termite inspection shall be required before notice to proceed to construction and a termite certificate will be required prior to project completion.

**6. Minimum Standards for Electrical Service and Lighting**

The dwelling shall contain sufficient electrical sources to permit the use of essential appliances while ensuring safety from fire. Each room shall have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit normal indoor activities and to support the health and safety of the occupants.

**a. Electrical Switches and Outlets**

- Every room shall have at least two duplex receptacle and one light fixture or three duplex receptacles.
  - Large rooms or rooms with heavy current electrical loads may require four or more outlets.
- All electrical outlets and switches must be operating as intended.
- Readily accessible electrical outlets shall be randomly tested with a circuit tester to determine if outlets are wired correctly and operating as intended.

**b. Light Fixtures**

- Every habitable room must be provided with a light fixture or one outlet controlled by a wall switch.
- Existing wall or ceiling lights with internal switches are acceptable.
- Common or internal stairways from one floor used as a living area to another must have at least one light controlled by a three-way switch.
- Exterior stairs with five risers or more shall have a light fixture.

**c. Ground Fault Circuits Interrupter (GFCI Electrical Outlets)**

Electrical outlets that are not GFCI protected must be replaced as necessary with GFCI protected outlets to comply with the below referenced requirements.

- Kitchens shall have at least two (2) GFCI protected outlets.

- Bathrooms must have at least one (1) GFCI protected outlet.
- Bar sink must have at least one (1) GFCI protected outlet.
- At least one (1) GFCI electrical outlet must be present in the garage, if applicable.
- All exterior outlets shall be GFCI protected.

**d. Appliance Outlets**

- Appropriate electrical outlets must be provided for all existing appliances.
- Appliances requiring 120 volts may be on a circuit with other outlets so long as there is no evidence the circuit is overloaded.
- Essential motors requiring 240 volt must have a separate dedicated circuit and outlet.

**e. Main Panel Board (Circuit Breaker Box)**

The service entrance must be intact, securely fastened, in good condition and sized to safely service all outlets, fixtures, and basic appliances.

- The service rating shall not be less than 150 amps for multi-family dwellings.
- Electric circuit breaker panel box shall be appropriately labeled. The use or purpose of all panel board circuits shall be legibly marked and identified on a circuit directory located on the face or inside the door of the enclosure.
- Panel box shall not be missing any knockouts.
- The panel box shall be grounded at the service.

**7. Minimum Standards for Heating and Cooling Systems**

Heating and cooling systems must:

- Be safe to operate.
- Be protected from destructive elements.
- Have reasonable future utility, durability and economy.
- Have adequate capacity and quality.

**a. Thermostatic Controls**

A thermostat that controls both heating and cooling shall be present and operable within the unit and, if replacement is necessary, shall be replaced with a programmable thermostat.

**b. Heating**

The heating system must be capable of delivering enough heat to assure a healthy environment and a comfortable living condition.

**c. Duct Distribution System**

Existing circulating air ducts shall be insulated including those located in attics and crawl spaces.

**d. Air Conditioning**

The cooling system must be capable of delivering enough cool air to assure a healthy living environment and a comfortable living condition.

- The airflow around the existing condenser must not be obstructed.
- The existing condenser unit must be reasonably level and well supported with the housing intact.
- The unit refrigerant line (larger line) must have the insulation intact.
- An electric disconnect switch used for maintenance and repairs should be located within sight of the condenser unit. Circuit breaker in the service panel box is acceptable if located within sight of the unit.

**8. Minimum Standards for Interiors of Structures**

**a. Kitchens**

Every dwelling unit, except for Single Room Occupancy (SRO) shall have a kitchen room or kitchenette equipped with the following:

- **Kitchen Sink** - It shall contain one double bowl sink with hot and cold running water in the kitchen, properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and maintained in working order. Hot water tap should be located on the left side
- **Stove** - It shall contain a stove (gas or electric), properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended. Kitchen stoves or ranges must be equipped with anti-tipping devices.
- **Stove/range hoods** – shall vent to the outside and not to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling.
- **Refrigerator** - It shall contain a refrigerator with freezers, properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
- **Countertops** – It must have laminate countertops or better and such countertops must be free of any irregularities.
- **Cabinets**- shall be leveled and securely fastened. Space between cabinets and surfaces shall be appropriately filled (no gaps present). Cabinets shall be free of any irregularities, and cabinet doors, drawers and cabinetry hardware shall operate smoothly.
- **Special built-in** spaces or compartments under cabinets and under countertops shall be equipped with the appliance it was intended to house. Stove/range and refrigerator are exempt.

- **All appliances** - where applicable, must be energy star rated, and all shall be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions and 2009 IRC.

**b. Toilet Room Required**

Every dwelling unit, except as otherwise permitted for rooming houses and SROs, shall contain a room, which is equipped with a flush water closet and a properly installed lavatory. All lavatories shall be properly connected to both hot and cold running water, under pressure, and shall be properly maintained in working order.

All flush water closets shall be properly connected to the water supply, under pressure and shall be maintained in working order.

**c. Shared Toilet Facilities**

Shared toilet rooms shall be equipped with a flush water closet and lavatory basin and shall be connected and maintained as provided in the "Toilet Room Required" section above. In rooming house type structures, at least one (1) toilet and one (1) lavatory basin, properly connected as set forth above, shall be supplied for each eight (8) persons or fractions thereof, residing within a rooming house, including members of the operator's family, whenever they share the use of said facilities; provided, that in rooming houses where rooms are let only to males, flush urinals may be substituted for not more than 1/2 of the required number of toilets.

**d. Bath Required**

Every dwelling unit shall contain a bathtub and/or shower except in SROs without such facilities.

Potable water supply piping, water discharge outlets, backflow prevention devices or similar equipment shall not be so located as to make possible their submergence in any contaminated or polluted liquid or substance. Said bathtub and/or shower may be in the same room as the flush water closet and lavatory or said bathtub and/or shower may be in a separate room.

In all cases, these facilities shall be properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and shall be maintained in working order.

In rooming house type structures, at least one (1) bathtub and/or shower, properly connected as set forth above, shall be supplied for each eight (8) persons or fraction thereof residing within rooming house, including members of the operator's family whenever they share the use of said facilities.

**e. Bathroom Standards**

The bathroom shall be equipped with a minimum of a vanity with a sink, a tub and shower with hot and cold running water and a toilet. Hot water taps should be located on the left side.

- Plumbing fixtures and other plumbing components shall be in good repair and operating as intended. Water leakage shall not be present.
- Bath or shower compartments shall have waterproof enclosures.
- Bathtub and shower compartments shall be adequately sealed with an appropriate sealant.
- Grab bars in shower areas shall be provided in all designated accessible units and in all units in developments exclusively for seniors or for special needs populations.
- Bathroom vanity tops shall be waterproof and free of any irregularities.
- Shower compartment doors shall be intact and free of leakage.
- Bathrooms shall be adequately vented to the outside by an exhaust fan or by a bathroom vent window that can be opened. The vent window must open to the exterior of the unit. Bathrooms must not be vented to the attic, crawl space, or any area inside the dwelling. An exception **shall be considered** on first floor 1/2 bathrooms where an exterior wall is not present and located below another room which is not the attic. In such a case the installation of an air circulating vent fan with a replaceable activated charcoal filter will meet this requirement. A bathroom without a bathtub, shower facilities or other bathing facilities shall be considered a ½ bathroom.
- Bathroom mirrors and medicine chest shall be intact and securely fastened.
- Bathroom vent window shall have a locking device (as referenced in the Windows Section of this MPS) and a mechanism to allow the window to remain partially open.
- Bathroom cabinetry shall be consistent with the kitchen cabinetry standards.

**f. Privacy In Room Containing Toilet And Bath**

Every toilet and every bath shall be contained in a room or within separate rooms, which affords privacy to a person within said room or rooms.

Toilets and bathrooms shall have doors with a privacy-type lock and such doors, lock and hardware shall be operable and maintained in working order.

**g. Location Of Communal Toilets And Baths**

Every communal bath required to be provided in accordance with other provisions, shall be located within a room or rooms accessible to the occupants of each dwelling unit sharing such facilities, without going through a dwelling unit of another occupant and without going outside of the dwelling.

In rooming houses, said room or rooms shall be located on the same floor as the dwelling unit, or on the floor immediately above or below the dwelling unit whose

occupants share the use of such facilities.

**h. Hot And Cold Potable Water Lines To Bath And Kitchen**

Every dwelling shall have supplied water-heating facilities which are properly installed; are maintained in working condition and free of leaks; are properly connected to any required hot water lines; and, are capable of heating water to be drawn for every bath as well as general usage.

Hot water storage associated with water heating facilities shall be not less than the following minimum capacities:

One (1) dwelling unit	30 gallons
Two (2) dwelling units	40 gallons
Three (3) or more dwelling units and rooming houses	50 gallons or more

Sizes and/or number of water heaters shall be based upon the number of units served. No water heaters shall be allowed in bathrooms or closets. All water heaters shall be properly vented and sealed and shall be equipped with a pressure relief valve and drip leg.

The local rehabilitation division/department and or the applicable local building inspection division/department may adjust the above-required capacities upwards or downwards based on the type and recovery time of the water heater being installed.

**i. Connection Of Sanitary Facilities To Water And Sewer/Septic System**

Every kitchen sink, toilet, lavatory basin and bathtub/shower, shall be maintained in working condition and be properly connected to an approved water and sewer or septic system.

**j. Flooring**

- The kitchen and breakfast areas, dining area or dining room, bathrooms, entryways and utility rooms should be provided with no-wax vinyl flooring or flooring covered with water resistant material and rendered smooth and cleanable.
- The living room, bedrooms, family rooms and studies/dens must be provided with floor carpet covering except when:
  - Other flooring type is required to accommodate a mobility impaired tenant, or for designated accessible units.
  - Existing higher-grade floor covering can be restored, such as ceramic floor tile, or wood flooring. Restoration of such higher grade floor covering is an eligible and allowable costs; however, installation of new higher grade floor covering may not be an eligible cost for CSD funding but may be provided through other funds in the project budget.

- All floor coverings must be free of any irregularities.

**k. Interior Walls and Ceilings**

- Walls must be generally plumb and the ceiling must be generally level.
- Walls and ceilings shall be uniformly painted and textured or have an appropriate covering (panel, wallpaper, etc.).
- Walls, ceilings and wall coverings shall be free of visible defects, such as poorly taped seams, nail dimples, inconsistent paint and texture, buckling, or any other irregularities.

**l. Utility Connections**

If Washer/Dryer connections are provided within individual dwelling units, such connections shall comply with the following:

- The water supply line housing shall be flush with the wall.
- The hot water connection shall be located on the left side.
- Dryer vents that pass through walls or other combustible material shall be metal and vented to the outside.
- Enclosed washer and dryers shall be provided with an exhaust system, independent of all other systems and shall convey moisture to the outside of the unit.

**m. Closets**

- Bedrooms shall have access to a closet located in the bedroom area for storage of clothing.
- Bedroom closets shall have a clothes rod and shelf.
- Closets designed to be accessed through a door shall have a door.
- Closet light fixtures shall not be located too close to the shelves.
  - Light fixtures too close to the shelves may cause a hazardous condition and an impediment to the use of the shelves.

**n. Bedroom Egress**

- All bedrooms shall have adequate egress to the exterior of the dwelling unit. If an enclosed patio is adjacent to the bedroom window, it is possible the bedroom may not qualify as a habitable bedroom.
- Emergency escape and rescue windows with bars, grills, covers or screens must be releasable or removable from the inside without the use of a key, tool, or force greater than normal operation of the escape and rescue opening.
  - Any impediment to escape or rescue caused by security devices, inadequate openable window size or difficult operating mechanisms shall not be permitted.
- Occupants of a bedroom must be able to get outside the unit in the event of fire or other emergency requiring quick egress.

**o. Stairs**

Stairs will need to conform as close as possible to the below new construction standards. This requirement may be waived by Harris County CSD if in an existing structure it would be impossible or cost-prohibitive to meet the new construction requirement. In such cases, new stairs could be installed which have the same rise and run as the old.

1. All stairways and steps of four (4) or more risers shall have at least one (1) handrail. All stairways and steps which are five (5) feet or more in width shall have a handrail on each side.
2. All handrails shall be installed not less than thirty four inches (34") nor more than thirty-eight inches (38"), measured plumb, above the nosing of the stair treads. Handrails adjacent to a wall shall have a space of not less than one and one-half inches (1 ½") between the wall and the handrail. All handrails shall be turned back into the wall on railing ends. The size of a round railing must be a minimum of 1.25 inches, but not more than 2 inches. Railings must be continuous from the top riser to the bottom riser.
3. Porches, balconies or raised floor surfaces, including stairway riser and/or landing, located more than thirty (30") inches above the floor or grade, shall have guardrails installed that are not less than thirty-six (36") inches in height. Open guardrails and stair railings shall have immediate rails or ornamental pattern such that a sphere of four inches (4") in diameter cannot pass through.
4. All stairs and steps shall have a riser height of not more than eight inches (8") and a tread depth of not less than nine inches (9"). All newly constructed stairs, not replacement stairs, shall have a riser height of not more than seven and three quarters (7 ¾") and a tread depth of not less than ten inches (10"). Risers and treads cannot be different in size by more than 3/8 of an inch from the top to the bottom of the stairs.

**p. Elevators**

A minimum of two elevators shall be provided in all multi-story developments, and accessible units in such developments shall not be segregated all to one wing or floor. Where elevators are provided, one shall be a service elevator of a sufficient size (5' x 7' approx.) and be so located, as to facilitate tenant move-ins/outs and emergencies (accommodate evacuees in prone position on EMS stretchers/folding gurneys). Hooks and removable pads shall be provided in service elevators.

**q. Exits**

Every exit from every dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall comply with the following requirements:

- It shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair;
- It shall be unobstructed at all times;
- All stairways and steps of 2 or more risers shall have at least 1 handrail, and all stairways and steps, which are 5 feet or more in width, or, which are open on both sides, shall have a handrail on each side;

- Every dwelling unit shall have two (2) independent means of egress;
- All handrails shall be not less than 30" vertically above the nose of the stair treads and not less than 36" above the stairway platform;
- All balconies and platforms, which are 30" or more above grade, shall have a protective railing not less than 36" in height above the balcony or platform level;
- All multiple dwellings, one and two family residences exempted, shall have a second exit stairway or approved fire escape available to all occupants from the second floor and above of all such structures;
- All stairs and steps shall have a rise height of not more than 8" and a tread width of not less than 9". This requirement may be waived by Harris County CSD if in an existing structure it would be impossible or cost-prohibitive to meet this requirement. In such cases, new stairs could be installed which have the same rise and run as the old.

**r. Interior Doors and Hardware**

- Bedroom, bathroom, closet doors and other interior doors and door hardware shall operate smoothly.
- Entrance door to the master bedroom and bathrooms shall be equipped with privacy door lock.
  - A privacy door lock may not be required on bathrooms with separate restroom facilities equipped with a door; provided the door to the referenced restroom facilities are equipped with a privacy door lock.
- Closet doors shall be equipped with passage door hardware.

**s. Window Coverings**

All windows in all buildings shall be furnished with window coverings for privacy and control of heat gain/solar shading.

**t. Doorbell/Door Viewer**

- The entry door shall be equipped with a doorbell or doorknocker.
- The doorbell chime shall be located in a central location, such as a hallway.
- The entry door shall also be equipped with a door viewer (peephole).
  - Exception: If a sidelight is adjacent to the entry door and/or the entry door has an unobscured glaze at a reasonable height (5 feet); a door viewer may not be required.

**u. Ceiling Fans**

The unit shall be equipped with ceiling fans with light kits located:

- In the living room area.
- And in the all bedrooms.

**v. Telephone Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least two (2) pre-wired telephone jacks. Generally located at the kitchen area and Master bedroom.

**w. Cable TV Connections**

The dwelling shall have at least one (1) pre-wired cable TV connections. Generally located at the living/family room.

**x. Smoke Alarms/Detectors**

- The Smoke Detector alarm system shall provide early notification to occupants of the unit in the event of fire. Single and multi-station smoke detectors shall be installed in the following locations:
  - In each sleeping room.
  - Outside of each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms (hallway area).
  - On each additional story of the dwelling.
  - When more than one smoke alarm is required in an individual dwelling unit the alarm devices shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. The alarm shall be clearly audible in all bedrooms over background noise levels with all intervening doors closed.
  
- A Smoke Detector alarm system designed for the hearing impaired shall be provided in the units required for accessibility, and made available as needed for hearing impaired tenants occupying any other unit not included in the minimum setaside for accessible units.

**y. Carbon Monoxide Detectors**

- Carbon Monoxide Detectors shall be installed in units where natural gas is present. At least one carbon monoxide detector shall be installed on each floor level. If a floor level contains bedrooms at least one detector shall be located in the immediate vicinity but outside the bedrooms.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be listed and installed in accordance with their listings.
- Combination carbon monoxide/smoke detectors are acceptable as long as they meet all requirements.
  - Exceptions:
    1. Carbon Monoxide detectors are not required in dwelling units with no combustion appliances and without an attached garage.
    2. Carbon Monoxide detectors are not required in dwelling units with only direct vent combustion appliances and without attached garage.

- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall be interconnected in such a manner that the actuation of one alarm shall activate all of the alarms in the individual swelling unit.
- Carbon Monoxide detectors shall receive their primary source of power from the building wiring and shall be equipped with a battery back-up. Wiring shall be permanent.

## 9. Minimum Standards for Exteriors of Structures

### a. Foundations And Structure

- FOUNDATIONS- Foundations will be sound, reasonably level, and free from movement.
- STRUCTURAL WALLS- Structural framing and masonry shall be free from visible defects. Be adequately sized for current loads.

### b. Windows And Doors

- EXTERIOR DOORS- Doors shall be solid, weather-stripped, operate smoothly, and include a peep site, a dead bolt, and an entrance lock set.
- WINDOWS- All windows shall meet or exceed the International Energy Conservation Code. Operable windows shall have a locking devise and mechanism to remain partially open.
- INTERIOR DOORS/PLACEMENT- All bedrooms, baths and closets shall have well-operating doors with locksets.

### c. Roofing

- PITCHED ROOFS- Fiberglass asphalt, 3 tab class A shingles with a prorated 20 year manufactured warranty with adequate ventilation.
- FLAT AND LOW SLOPE ROOFING- Built-up roofing flashing and accessories shall be installed to provide a 10-year warranty from a certified roofing company.

### d. Exterior Surfaces

- EXTERIOR STEPS AND DECKS- Steps, stairways, and porch decks will be structurally sound, reasonably level, with smooth and even surfaces.
- EXTERIOR RAILINGS- Handrails will be present on one side of all interior and exterior steps or stairways with more than two risers, and around porches or platforms over 30" above ground level. Railing repairs will be historically sensitive.

- EXTERIOR CLADDING- Siding and trim will be intact and weatherproof. All exterior finish components will have full coverage of paint
- EXTERIOR HARDWARE - Every dwelling unit will have assigned mailbox on-site and minimum 3" high unit numbers on or near unit entry.

## 10. Minimum Standards for Plumbing Systems

All plumbing fixtures and plumbing components must be in good repair and in proper working condition free of leaks.

### a. Water Supply

- The units must be provided with a continuing and sufficient supply of potable water under adequate pressure and of appropriate quality for all household uses.
- Hot taps shall be located on the left side.
- One main water shut-off valve should be located near the entrance of the water service to each building.
- Hose connections shall be protected by backflow prevent devices (vacuum breakers).
  - This does not apply to water heater drain valves.
  - Nor water supply valves intended for connecting clothes washing machines.
- Water supply lines to the kitchen sink, lavatory basin, water heater and other water supply lines must have individual shut-off valves.
- Water line penetrations under kitchen sinks, lavatory basin, and at other locations must be adequately sealed. Clean-out penetrations located in the referenced areas or in other locations must be sealed.
- Sinks, basins or pipes shall not leak.
- The following water supply lines shall be appropriately insulated:
  - Water supply lines located in the attic.
  - Water heater cold water supply lines; also applies to water heaters located in the garage.
  - Water supply lines exposed to the weather.
- Electrical wiring under sinks/basins (usually from a garbage disposal) must meet NEC code for circuit isolation and not present a hazard or threat to the occupants. The wiring must not come in contact with water lines and possible water leakage.
- The main meter compartment shall be free of stagnated water and evidence of possible leakage.

### b. Drain, Waste, Vent Lines

Units must have sanitary facilities and a safe method of sewage disposal.

- Existing drainage, waste, and vent system should be adequately sized to provide drainage and removal of wastes.
- Existing vents must prevent pressure build-up and sewer gas from entering the unit.
- Existing traps or other plumbing components that are broken or leaking shall be repaired or replaced as necessary with similar components and installed in accordance with manufacturer's instructions and current IRC.

**c. Water Heaters**

- The water heater (WH) shall provide an adequate supply of hot water at all taps and comply to all national plumbing codes.
- Each dwelling unit shall have a gas or electric WH with at least a minimum capacity of 30 gallons.
- A gas WH shall be connected to an appropriate flue, to vent combustion gases to the exterior.
- The WH shall be equipped with an appropriate sized temperature and pressure relief valve with discharge pipe properly installed.
- WH discharge line shall be directed approximately 6 inches above floor or to the exterior.
- A shut-off valve to the WH cold water supply line shall be present. The valve shall be located at or near the WH and shall be readily accessible.
- WH cold water supply line shall be completely insulated if located in the attic, garage and other locations in which the WH may be exposed to low temperatures which may result in the referenced line freezing.
- A WH installed where leakage of the WH tank or connections may cause damage, shall be installed in a galvanized drain pan or in other pans listed for such use.
- Gas and electric WH located in the garage and that have an ignition source shall be elevated 18 inches above the garage floor.
  - Exception: Elevation is not required if the WH is listed as "flammable vapor resistant" and "installation without elevation."
- The WH shall not be located in any room used or designed for sleeping purposes or in a clothes closet.