



BALTIMORE CITY RENTAL LICENSE INSPECTION FORM

RENTAL LICENSING INSPECTOR GUIDANCE

Checklist items A - L may receive a result of “Pass” or “Fail”

A. Railing is present for interior and exterior steps with more than 3 risers.

The Rental Licensing Inspector should ensure that a railing is present when there are 4 or more steps, or greater than 33 inches off the ground.

Railing should be securely attached.

C. Electrical live wires are not visible in living areas.

The Rental Licensing Inspector should ensure that wires that should be concealed behind the walls are not visible. Electrical wires in this case do not refer to devices such as power strips, extension cords, etc.

D.1 Electrical outlets are protected by cover plates.

The Rental Licensing Inspector should inspect all accessible outlets.

NEC 406.4 (B) and NEC 406.4 (D)(2)(a) All grounded type Receptacles (i.e. three-pronged outlets) must be grounded. Non-grounding-Type Receptacles (i.e. two-pronged outlets) are allowed to be ungrounded as long as no equipment grounding conductor exist in receptacle enclosure.

NEC 406.4(D)(2)(b) “A non-grounding-type receptacle shall be permitted to be replaced with a GFI type of receptacle. These receptacles shall be marked “No Equipment Ground”. An equipment grounding conductor shall not be connected from the GFI receptacle to any outlet supplied from the GFI receptacle.”

D.2 Electrical outlets in areas where water is generally present (e.g. kitchen, bathroom) are Ground Fault Interrupter (GFI) protected.

NEC 210.8(A) Dwelling Units. All 125-volt, single phase, 15 & 20ampere receptacles installed in the locations specified in 210.8(A)(1) through (10) shall have GFI protection for personnel. (1) Bathrooms (2) Garages (3) Outdoors (4) Crawl Spaces (5) Unfinished basements (6) Kitchens – where the receptacles are installed to serve the countertop surfaces. (7) Sinks –Where receptacles are installed with (6 ft.) of the outside edge of the sink (8) Boat houses (9) Bathtubs or shower Stalls (10) Laundry areas.

If the property was constructed prior to 1975, or there is no evidence of recent rehabilitation (that involved electrical systems) in the relevant areas, then the absence of GFI receptacles shall not result in “Fail”.

E. Smoke Detectors are properly installed and operational.

The 2015 International Fire Code (IFC), requirements are dependent upon the year that the building was constructed or rehabilitated. Please see the table below for a summary.

For additional information on the Maryland Smoke Alarm Law, visit:

<https://fire.baltimorecity.gov/maryland-new-smoke-alarm-law>

FOR 1 & 2 UNIT DWELLINGS:

| # of Units | Year Built or Rehabilitated | Smoke Detector Requirements | | | | | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | | Hardwired | Battery Back-Up | Inter connected | Inside Each Sleep Area | Outside Sleep Area | On Each Level |
| All new Construction | | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| 1 or 2 | Prior to 07/01/75 | N | N | N | N | Y | Y* |
| 1 or 2 | 01/01/75 - 06/30/90 | Y | Y | N | N | Y | Y* |
| 1 or 2 | After 01/01/89 | Y | Y | Y | N | Y | Y |
| 1 or 2 | After 01/01/96 | Y** | Y** | Y** | Y** | Y** | Y** |

** Smoke Alarms shall be provided on every level in homes constructed before January 1, 1989 when the following occurs:*

- A. The existing smoke alarm is more than ten years old.*
- B. The existing smoke alarm fails to respond or otherwise malfunctions.*
- C. There is a change of tenant.*
- D. A building permit is issued for an addition or renovation.*
- E. January 1, 2018 at the absolute latest.*

To achieve the upgraded smoke alarm coverage noted above, smoke alarms shall be hard-wired units except that sealed battery-operated smoke alarms with long- life batteries and silence/hush button features may be installed in locations of the home where hard-wired smoke alarms did not previously exist.

*** Based on the 1996 BOCA Code, smoke alarms are required for R/2 and R-3 use groups in the following locations:*

- A. In the immediate vicinity of bedrooms;*
- B. In all bedrooms; and*
- C. In each story within a dwelling unit, including basements.*



IFC 907.2.11.5 Interconnection Where more than one smoke alarm is required in a dwelling unit, all smoke alarms shall be interconnected in such a manner that activation of one alarm will activate all of the alarms in the individual unit. Physical interconnection is not required where listed wireless alarms are installed and all alarm sound upon activation of one alarm.

IFC: 907.2.11.6 Power Source In new construction, required smoke alarms shall receive their primary power from the building wiring where such wiring is served from a commercial source and shall be equipped with a battery backup.

Any smoke alarm older than 10 years (or if newer, upon upgrading) shall be replaced with new, sealed, long-life smoke alarms with the hush-feature.

Light signal for hearing impaired: The landlord must provide a smoke detector that is designed (and has been tested and certified by an approved testing laboratory) to alert persons with hearing impairments if the tenancy is occupied by a person who is hearing impaired and the tenant has asked for the detector in writing by certified or registered mail.

FOR MULTI FAMILY DWELLINGS:

| # of Units | Year Built or Rehabilitated | Smoke Detector Requirements | | | | | |
|------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| | | Hardwired | Battery Back-Up | Inter connected* | Inside Each Sleep Area | Outside Sleep Area | On Each Level |
| 3 or more | Prior to 1996 | N | N | N | Y* | Y* | Y* |
| 3 or more | After 1996 | Y | Y** | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| 3 or more | After 2000 | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |

** Per 2009 IFC, if an existing building already had a smoke alarm in the individual unit, it did not have to comply with the code provision that required a smoke alarm inside each sleep area, outside the sleeping area and on each level.*

However, if the existing building did not already have a smoke alarm in each unit, the building was required to comply with the code provision.

1996 BOCA – Fire Protection Systems

Battery backup shall not be required for smoke detectors in buildings equipped throughout with an *automatic sprinkler system* installed in accordance with Section 906.2.1, 906.2.2 or 906.2.3.

2009 IFC 4603.7 Single- And Multiple-Station Smoke Alarms

Single- and multiple-station smoke alarms shall be installed in existing Group R occupancies and in dwellings not classified as Group R occupancies in accordance with Sections 4603.7.1 through 4603.7.3.



2009 IFC 4603.7.1 Where Required

Existing Group R occupancies and dwellings not classified as Group R occupancies not already provided with single-station smoke alarms shall be provided with single-station smoke alarms. Installation shall be in accordance with Section 907.2.10, except as provided in Sections 4603.7.2 and 4603.7.3.

F. Carbon Monoxide Alarms are properly installed and operational.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms are required in properties with fossil fuel-burning equipment/appliances, fireplaces, wood stoves, or attached garages.

When required, they should be installed:

- *Outside of each separate dwelling unit's sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the sleeping rooms.*
- *On every occupiable level of a dwelling unit, including basements and excluding attics and crawl spaces.*

G.2 Plumbing fixtures do not leak.

All plumbing fixtures must be operational. Tubs and sinks must be able to drain.

I. Windows, which are designed to do so, should open and close and have a working locking mechanism.

This includes all windows, including storm windows, wooden windows, etc.

Rental Licensing Inspectors should check to see that the windows function, are in sound condition and are in good repair.

Windows that are used for ventilation must be able to open and close with working locking mechanism.

For rooms/areas with windows that are not designed to open and close, there must be a source of mechanical ventilation present and operational.

L. The property has an operable heat supply system.

The Rental Licensing Inspector must turn on and off the heating system to ensure that the system is operational.

Checklist items M, N, O & P may receive a result of “Pass” or “Refer”

The Rental Licensing Inspector should mark a checklist item as Refer if it does not Pass. The Inspector must then notify Baltimore City’s Department of Housing and Community Development for further review.

Note: Any referrals will be subject to a complete re-inspection by a Housing Code Enforcement Officer.

In Items M, N, O & P below, the *information in italics* provides further explanation and examples of when a Rental Licensing Inspector may choose to mark the item as **Pass** instead of **Refer**.

M. The interior of the property is clean and sanitary.

A property may pass inspection if there are interior sanitation violations that are solely the responsibility of the tenant to abate, unless the conditions create an imminent threat to life.

*Partial responsibility for the condition of the interior of a dwelling unit, related to its cleanliness, may belong to the tenant. If the Rental Licensing Inspector finds that the dwelling conditions create an imminent threat to the life of the unit’s residents (or neighbors), but that the tenant is responsible, they should mark it as **Refer** which will result in a Housing Code Enforcement Officer following up on the report.*

N. The interior of the property appears to be free of signs of infestation by rodents, insects, or pests.

For the purposes of this inspection, the term “insects” refers to nuisance insects such as, but not limited to, bed bugs, fleas, mites, and cockroaches, and the term “infestation” refers to the presence of a quantity of insects that could cause damage and/or disease.

Inspections shall not be construed as a “pest control consultation” as defined under Maryland law (COMAR Title 15 Subtitle 5). A Maryland licensed pest control professional should be consulted to identify pest issues, develop treatment plans and exterminate pests.

Partial responsibility for the condition of the interior of a dwelling unit, related to the presence of rodents, insects or pests, may belong to the tenant.

Owner responsibility for rat proofing: preventing entrance by blocking passages with rat-resistant material; and paving basements and other areas that are in contact with the soil.

Tenant responsibility for extermination: An occupant of a multiple-family dwelling is responsible for extermination if the occupant’s unit is the only unit infested. The occupant of a single-unit building is responsible for extermination of insects, rodents and all other pests, other than wood destroying insects.

*If the Rental Licensing Inspector finds the appearance of an infestation, but the tenant is responsible, they should mark it as **Refer** which will result in a Housing Code Enforcement Officer following up on the report.*



O. If there is a bedroom in the basement, there is proper egress in case of fire.

*If the Rental Licensing Inspector finds that a bedroom (or space being used as bedroom) has been established in the basement in a non-compliant manner, they should mark it as **Refer** which will result in a Housing Code Enforcement Officer following up on the report. The information below provides guidance on compliance of a basement bedroom space as it pertains to emergency escape and rescue openings when other methods of egress are not available.*

IRC R310 EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS

R310.2 Emergency escape and rescue openings. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have minimum dimensions as specified in this section.

R310.2.1 Minimum opening area. Emergency and escape rescue openings shall have a net clear opening of not less than 5.7 square feet (0.530 m²). The net clear opening dimensions required by this section shall be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue opening from the inside. The net clear height opening shall be not less than 24 inches (610 mm) and the net clear width shall be not less than 20 inches (508 mm).

Exception: *Grade* floor or below *grade* openings shall have a net clear opening of not less than 5 square feet (0.465 m²).

R310.2.2 Window sill height. Where a window is provided as the emergency escape and rescue opening, it shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches (1118 mm) above the floor; where the sill height is below *grade*, it shall be provided with a window well in accordance with Section R310.2.3.

For existing buildings the requirement is as listed below.

R310.6 Alterations or repairs of existing basements. An emergency escape and rescue opening is not required where existing *basements* undergo alterations or repairs. **Exception:** New sleeping rooms created in an existing *basement* shall be provided with emergency escape and rescue openings in accordance with Section R310.1.

P. The exterior is free of rodent burrows.

*Burrows of various animals may be difficult to distinguish. If the Rental Licensing Inspector observes signs of possible rodent burrows, that do not also show signs of being treated, they should mark it as **Refer** which will result in a Housing Code Enforcement Officer following up on the report.*

Signs of treatment for rodent burrows include (but are not limited to):

- *Flags placed on the property by the exterminator*
- *Physical signs of poison/bait*
- *A treatment plan provided by the property owner*

Q. Are there any other readily observable problems that in an inspector's opinion represent an immediate threat to the health and safety of occupant? If "yes" please describe.

The Rental Licensing Inspector will very briefly identify the problem.

Details about the problem will be provided on the phone to the 311 operator when placing the call to notify Baltimore City of an item to "Refer".

How to make a referral to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) on checklist items M, N, O & P

1. Call "311"
 - a. The report type is "Maintenance Structure Service Request"
 - b. When prompted, provide the property address information
 - c. When asked for additional information, state that this is related to a "Rental Inspector Referral"
 - d. State the nature of the Referral (i.e. which Checklist item did not Pass)
2. On the Baltimore City Rental License Inspection Form (also known as the Checklist), indicate the following:
 - a. The date on which the call was made to 311
 - b. The 311 Report Number*
3. Advise the Property Owner, when you provide them their inspection results, that a referral was made for one or more items on the Checklist.

***Note:** Only one 311 report should be completed for each property, even if multiple items are being referred. For example, the Rental Licensing Inspector should state that "Items N, O & P did not pass the inspection. There are roaches in the basement, the basement bedroom has no egress and there are untreated rat burrows in the back yard".

**Checklist Addendum for Common Areas in Multi-Family-Dwellings,
Rooming Houses and Hotels**

*Not all units within a Multi-Family Dwelling, Rooming House, or Hotel must be inspected. Below is the guidance on the **Number of Units to be Inspected** in these types of properties.*

Number of units to be inspected must be distributed among different buildings and floors within the property.

| Units on Parcel | Number of Units Required to be Inspected |
|-----------------|--|
| 9 & under | All |
| 10 -13 | 10 |
| 14-16 | 11 |
| 17-20 | 12 |
| 21-30 | 13 |
| 31-50 | 14 |
| 51-60 | 15 |
| 61-75 | 16 |

| Units on Parcel | Number of Units Required to be Inspected |
|-----------------|--|
| 76-100 | 17 |
| 101-125 | 18 |
| 126-150 | 19 |
| 151-200 | 20 |
| 201-250 | 22 |
| 251-300 | 24 |
| 301-500 | 26 |
| 501 & more | 28 |

A. Public hallways and stairways are free of obstructions.

All methods of egress from the unit to the outside of the building are free of obstructions.

C. Fire separation is intact between dwellings, hallways, and stairways.

There should be no holes in the walls or ceiling.

D. Fire alarm system is in working order. (Enter N/A if not required.)

A fire alarm is considered to be in working order if the Rental Licensing Inspector is able to visually confirm the presence of a current (i.e. completed within the past 12 months) inspection sticker.

F. Exit signs are installed and clearly visible.

IFC 1013 Exit Signs. Where required. Exits and exit access doors shall be marked by an approved exit sign readily visible from any direction of egress travel. The path of egress travel to exits and within exits shall be marked and readily visible exit signs to clearly indicate that the direction of egress travel in cases where the exit or the path of egress travel is not immediately visible to the occupants. Intervening means of egress doors within exits shall be marked by exit signs. Exit sign placement shall be such that no point in an exit access corridor or exit passageway is more than 100 feet (30 480mm) or the listed viewing distance for the sign, whichever is less, from the nearest visible exit sign.



G. Mechanical room (furnace, boiler) has proper clearance and is not used for storage.

IPMC 603.3 Clearances. Required clearances to combustible materials shall be maintained. Proper clearances must be maintained between combustible materials and all heat-producing appliances and equipment. Adequate clearances are necessary to prevent the possible ignition of combustibles. The required clearances for the labeled appliances and equipment must be maintained in accordance with the manufacturer's requirements. Clearances for chimneys, vents and their connectors are also specified in the IMC and IFGC.

H. Electrical room (meters, wires) has proper clearance.

IRC E3405 EQUIPMENT LOCATION AND CLEARANCES

E3405.1 Working space and clearances. Access and working space shall be provided and maintained around all electrical equipment to permit ready and safe operations and maintenance of such equipment in accordance with this section and Figure E3405.1 (110.26)

I. The multi-family license is posted in a common area.

The license should be posted in a common area, accessible to tenants and inspectors. In apartment complexes with a rental office onsite, the license can be posted in the office.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:

1. This inspection is limited to the checklist items set forth by the Baltimore City DHCD as required under Article 13 Subtitle 5 of the Baltimore City Code.
2. Inspections shall not be construed as a "home inspection" as defined under Maryland law.
3. Inspections shall not be construed as a "pest control consultation" as defined under Maryland law (COMAR Title 15 Subtitle 5). A Maryland licensed pest control professional should be consulted to identify pest issues, develop treatment plans and exterminate pests.
4. The Rental Licensing Inspector completing this report may not repair, or recommend any person to repair, any of the items listed above that fail.
5. If scanning multiple forms please keep them in one PDF.
6. Photographs are not required.
7. MFD Property Owners with existing 2018 licenses, do not need to have their properties inspected and re-licensed until their current licenses are set to expire.
8. MFD properties with a license expiring in 2019 must have the inspection performed by a City-registered Rental Licensing Inspector, prior to expiration.