

# Inspection Q&A

Housing Authority of the County of Santa Cruz, also serving Hollister and San Juan Bautista

Oct 21

## Tips for getting ready for your inspection:

- ✓ For move-in inspections, make sure the power and water is on and the unit is clean and vacant.
- ✓ For annual or biennial inspections, make sure that an adult is present, the unit is clean and everything is working as designed to work.
- ✓ We recommend - but don't require - that both the landlord and the tenant attend the inspection.
- ✓ Review our HQS Inspection Checklist and try to make repairs before the inspection to avoid delays.

## Information About Housing Authority Inspections

### What is the purpose of the inspection?

The purpose of the inspection is to ensure that units we assist are "decent, safe, and sanitary." These standards are called Housing Quality Standards, or HQS, and are not the same as building codes.

We encourage review of our **HQS Inspection Checklist** in detail before the inspector arrives. If minor repairs can be taken care of before the inspection, there is a better chance that the unit will pass right away. Only one re-inspection is allowed, and only if the voucher has not expired or is not about to expire.

The Inspection Checklist can be obtained from our website or by calling our Info Line to request one.

It is the landlord's responsibility to correct inspection violations. The landlord may follow state law in charging the tenant for tenant-caused damages. We encourage tenants to keep their homes in good condition and report maintenance problems to the landlord promptly. Tenant-caused damage, beyond normal wear-and-tear, can result in termination from the program.

### When must a unit be inspected?

The federal government requires the Housing Authority to inspect all units assisted through the Housing Choice Voucher program, as well as most other programs it administers.

A unit must be inspected before move-in and biennially thereafter or by special request

### What if the unit fails inspection?

For initial move-in inspections, the results are usually available by phone on the afternoon of the day following the inspection. If the unit fails, we will send the landlord a letter listing the corrections that need to be made. Once the landlord has made the repairs, he or she must call us to schedule a second inspection. If the unit fails again, we advise the tenant to look for another unit.

For annual or biennial inspections, landlords are given a deadline to complete repairs and reschedule an inspection or complete a self certification form that all repairs have been taken care of. If repairs are not completed by the deadline, the Housing Authority will stop payments to the Landlord.



**Questions? Call our Info Line at 454-5955  
or visit us online at [www.hacosantacruz.org](http://www.hacosantacruz.org)**

2160 41<sup>st</sup> Avenue, Capitola, CA 95010 Open M-TH 8-4:30,  
Closed Fridays



For our business office or para información in español: 831 454-9455  
*Program rules are subject to change. Use this as general guidance only.*

TDD: 831 475-1146

# Inspection Q&A cont'd

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## More About Initial and Annual Inspections

### Can the tenant move in before a unit passes inspection?

The tenant will have to pay the full rent if he/she moves in before the unit passes inspection, a lease is signed, and the Housing Authority contract is signed.

#### **The rent is not retroactive.**

Housing Authority rent begins the day the unit passes inspection, or the effective day of the lease, whichever is later, provided paperwork is complete.

If the landlord does not make the necessary repairs or changes his/her mind about signing the contract, the tenant would have to find another place to live.

**For this reason, tenants should ensure that they have enough time on their vouchers to look for other units.**

### Can you inspect a unit before the landlord has found a tenant to see if it will pass?

We cannot inspect a unit until a tenant turns in an RTA. You can use our **HQS Inspection Checklist** to identify failed items.

### What does the inspection cover?

Please see our **HQS Inspection Checklist** for a more detailed description of what the inspection covers. In general, the inspector will be looking for:

- ✓ A working smoke detector on each floor.
- ✓ A clean and working stove and refrigerator. (Tenants can provide their own appliances.)
- ✓ A safe and adequate heating system.
- ✓ A working water heater with a proper discharge line on relief valves.
- ✓ Exterior doors that lock and provide a weather-tight fit. Interior keyed locks are not permitted.
- ✓ Hot and cold running water with no leaks.
- ✓ No evidence of roach or vermin infestation.
- ✓ No peeling paint or mold.
- ✓ Clearly marked address.

- ✓ Proper ventilation in bathrooms, window or vent
- ✓ No electrical hazards, including missing, cracked or broken cover plates. GFI's must test properly.

**This is only a partial list, and standards may change over time.**

**Remember that all utilities must be on, and the unit must be move-in ready, at inspection time.**



### Need More Info?

Visit our website or call our Info Line to get more information, including:

- ✓ HQS Inspection Checklist
- ✓ Housing Search Q&A
- ✓ Transfer Q&A
- ✓ Landlord Introduction Q&A

**Info Line: 831 454-5977**

**Website: [www.hacosantacruz.org](http://www.hacosantacruz.org)**