

**ARLINGTON HOMEBUYERS' ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
(AHAP)**

MINIMUM HOUSING STANDARDS

City of Arlington, Texas

Community Development and Planning Department

These minimum standards have been developed for use with the City of Arlington's Arlington Homebuyers' Assistance Program. The property inspection reports reflect the property's adherence to these standards on the date of the inspection. Where, in a specific case, different sections of these standards specify different requirements, the more restrictive shall govern unless approved by the Assistant Director of Community Services or his/her designee. Nothing in these standards shall be construed to cancel, modify or set aside any provision of codes required at the time of construction or when any repairs, additions or alterations were made to a structure.

I. MINIMUM BASIC EQUIPMENT AND FACILITIES

A. Kitchens - Every dwelling unit shall have a kitchen room or kitchenette equipped with the following:

1. Kitchen Sink: It shall contain an approved kitchen sink, properly connected to both hot and cold running water lines, under pressure, and maintained in working order. 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.
2. 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.
3. Refrigerator: It shall contain a refrigerator, properly connected to the source of power, maintained in working order, and capable of supplying the service for which it is intended.
4. In properties being acquired for homeownership, if the purchasers will be furnishing their own appliances, there shall be sufficient space and all required electrical and gas hookups, properly installed to facilitate the use of said appliances.

B. Toilet room - Every dwelling unit, 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, have an approved anti-siphon valve assembly, and shall be maintained in working order.

- C. Bath** - Every dwelling unit shall contain a bathtub and/or shower. 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.
- D. Privacy in room containing toilet and bath tub** - 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.
- E. Hot and cold water lines to bath and kitchen** - Every dwelling shall have supplied water-heating facilities which are properly installed and maintained in working condition, free of leaks and properly connected to required hot water lines 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 dwelling unit - 30 gallons.

No water heaters shall be allowed in bathrooms or closets other than for the specific purpose of housing the water heater. All water heaters shall be properly vented and sealed and shall be equipped with a properly installed pressure temperature relief (TPR) valve and a properly installed TPR discharge line.

- F. Connection of sanitary facilities to water and sewer-septic system** - Every kitchen sink, toilet, lavatory basin and bathtub and/or shower and other plumbing fixtures shall be maintained in working condition and be properly connected to an approved water, and sewer or septic system.
- G. Exits** - Every exit from every dwelling unit shall comply with the following requirements:
1. Exits shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.
 2. Exits shall be unobstructed at all times.
 3. All stairways and steps of two or more risers shall have at least one handrail, and all stairways and steps which are five feet or more in width, or which are open on both sides, shall have a handrail on each side.
 4. Every dwelling unit shall have two independent means of egress.
 5. All handrails shall be not less than 30 inches vertically above the nose of the stair treads and not less than 36 inches above the stairway platform.
 6. All balconies and platforms which are 30 inches or more above grade shall have a protective railing not less than 36 inches in height above the balcony or platform level.
 7. All stairs and steps shall have a rise height of not more than eight inches and a tread width of not less than nine inches. This requirement may be waived, if

requested in writing and approved by the Assistant Director of Community Services or his/her designee, 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 stairs.

- H. Smoke detectors** - All residential structures shall have U. L. approved hard wired smoke detectors or battery operated smoke detectors, in operable condition, properly installed in all bedrooms and in hallways adjacent to bedrooms. All smoke detectors shall be replaced if the date of the manufacturer's useful life has expired or is not indicated.

II. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR LIGHT, VENTILATION AND HEATING

- A. Required window area** - Every habitable room, provided such rooms are adequately lighted, shall have at least one open air space. The minimum total window area, measured between stops, for every habitable room shall be as follows:
1. 1/12 of the floor area if two or more separate windows exist, or;
 2. 1/10 of the floor area if only one window exists;
 3. A minimum of 12 square feet of window area is required in habitable rooms other than kitchens and baths.
 4. A kitchen may pass without a window area, provided, there is a mechanical means of ventilation which is maintained in working order.
 5. Every dwelling unit shall have access directly to the outside. Every sleeping room shall have at least one (1) operable window or exterior door approved for emergency egress or rescue. The windows shall be operable from the inside to provide a clear opening without the use of separate tools or key.
 6. All egress windows from sleeping rooms shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet. The minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be twenty-four inches (24"). The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be twenty inches (20"). Where windows are provided as a means of egress or rescue, they shall have a finished sill height not more than forty-four inches (44"). Pre-existing windows that do not meet these requirements but met applicable code at the time the structure was built or window installed are exempt from this requirement.

Whenever the only window in a room is a skylight type window at the top of the room, the total window area of such skylight shall be equal to at least 15 percent of the total floor area of such room. Skylight type windows, if less than 15 percent of the total floor area, shall be increased to 15 percent of the total floor area unless another window is to be installed which will provide adequate light and ventilation.

- B. Adequate ventilation required** - Every habitable room shall have at least one window or skylight which can easily be opened, or other such device that as will ventilate the room. The total openable window area, in every habitable room, shall be equal to at least 50 percent of the minimum window area size as required above, except where there is supplied some other device affording ventilation.

C. Electric outlets and service required - Where there is suitable electricity available from supply lines which are not more than 300 feet away from a dwelling, all existing dwellings shall be supplied with electrical services.

1. Every habitable room within such dwelling shall contain at minimum, two separate and remote wall type electric convenience outlets. Habitable rooms over 120 square feet, shall contain, at a minimum, three separate and remote wall type electric convenience outlets. All newly installed outlets shall be of the grounded type. Temporary wiring or extension cords shall not be used as permanent wiring.
2. Every habitable room shall have at least one ceiling or wall type electric light fixture, controlled by a wall switch, or a wall type electric convenience outlet controlled by a remote switch.
3. Every toilet room, bathroom, laundry, furnace room, and hallway (hallway where applicable) shall contain at least one supplied ceiling or wall type electric light fixture, controlled by a wall switch. Every bathroom, laundry, furnace room, and hallway (hallway where applicable) shall contain at least one electric convenience outlet. Wall type convenience outlets used in bathrooms that are within six feet of a water source shall be GFCI protected.
4. Every kitchen shall be wired to meet the requirements of the N.E.C. at the time of original construction, based on the size and layout of each individual kitchen; however, electric outlets within six feet of a water source shall be GFCI protected.
5. All heavy duty appliances, i.e., window air conditioners, freezers, refrigerators, electric stove, washers, electric dryers, microwaves, etc., shall be supplied with a properly installed outlet(s) on a separate circuit, as applicable.
6. Receptacle convenience outlets installed on the exterior of the structure or on open porches, breezeways, garages, utility rooms, etc. shall be of an approved type and be GFCI protected.
7. A wall switch shall control all wall and or ceiling type lighting fixtures, except that porcelain type fixtures such as those used in attics or garages may be controlled with a proper pull chain. All old pendant type lighting fixtures shall be removed and replaced with properly installed non-pendant type fixtures.
8. All broken and or missing switch plates and/or receptacle plates shall be replaced.
9. All outlets, appurtenances, and fixtures shall be properly installed, shall be maintained in working condition, and shall be connected to the source of electric power in a proper manner and shall be in accordance with the electrical code of the city and or the N.E.C. at time of original construction, as applicable.
10. If a unit does not have a central air-condition system and central air will not be installed, at a minimum proper grounded outlet shall be installed under one window or within two feet of the window in each habitable room to allow the occupants to install window air conditioning units.
11. All electric panel boxes shall be properly labeled.
12. The minimum electrical service for each dwelling shall be 100 amps, or as adjusted and approved in writing by the Assistant Director of Community Services or his/her designee.

D. Heating facilities - All heating facilities shall be properly installed, be maintained in working condition and be capable of adequately heating all habitable rooms, bathrooms, and toilet rooms contained therein, or intended for use by the occupants thereof, to a temperature of at least 70 degrees F. (21 degrees C.) at a distance three

feet above the floor. Every supplied central heating system shall comply with all of the following requirements:

1. The central heating unit shall be safe and in good working condition.
2. Every heat duct, steam pipe, and hot water pipe shall be free of leaks and shall function so that an adequate amount of heat is delivered where intended.
3. Every seal between any of the section of a hot air furnace shall be air-tight so noxious gases and fumes will not escape into the heat ducts.
4. All fuel burning heating systems shall be inspected to determine if the unit is safe and capable of supplying heat as required above.
5. Each dwelling and/or dwelling unit shall be equipped with an approved heating system/appliance capable of meeting the requirements of Section D.
6. Unapproved heating systems/appliances are not allowed, i.e. unvented, fuel burning space heaters.

E. Screens required - Every window opening to outdoor space, which is used or intended to be used for ventilation, shall be supplied with screens covering the entire window areas required for ventilation. The material used for all such screens shall be not less than 16 meshes per inch and shall be properly installed, maintained, and repaired to prevent the entrance of flies, mosquitoes or other insects. Half screens on windows may be allowed, provided, they are properly installed and are bug and insect tight.

III. MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR MAINTENANCE

A. Maintenance of foundations, exterior walls, roofs, soffits and fascia - Every foundation, exterior wall, roof, soffit, fascia and all component parts shall be weather tight, watertight, rodent proof, and insect-proof and shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.

1. All exterior surface material shall be protected from weather and the elements by lead-free paint or other protective coatings i.e., stain, in accordance with acceptable standards. The exception to painting shall be all types of exterior materials acceptable to weathering without deterioration, i.e., siding. All siding material shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.
2. In units constructed on or before 1978, treatment of all applicable surfaces, (interior and exterior) will be in full compliance with the Lead Base Paint regulations, as found at 24CFR Part 35, including all future amendments as published by HUD.

B. Maintenance of interior walls, floors, ceilings, doors and windows - Every interior partition, wall, floor, ceiling, door, window, and all component parts shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair, and shall be maintained in such a manner so as to be capable of being kept in a clean and sanitary condition. All interior doors shall be capable of affording the privacy for which they were intended.

C. Rainwater drainage from roof - All rainwater shall be so drained and conveyed from every roof so as not to cause dampness/damage to interior portions of walls, ceilings, or floors of any habitable rooms, bathroom, toilet room, laundry room, or

any other type of room therein. If present, all rainwater draining devices such as gutters and downspouts shall be kept in a good state of maintenance and repair. Ground areas around buildings shall be sloped away from the foundation walls to eliminate low areas where standing water may collect.

- D. Maintenance of windows and exterior doors** - Every front, rear, and side door shall be not less than two feet four inches in width and not less than six feet six inches in height, except where larger doors and doorways are required to accommodate handicapped access. In existing structures, if replacement to meet these requirements would be impossible or cost-prohibitive, said requirements may be waived. Request for waiver must be made in writing and must receive the approval of the Assistant Director of Community Services or his/her designee. In addition, the following requirements shall be met.
1. All exterior doors to the outside shall be equipped with adequate security locks. All windows accessible from ground level without the aid of mechanical devices shall have a security device-lock. The security device lock shall not require special knowledge or a key to operate.
 2. Every window sash shall be fully equipped with glass window panes which are without cracks or holes, and all panes shall be secured.
 3. Every window, other than a fixed window, shall be capable of being easily opened and shall be held in position by window hardware, not broom handles, sticks or other such items.
 4. Every exterior and interior door, when closed, shall fit well within its frame.
 5. Every exterior and interior door, door hinge, and door latch and or lock shall be maintained in good working condition.
 6. Every window, door and frame shall be constructed and maintained in such relation to the adjacent wall construction, so as to exclude rain, as completely as possible and to the maximum extent feasible substantially exclude wind from entering the dwelling or structure, i.e., it must have adequate weather-stripping.
- E. Maintenance of stairways and porches** - Every interior and exterior stairway, every porch and every appurtenance thereto shall be so constructed to be safe to use and capable of supporting the load that normal use may cause to be placed thereon; and, shall be kept in sound condition and in a state of maintenance and repair, including compliance with the Lead Based Paint Regulations, if applicable.
- F. Maintenance of supplied plumbing fixtures** - Every supplied plumbing fixture and water and waste pipe shall be properly installed in accordance with the plumbing code of the City and maintained in safe, sanitary working condition, free from leaks, defects and obstructions.
- G. Maintenance of bathroom, toilet rooms, kitchen and utility room floors** - Every bathroom, toilet room, kitchen and utility room floor surface shall be constructed and maintained so as to be substantially impervious to water and so as to permit such floor to be easily kept in a clean and sanitary condition.
- H. All equipment, systems, devices and safeguards** required by these minimum standards shall be maintained in good working order.

IV. MINIMUM SPACE, USE, AND LOCATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Minimum ceiling height - No habitable room in a dwelling or dwelling unit shall have a ceiling height of less than seven feet six inches. At least half of the floor area of every habitable room located above the first floor shall have a ceiling height of seven feet six inches, and the floor area of that part of any room where the ceiling height is less than five feet shall not be considered as part of the floor area in computing the total floor area of the room or for the purpose of determining maximum floor area.

A ceiling height of a minimum of seven feet is acceptable in bathrooms, toilets rooms, hallways, utility rooms, and kitchens.

All rooms, except kitchens and/or kitchenettes and baths, shall have a minimum width of seven feet.

B. Maintenance of sleeping, bath and toilet rooms - No dwelling or dwelling unit containing two 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 closet with a minimum of six square feet of floor area and a minimum height of 6' located within the dwelling unit. Dwelling units with two or more bedrooms shall have a storage floor area of at least four 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 inches and a horizontal width of at least 12 inches. Each kitchen shall have a minimum of four square feet of counter area.

E. Maintenance of dwelling structure are maintained to prevent the dwelling unit from becoming a harborage for rodents, snakes, vermin, and insects.

V. MAINTENANCE OF NON-DWELLING STRUCTURES, FENCES AND PREMISES

A. Maintenance of non-dwelling structures - Every foundation, wall, roof, window, door, hatchway, and every other entryway of every non-dwelling structure shall also be so maintained as to prevent the structure from becoming a harborage for rodents, snakes, vermin, and insects, and shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair.

B. Protection of exterior wood surfaces - All exterior wood surfaces of all non-dwelling structures shall be properly protected from the elements and from decay and

rot by lead-free paint or other approved protective coatings. If units are constructed on or before 1978, treatment of all applicable surfaces shall be in full compliance with the Lead-Based Paint regulations as found at 24 CFR Part 35, including all future amendments as published by HUD.

- C. Maintenance of fences** - Every fence shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair or shall be removed (unless required by local code). Replacement is optional. If a fence is to be removed and replaced installation shall be in conformance with all local requirements.
- D. Grading and drainage of premises** - Every premises shall be graded and maintained so no stagnant water will accumulate or stand on the premises, or within or around any building or structure located on the premises. Ground areas around buildings shall be sloped away from walls to eliminate low areas where standing water may collect.
- E. Maintenance of retaining walls, sidewalks, and driveways and patios** - All retaining walls shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair. All sidewalks, service walls driveways and patios shall be kept in a state of maintenance and repair, free from obstruction, defects, uneven joints, tripping hazards, etc.
- F. Maintenance of property** - All areas and all parts of the premises upon which any dwelling or dwelling units are located, and all areas adjacent thereto and a part of the premises, shall be maintained and kept in a clean and sanitary condition. This shall include, but not be limited to, the cutting of grass-weeds; removal of dead trees and brush, removal of abandoned and junked automobiles, automobile bodies, chassis and parts, trailer, removal of inoperable machines and appliances, lumber pile, and building materials not being used in actual construction, tin cans, broken glass, broken furniture, boxes, crates and other debris, rubbish, junk and garbage.
- G. Water supply – connect to water main** - Every owner of a dwelling unit situated on property which abuts any street or alley in which a water main is laid, shall cause the water service system of his dwelling to be connected to such main.
- H. Abandoned wells and cisterns** - Every owner of a dwelling which contains an abandoned well or cistern on the premises shall close and fill them in a proper manner.
- I. All accessory structures** shall be maintained structurally sound and in good repair.

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