

NSPIRE-V Inspection

Most Commonly Failed Items

National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate — Voucher-Based Housing
Reference guide for property owners, managers, and inspection preparation teams

1. UNIT INTERIOR

- Infestation (insects/rodents)

Any evidence of roaches, mice, bedbugs, or other pests — one of the top deficiencies cited.

- Smoke/CO detector missing, non-functional, or wrong type

Battery-only units where hardwired is required; detectors outside 10-ft of sleeping areas.

- Peeling, chipping, or deteriorating paint (pre-1978 units)

Applies to all painted surfaces; critical in units housing children under 6 — EHS level deficiency.

- Outlet/switch covers missing or broken

Exposed wiring or open electrical boxes in any room.

- GFCI protection absent near water sources

Kitchen, bathroom, laundry areas — missing or non-functional GFCI outlets.

- Bathroom exhaust fan missing or inoperable

Required where no operable window is present.

- Tripping hazards — damaged flooring, thresholds, carpet

Torn carpet, buckled vinyl, cracked tile, raised thresholds.

- Window does not open/lock/screen as required

Emergency egress windows that are painted shut or have broken hardware.

- Stove/range burner or oven not functional

Any non-working burner or oven element; missing knobs.

- Refrigerator not maintaining safe temperature

Unit not cooling or door seals failed.

- Bathroom/kitchen plumbing — leaks or no hot water

Dripping faucets, leaking supply lines, lack of hot water at fixtures.

- Ceiling/wall damage — holes, water stains, mold

Unrepaired holes, active or historic water intrusion evidence.

- Doors — interior doors inoperable or missing hardware

Bathroom privacy lock missing; bedroom door won't latch.

2. BUILDING EXTERIOR

- Foundation cracks or deterioration

Significant cracking, spalling, or erosion that could affect structural integrity.

- Roof — missing shingles, damaged flashing, ponding water

Any condition allowing water intrusion; sagging deck or fascia damage.

- Gutters and downspouts — missing, damaged, or disconnected

Gutters pulling away from structure; downspouts discharging at foundation.

- Exterior doors — gaps, damaged frames, inoperable locks

Light visible around door frame; deadbolt not functioning; damaged thresholds.

- Window glazing — broken, cracked, or missing panes

Any broken glass or windows missing glazing compound with gaps.

- Siding/cladding deterioration

Rotted wood, missing sections, or significant cracks allowing moisture intrusion.

- Stairways/walkways — trip hazards or missing handrails

Cracked concrete, uneven pavers, missing or loose railings on steps.

- Grading — improper slope directing water toward building

Negative grade within 6 ft of foundation; pooling near structure.

- Exterior lighting — missing or non-functional

Common-area lighting required for safety; burned-out or vandalized fixtures.

- Trash/debris accumulation on grounds

Bulk trash, abandoned vehicles, junk storage in common areas.

3. COMMON AREAS

- Hallway/stairwell lighting inoperable

Any common egress path without adequate functional lighting.

- Fire extinguisher — expired, missing, or not inspected

Must be within inspection date and properly mounted per code.

- Smoke/CO detectors in common areas non-functional

Hallways, laundry rooms, utility rooms — same standards as units.

- Egress — blocked or inadequate exits

Storage blocking fire exits; exit signs not illuminated.

- Elevator — not inspected or certificate expired

Current certificate must be posted; any operational deficiency.

- Mailboxes — damaged or unsecured

Broken locks, missing doors, or boxes that allow mail theft.

- Common bathroom/laundry — plumbing or mold issues

Leaking fixtures, water damage, mold on walls or ceilings.

- Peeling paint in common areas (pre-1978 buildings)

Same lead-based paint rules apply in hallways, stairwells, lobbies.

4. MECHANICAL & UTILITY SYSTEMS

- HVAC — inoperable, inadequate, or unmaintained

No heat in heating season; no cooling where provided; dirty filters.

- Water heater — improper venting, no TPR valve/drain

Missing or uncapped T&P; relief valve discharge pipe; flue disconnected.

- Electrical panel — open knockouts, double-tapping, no cover

Any exposed wiring in panel; overcrowded or unsafe conditions.

- Plumbing — main drain backups or slow drains

Evidence of sewage backup; slow-draining fixtures indicating blockage.

- Ventilation — mechanical exhaust not functioning

Bathroom or kitchen exhaust fans with no airflow.

- Gas lines — improper connections or no shutoff accessible

Flexible connectors behind appliances that are damaged or kinked.

5. EXIGENT HEALTH & SAFETY (EHS) — Immediate Fail

EHS Deficiency	Why It Matters
No functioning smoke detector in unit	Immediate EHS — occupant life-safety risk
No functioning CO detector (gas appliances present)	Immediate EHS — carbon monoxide poisoning risk
Exposed electrical wiring / shock hazard	Immediate EHS — electrocution risk
Infestation (severe — rodents or bedbugs active)	Immediate EHS — health hazard to occupants
Missing or inoperable window guards (upper floors, children)	Immediate EHS — fall hazard
Lead-based paint hazard (deteriorated, child present)	Immediate EHS — chronic lead poisoning risk
No heat in heating season below minimum temp threshold	Immediate EHS — hypothermia risk
Blocked or unusable exit / fire egress	Immediate EHS — fire escape route compromised
Sewage backup inside unit	Immediate EHS — biological contamination
Structural collapse hazard (roof, floor, ceiling)	Immediate EHS — physical injury risk

Pre-Inspection Checklist Tips

- ✓ Test every smoke and CO detector — replace batteries or units as needed.
- ✓ Walk all exterior areas: check gutters, grading, siding, steps, and lighting.
- ✓ Inspect all unit appliances: stove burners, oven, refrigerator temperature.
- ✓ Check every outlet cover and GFCI in kitchens and bathrooms.
- ✓ Look up at all ceilings for water stains, mold, or peeling paint.
- ✓ Verify fire extinguisher tags are current and extinguishers are mounted.
- ✓ Confirm all egress windows open freely and emergency exits are unobstructed.
- ✓ Review any pest control logs — address active infestations immediately.

This reference guide is based on HUD NSPIRE inspection standards effective October 1, 2023. Always verify against the current HUD NSPIRE Technical Guidance and local HQS/PHA requirements. Not a substitute for official inspection protocol. | Prepared for informational purposes only.