

# **BALTIMORE CITY RENTAL LICENSE INSPECTION FORM**

## **INSPECTOR GUIDANCE**

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

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

The inspector should ensure that a railing is present when there are 4 or more steps. Railing should be securely attached.

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

The 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. Electrical outlets are grounded and protected by cover plates.**

The inspector should randomly inspect a reasonable number of accessible outlets to ensure that they comply with the following requirements:

[NEC 230.41 Insulation of Service-Entrance Conductors.](#) Service-entrance conductors entering or on the exterior of buildings or other structures shall be insulated.

[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 receptacle 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.”

[NEC 250.104\(B\)\(1\)\(2\)\(3\)\(4\)\(5\)](#) Other Metal Piping. If Installed in, or attached to, a building or structure, a metal piping system(s), including gas piping, that is likely to become energized shall be bonded to any of the following: (1) equipment grounding conductor for the circuit that is likely to energize the piping system (2) Service equipment enclosure (3) Grounded conductor at the service (4) Grounding electrode conductor, if of sufficient size (5) One or more grounding electrode used.

V1. 09/06/18

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

The inspector should inspect all outlets in areas where water is generally present to ensure compliance with the following requirements:

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 1971, 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 in proper working order.**

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>

**# of Units**

**Page 2 of 7 Year**

**Built or Rehabilitated**

**Smoke Hardwired**

**Back-Up Battery**

**Detector Requirements Inter connected\***

**Inside Each Sleep Area**

**Outside Sleep Area**

**On Each Level**

**All new Construction**

Y Y Y Y N Y

1 or 2 Prior to 07/01/75 N N N N Y N

**1 or 2**

01/01/75 - 06/30/90

Y Y N Y N N

1 or 2 After 01/01/89 Y Y Y Y N Y

3+ \*\* \*\* Y Y Y Y MFD \*\* \*\* Y Y Y Y

\* 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.

V1. 09/06/18

\*\* 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.

**F. Carbon Monoxide Alarms are properly installed and in proper working order.**

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.

**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. 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 properly 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 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 some further explanation and examples of when an 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 premises, related to its cleanliness, may belong to the tenant. If the 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 is 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.

*Partial responsibility for the condition of the interior of a premises, 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 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 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.*

**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 m<sup>2</sup>). 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 m<sup>2</sup>).

**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 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*



**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 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”.

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.

Units on Parcel Number of Units Required to be Inspected

9 and under All 10 -13 10 14-16 11 17-20 12 21-30 13 31-50 14 51-60 15 61-75 16 76-100 17 101-125 18  
126-150 19 151-200 20 201-250 22 251-300 24 301-500 26 501 and greater 28



V1. 09/06/18

**ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE:**

1. Inspections should be limited to the checklist items and performed to the requirements 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 inspections” as defined under Maryland law. 3. The Inspector completing this report may not repair, or recommend any person to repair, any

of the items listed above that fail. 4. If scanning multiple forms please keep them in one PDF. 5. Photographs are not required and will not be accepted.

Page 7 of 7