

HELENA HOUSING AUTHORITY
Housing Standards Inspector (HQS and NSPIRE)
UPDATED October 2023

Classification: NON-EXEMPT

Grade: 17

REPORTS TO: Housing Program Manager

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Housing Standards Inspector, responsible for both Housing Quality Standards (HQS) and National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE), determines the suitability of housing units for Helena Housing Authority (HHA) customers. The position inspects Section 8 and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties for compliance with HQS for Section 8 and Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) properties; inspects Public Housing Authority properties for compliance with NSPIRE Standards; and ensures compliance of all properties and inspection activities compliance with federal inspection standards, HHA HCV Administrative Plan, public housing ACOP, and other HHA policies, city and state building codes, and federal regulations.

The position works under the supervision of HHA's Housing Program Manager in collaboration with the Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program team and Public Housing team to ensure timely completion of HQS, NSPIRE inspections, and related tasks. The position provides customer service to residents, landlords, building owners and co-workers, and participates in developing inspection practices and protocols.

HHA expects the Housing Standards Inspector to be readily available to perform inspections as needed, but will work to ensure that inspections are scheduled in as orderly a fashion as is possible.

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS:

A. Section 8 Housing Choice Inspections **75%**

Inspect Section 8 properties for compliance with HQS and NSPIRE.

1. Attend and successfully complete HQS Certification and on-the-job training prior to conducting inspections. This includes developing an understanding of confidentiality requirements, programs, and administrative procedures.
2. Inspect privately owned properties, including grounds, structures, building systems and equipment, for compliance with Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HQS. Inspect properties for compliance with applicable HHA standards, local building codes, and zoning ordinances that have been added to the HQS requirements. Document deficiencies and/or substandard conditions that cause the property to be non-compliant with HUD regulations.

3. Receive requests for several types of inspections to ensure Section 8 assisted properties are in compliance. These inspections are initial, annual re-inspection, special inspections, emergency, and other inspections as assigned.
 - Make independent judgments in the field in accordance with departmental policy. This includes developing logical and efficient inspection plans, ensuring units are safe for inspection prior to entry, and implementing proper measures to ensure safety (e.g., masking, social distancing).
 - PASS or FAIL Section 8 properties and inform the property owner or Leasing Agent of the deficiencies and non-compliance with regulations (HQS). Document the inspection on the HHA computerized inspection system (including using a mobile device to take pictures of items needing repair) and issue notifications of the necessary repairs for HQS compliance to the property owner, and Leasing Agent file. Complete inspection checklists on mobile device and documents HQS violations using required software and must be able to answer questions regarding necessary action to bring property into compliance with HQS. Schedule additional inspections as required.
 - Accurately and thoroughly performs data entry or scans inspection documents into YARDI or HAPPY (software systems) and files inspection reports and accompanying documents in the electronic & paper file management system. Maintain electronic and paper files that involve the identification and citation of deficiencies and recommend specific preventative and corrective actions to HHA Local or State HCV Specialist who can then discuss these items with owners, tenants, and customers so units comply with the appropriate standards. Attain signatures from landlords and residents on fail letters and send second notices two weeks after inspections if repairs have not yet been made. Ensure all correspondence is documented in YARDI, HAPPY, and internal (spreadsheet) tracking systems. Responsible for all related data entry, reporting, and tracking of time sensitive data that involves inspection documentation and follow-up on compliance.
 - Disseminate findings clearly and accurately to property owner and HHA Staff and clarify questions as needed. This includes providing information and definitions of terms sufficient in detail to allow the HCV Specialist and property owners to understand and make determinations regarding the problems or hazards observed in each inspected dwelling.
4. Proactively communicate with Management and other essential HHA employees regarding HQS inspections. Work with HHA staff to plan, organize, conduct, manage, schedule, and report on HQS inspections to ensure that properties meet federal and local housing quality standards under HHA's and HUD regulations for HQS compliance. Establish deadlines for the completion of work.

5. Participate in, facilitate, and support staff in the development and implementation of goals, work plans, performance measures, and continuous improvement of service delivery, working cooperatively and interdependently with others and all departments. As part of a team, develop communication plans and establish tracking processes to ensure completion of initiatives and work plans. Demonstrate continuous effort to improve operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work processes, and work cooperatively and jointly to provide seamless customer service.
6. Participate in the analysis and adoption of new HUD inspection standards (National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE)). This includes evaluating standards, updating and modifying inspection procedures and documentation as needed, and making recommendations regarding new or changed policies.
7. Identify potential instances of fraud. Occasionally, present evidence at informal hearings relative to HUD HQS and Section 8 Criteria Standards; appear as a witness in court representing HHA and present appropriate evidence to support the case with HHA legal counsel.

B. Public Housing Inspections

20%

Inspect Public Housing properties for compliance with Uniform Physical Condition Standards (UPCS).

1. Attend and successfully complete UPCS Certification prior to conducting relative inspections.
2. Inspect HHA (HUD) owned properties used for public housing programs to ensure compliance with applicable HUD regulations including PHAS National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate (NSPIRE) requirements, HHA standards, local building codes, and zoning ordinances that have been added to the NSPIRE requirements. Inspections include housing units, grounds, structures, building systems and equipment, exteriors, public facilities, and related features (playgrounds, fencing, landscape etc.) owned by HHA.
 - Make independent judgments in the field in accordance with departmental policy.
 - Accepts or finds deficient the HHA (HUD) property and inform HHA management the deficiencies and non-compliance with regulations (NSPIRE). Document and issue work orders on HHA computer software inspection system. Must be able to answer questions regarding actions necessary to bring the property into compliance with NSPIRE. Schedule additional inspections as required.

- Accurately and thoroughly performs data entry or scans inspection documents into tablet/ YARDI (software) system on a timely basis. Maintain electronic and paper files that involve the identification and citation of deficiencies and recommend specific preventative and corrective actions. Collaborate with public housing team and Facilities Manager to resolve issue through work orders or tenant communication by public housing team.
 - Disseminate findings clearly and accurately to property owner and HHA Staff. Ability to clarify questions if needed. This includes providing information and definitions of terms sufficient in detail to allow public housing team and Facilities Manager to understand and make determinations regarding the problems or hazards observed in each inspected dwelling unit so that actions can be scheduled to identify necessary corrective or administrative action.
 - Responsible for all related data entry, reporting, and tracking of data as deemed necessary.
3. Document deficiencies and/or substandard conditions that cause the property to be non-compliant with regulations.
 4. Proactively communicate with Management and other essential HHA employees regarding NSPIRE inspections. Work with HHA staff to plan, organize, conduct, manage, schedule, and report on NSPIRE inspections to ensure that properties meet federal and local housing quality standards under HHA's and HUD regulations for NSPIRE compliance. Establish deadlines for the completion of work.
 5. Respond to requests for several types of inspections to ensure Public Housing property compliance. This includes initial, annual, special, emergency, and other inspections as assigned.
 6. Prepare for Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC) inspections by conducting inspections of public housing properties. REAC inspections include all five (5) Inspectable Areas: the Site, all Building Exteriors, all Building Systems, all Common Areas and all Units. Provide support for REAC inspections as assigned including facilitating inspector access, performing allowable corrections, and participating in inspection responses.
 7. Participate in, facilitate, and support staff in the development and implementation of goals, work plans, performance measures, and continuous improvement of service delivery, working cooperatively and interdependently with others and all departments. As part of a team, develop communication plans and establish tracking processes to ensure completion of initiatives and work plans. Demonstrate continuous effort to improve operations, decrease turnaround times, streamline work

processes, and work cooperatively and jointly to provide seamless customer service.

8. Participate in the analysis and adoption of new HUD inspection standards (NSPIRE). This includes evaluating standards, updating and modifying inspection procedures and documentation as needed, and making recommendations regarding new or changed policies.
9. Identify potential instances of fraud. Occasionally, present evidence at informal hearings relative to HUD UPCS; appear as a witness in court representing HHA and present appropriate evidence to support the case with HHA legal counsel.

C. Other Duties as Assigned

5%

Perform additional duties as assigned by accounting officer that can include meeting with and responding to tenant issues, backup to other positions, representing the HHA at meetings and events, coordinating projects amongst staff and partner agencies and attending training and education.

JOB-RELATED AND ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS

Demonstrated Knowledge of:

- Materials, methods, and equipment used to assess compliance of building and grounds. Use and care of physical environments to inform deferred maintenance needs and compliance issues.
- Construction trade knowledge including the basic principles and practices of plumbing, carpentry, heating and electrical repairs and an understanding of deferred maintenance needs required at sites that fail HQS inspections. Working knowledge of the principles, methods, processes, tools and equipment of the plumbing trade; state and national plumbing codes and building codes; carpentry methods, processes, practices, and tools; building codes; and installation. Working knowledge of mechanical HVAC systems, including pneumatic and digital control systems and operations, is helpful but not required at the time of hire.
- Customer service principles and practices.
- Technical writing.
- Occupational safety and health standards (OSHA); ADA/504 compliance; Construction.
- Must develop a working knowledge of HHA's HCV Administrative Plan, public housing ACOP, HHA policies, the Montana Tenant/Landlord Act, and other pertinent document/policies pursuant to HHA's HCV and public housing program (although

not required upon hire) is required for successful performance of the position of HQS Inspector.

- Computers and software (i.e., Microsoft Office Suite). Inspection Software and other Informational Databases or systems will be reviewed and learned after hire.
- Landscaping, irrigation, and external property features (e.g. playgrounds, common areas, sidewalks, ramps, parking lots, and building exteriors).

Demonstrated Skills and Abilities:

- Skill in the use of a variety of Microsoft Office applications & Inspection/Reporting Software.
- Proven proficiency of equipment including cell phones, tablets, scanners, printers, computers, GPS or other hand-held devices.
- Skill in report creation, dissemination, and communication to ensure thorough, complete, or otherwise detailed inspection reports. Prepare and present ideas in a clear and concise manner, both orally and in written form.
- Ability to read and interpret regulations, blueprints, plans, and sketches; interpret manufacturers' instructions and schematics; and communicate deferred maintenance needs to the Facility Manager & Housing Program Manager (or designees) and/or participating property owners is paramount.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with others, which includes, but is not limited to, fellow department team members, residents, landlords, voucher holders (clients) and management to communicate effectively both verbally and in writing; to plan, organize, and complete work assignments in a timely manner with minimal supervision; to perform basic arithmetic calculations using whole numbers, fractions, and decimals; to create reporting outcomes necessary to the support, sustainability, and improvement of the HCV Program, its quality housing for clients, and fair, equitable, and justified treatment and reporting of landlords and their sites.
- Ability to analyze new or changing regulations and requirements and to develop new inspection approaches, protocols, and documentation based on this analysis.
- Ability to conduct visual inspections and determine compliance with detailed standards and requirements.
- Ability to determine priorities, schedule appointments and effectively manage time independently.
- Commitment to self-development: HQS and NSPIRE Inspectors will be expected to fully apply themselves towards ongoing training to build proficiencies with inspections.

Qualifications:

- A combination of education and experience equivalent to high school graduation with vocational coursework and three (3) years of training/education or experience in building construction, maintenance, or inspections and customer service.
- Possession of or the ability to obtain a valid Montana driver's license.
- Must pass an extensive background check, including having an acceptable criminal background check and driving record.
- After hire, the candidate must complete training(s) required for the performance of HQS and NSPIRE Inspections. Timeframes for this training and assumption of these responsibilities are determined on an individual basis at the discretion of the Housing Program Manager, Facilities Manager, and Executive Director (based on HHA needs). Training includes but is not limited to: HQS Inspection Certification and NSPIRE Inspection Certification.

Work Environment and Physical Demands

Work is performed indoors and outdoors in all types of weather. Work requires the ability to perform manual labor requiring the range of full body movement. HQS and NSPIRE Inspector must be able to work from a ladder or from heights, follow oral and written instructions, lift one hundred pounds, stand, walk, sit, bend, twist, kneel, crawl, push, pull, grasp, and ride. Hand-eye coordination is necessary, as is the ability to talk and hear in person, by telephone, or two-way radio. Must be able to see and read instructions and safety information and to distinguish colors.

Work conditions include:

- Driving a vehicle to conduct work,
- Periodic unsanitary conditions and stressful situations in occupied and unoccupied apartments and houses,
- Potential exposure to chemicals, construction hazards and asbestos.

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

Employees of the Helena Housing Authority are expected to achieve the highest standards of personal and professional work performance in commitment to serving HHA's constituents and the Helena community in general. The ability to work as part of a team, be transparent in written and verbal communication, and show respect and care for people from a wide variety of backgrounds is required on a daily basis.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

DATE