



LOS ANGELES COUNTY RENTAL HOUSING HABITABILITY PROGRAM

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the County's New Rental Housing Habitability Program (RHHP)?

On April 23, 2024, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors enacted Chapter 8.53 of the Los Angeles County Code, which established a new proactive rental housing inspection program in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The program aims to ensure that rental units comply with habitability requirements, help property owners maintain property values, and preserve the housing stock.

The new inspection program is called the Rental Housing Habitability Program (RHHP) and will be administrated by the Department of Public Health's Environmental Health Division (DPH-EH).

2. How will the Rental Housing Habitability Program (RHHP) Work?

The RHHP will inspect each rental housing unit in the unincorporated areas of the County of Los Angeles once every four (4) years. For these routine inspections, the RHHP will send a 30-day notice to the rental property owner (landlord) informing them that the rental housing property and units will be inspected on a specific day or range of dates, depending on the number of rental units on the property. The landlord is required to post these notices in conspicuous places on the property, so tenants are aware of the upcoming inspection date.

Within 24-hours of a scheduled routine inspection, the landlord is required to provide each tenant a written notice reminding them of the scheduled routine inspection and the need for the inspector to enter the rental housing unit to complete the inspection.

3. When will scheduled routine inspections begin?

Routine inspections will begin in November 2024. RHHP will prioritize rental properties with 5 or more units that have a history of repeated habitability violations and 2-4-unit rental properties that have had 1 or more habitability violations during the previous two years. The 30-day notices for properties that have been prioritized, should begin receiving their notice in October.

4. If my rental property is located within a city, does the RHHP apply to my property?

No, the RHHP applies only to rental properties in the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County.

5. What type of Rental Housing Units does RHHP apply to?

RHHP applies to all rental housing properties with two or more rental housing units and tenant-occupied single-family homes within the unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County and all rental housing properties registered in the County's Rent Registry.

6. Are there types of rental units that will not be inspected by the RHHP?

Yes. The RHHP does not apply to:

- a. Owner-occupied units in Rental Housing Properties,
- b. Owner-occupied units where a room is rented,
- c. Mobile homes, or mobile home parks, recreational vehicles, or recreational vehicle parks,
- d. Properties that are subject to routine inspections for habitability by other local, state, or federal government agencies. However, individual rental units participating in Section 8 that are located on properties not subject to other agency inspections will be included,
- e. Vacant properties including vacant units that are designated by the landlord following the process set forth in the ordinance, and
- f. Rental units subject to the County's Short-Term Rental Ordinance.

7. Is there an annual fee to fund the operations of the RHHP?

Yes. To fund the RHHP operations, the County will collect a fee of \$86 per rental unit from the property owner, on an annual basis. This fee will be charged as part of the Assessor's Property Tax Statement for the property. Beginning July 2024, the landlord may recover 50% of this annual per unit fee from the tenant by collecting a monthly fee of \$3.58.

8. Besides routine inspections what other inspections will inspectors conduct as part of the RHHP?

Inspectors will also conduct an inspection after receiving a habitability complaint. The inspector will contact a tenant within three (3) days to schedule an inspection of the rental unit within seven (7) days.

9. What does the inspection entail?

The inspector will introduce themselves; provide proper identification and state the purpose of the visit. The inspector will then request permission to enter and if granted, conduct an inspection of the rental unit. The inspector will inspect the rental property and units for conditions such as insect or rodent infestations, damaged walls/floors/roof/ceiling, lack of hot/cold water, inoperable plumbing fixtures, lead and mold hazards, lack of heating, lighting, electrical, ventilation, and other unsanitary conditions. The inspector will also ask the tenant(s) questions as to whether there are any issues in the unit that need to be addressed (cockroaches, rats, leaking plumbing, clogged toilet etc.).

10. What happens if a tenant says there are habitability issues but refuses to allow an inspection of their unit?

If a tenant says there are habitability issues but refuses entry into the unit, the inspector will inform the tenant that unless the inspector observes a violation, it cannot be included on the Rental Housing Official Inspection Report (RHOIR).

11. How will the inspector document the inspection findings?

The inspector will describe all violations observed at the rental property and/or the rental unit(s) on a Rental Housing Official Inspection Report (RHOIR). The landlord will be given a compliance date of 21 days to correct the habitability violation(s). The inspector will conduct a reinspection within five (5) business days of the compliance date to verify that the required repairs and corrections have been made.

12. Can the landlord receive an extension of the compliance date?

Yes, the landlord may be granted an extension of the compliance date for up to 30 calendar days, if there is significant progress being made to correct the violation(s) listed in the RHOIR. The inspector will determine significant progress by reviewing the steps the landlord has taken to correct the violations documented on the RHOIR. The inspector will be looking for evidence of substantial advancement or improvement of the cited violations when determining whether an extension is warranted. The inspector may also evaluate whether extenuating circumstances have delayed corrections that would warrant an extension.

13. What happens if a landlord fails to correct the violations listed in the RHOIR by the compliance date or the extended compliance date?

If a landlord does not correct the violations listed in the RHOIR by the compliance date, the case will be referred to the County's Housing Program Chief who will determine the next steps to obtain compliance, including the scheduling of an administrative hearing.

14. Can the property owner conduct construction work without a permit?

Not all repairs require permits, but for those that do, the rental property owner must obtain the necessary permits from applicable regulatory agencies.

15. Will inspectors accept third-party inspection reports? (For example, mold inspection reports.)

Third-party inspection reports are not accepted as evidence of violations nor compliance for any habitability violations.

16. Who can I contact regarding habitability concerns or to report a complaint?

You may contact DPH-EH at 888-700-9995. A new phone number will be established specifically for the RHHP when the program is implemented, so please continue to check our website <http://ph.lacounty.gov/eh/>.

17. Who do I contact regarding my rights as a tenant or landlord?

For questions on tenant and landlord rights and responsibilities, you may contact the Los Angeles County Department of Consumer & Business Affairs (DCBA) at:

Phone: 800-593-8222

Website: rent.lacounty.gov

Email: rent@dcba.lacounty.gov

18. Who do I contact if I have questions, concerns, or feedback about RHHP?

Please email DPH-EH Rental Housing Habitability Program at DPH-RHHP@ph.lacounty.gov.