



Newport News Residential Rental Dwelling Inspection Program FAQs

1. Why is the city undertaking the Residential Rental Inspection Program?

To improve housing conditions and ensure that all residential rental property meets minimum standards for safety and is used in a manner consistent with the City's Zoning Ordinance.

2. Is my property included in the City's Residential Rental Inspection Program?

Your property is included if it is a residential dwelling offered for rent and is located in one of the three inspection districts established by city Council on October 25th 2016. Please refer to the Newport News municipal code Chapter 13, Article 12 Identification and Inspection of Rental Dwelling Units for more information or access aerial maps of the rental inspection districts on the Department of Codes Compliance's website at: www.nnva.gov/codes.

3. What does the Residential Rental Inspection Program mean for me as a property owner? The owners of residential dwelling units located in an inspection district must obtain a permit and inspection from the department of Codes Compliance. Owners are required to arrange for an inspection by paying a \$50 inspection fee to the department of Codes Compliance in advance and making the unit available for inspection. If the unit to be inspected is occupied at the time of a required inspection, it is the property owner's responsibility to notify the occupants of the inspection and make the unit available.

Codes Compliance staff will inspect the property for compliance with the Virginia maintenance code and applicable city codes. If the inspection reveals the dwelling unit has no disqualifying violations, the department of Codes Compliance will issue a 48 month certificate of compliance.

If one or more violations of the property maintenance code or other municipal regulations are found but these infractions do not constitute a disqualifying violation, Codes Compliance staff will note these infractions on the 48 month certificate of compliance along with a date by which these non-disqualifying violations must be corrected. Failure to correct these nondisqualifying violations after a reasonable time shall result in the revocation of the 48 month certificate of compliance and enforcement action by Codes Compliance staff. Thereafter the unit shall be subject to annual inspection.

4. What happens if the inspection reveals one or more disqualifying violations?

The department of Codes Compliance will not issue a certificate of compliance until the disqualifying violations are satisfactorily abated. The property owner will be notified in writing of the subject violations and given a reasonable timeframe to have them corrected. If the disqualifying violation is an imminent threat to health or safety, the unit will be declared unfit for occupancy, be vacated and the property owner will be ordered to abate the violation.

In these cases, the Department of Codes Compliance may exercise its authority under State and municipal code to abate the violation should the owner fail to do so.

5. What happens when the disqualifying violations are corrected?

The dwelling unit will be inspected and if no disqualifying violations are discovered and no significant violations are noted, the property will be issued a 48 month certificate of compliance. Be advised that the issuance of a certificate of compliance is not evidence of a lack of any and all building code violations, and shall not prevent the Department of Codes Compliance from conducting follow up inspections.

6. What happens when the disqualifying violations are NOT corrected after the owner has received proper notice from Codes Compliance?

If the disqualifying violations are imminent threats to health or safety, the unit shall be declared unfit for occupancy and the unit shall be required to be vacated. If the owner can be contacted in person, they will served with a court summons for the outstanding violations. In certain cases, the Department of Codes Compliance may exercise its authority under State and municipal code to abate the violation(s) should the owner fail to do so.

7. How many times per year may my property be inspected?

There is no limitation on the number of times a property may be inspected if it is found to be in violation of the Virginia Maintenance Code and other applicable city regulations. However, no annual inspection will take place more than one time each year calculated from the date of the first inspection.

8. How long does it take to obtain an inspection after paying the applicable inspection fee? The initial inspection shall take place no later than 120 days from the date that Codes Compliance receives the inspection fee.

Dwelling units that have received a certificate of compliance (48 month or otherwise) shall be inspected again within 30 days from the expiration date of the certificate. Property owners are responsible for contacting Codes Compliance and arranging for inspection of the dwelling unit prior to expiration of the certificate of compliance. Except in the case of an inspection following revocation of a 48 month certificate of compliance, if the date scheduled for inspection is after the expiration date of the current certificate and more than 30 days from the date that the owner paid the applicable inspection fee to Codes Compliance, a 30 day temporary certificate of compliance will be issued by Codes Compliance. This temporary certificate of compliance will expire upon the earlier of: (1) the date of expiration for the temporary certificate of compliance, or (2) the completion of an inspection which finds all violations satisfactorily remedied.

9. For how long is a certificate of compliance valid?

A certificate of compliance is valid for a period of twelve (12) months. This date begins with the first day of the month following the month of issuance. The only exceptions to this rule are for: (1) residential rental units that are exempt from inspection, or (2) residential rental units that have received a forty eight (48) month certificate of compliance.

10. Is it illegal to rent a residential rental unit that is subject to the City's rental inspection program if it does not possess a certificate of compliance?

Yes. Unless a valid current or temporary certificate of compliance is in force, no owner shall permit any person to occupy a unit as a tenant or otherwise. Failure to obtain a rental inspection when required or renting a dwelling unit subject to this ordinance without a valid certificate of compliance is a violation of Article 12 Identification and Inspection of Rental Dwelling Units and is subject to the penalties established in Section 13-2 of the Newport News municipal code.