

City of Rochester Covid-19 Temporary Inspection Protocols

7/28/20

In response to the Covid-19 pandemic it is necessary to adjust the manner in which interior inspections are performed to better protect both staff and the public we serve. As such, the following policy will be used to guide the various inspection activity until further notice. This policy is broken down into activity areas for clarity. Please note that inspection staff will be wearing masks/face coverings and are encouraged to wear gloves for any and all interior appointments.

New Construction Inspections (Includes Building, Plumbing & Electrical)

Inspection staff may enter into a new construction site or area to perform inspections as long as the following criteria are met. For this scenario it is assumed that the subject structure or space is otherwise currently unoccupied.

- There is no more than one adult accompanying the inspector or present in the unit.
- Both the inspector and the person accompanying them must be wearing masks/face coverings, if the customer does not have a mask/face covering the inspector will provide a mask.
- These appointments will be efficiently scheduled so that the inspector is not on site for more than one hour.
- Where reasonable, compliance may be achieved via video evidence.

Complaint Inspections

- Exterior
 - Exterior complaints can be handled in the same manner as they always have been where the inspection is performed without the inspector being accompanied by the complainant. Any necessary interaction with the caller will be accomplished via phone conferencing.
- Interior
 - Upon receipt of an interior complaint, City staff will follow the steps outlined in the complaint policy.
 - Once the complaint policy has been followed and a necessary inspection is to be scheduled the following criteria must be met in order for an inspection to be performed. These items will be covered by the support staff as they schedule the appointment with the resident.
 - The support staff person will ask the caller if they are feeling sick, have a fever or are being either treated for Covid or under quarantine. If any of these answers are yes the appointment will not be scheduled. Upon confirmation of the appointment the inspector will ask the same series of questions.
 - Appointments will only be scheduled for health and safety related concerns.
 - During any necessary interior inspection there should be no more than one adult accompanying the inspector. An exception can be made for one adult resident and one owner/agent rep so long as both answer the same series of questions related to Covid previously answered by the tenant and all are wearing masks/face coverings and practicing social distancing.
 - Both the inspector and the complainant must be wearing masks at all time during the inspection. If the customer does not possess a mask the inspector will provide one.
 - The inspection will be efficiently performed with a focus only on the health and safety related issues expressed as a concern by the complainant.
 - In the course of performing the interior inspection if there is a need to open a window, turn on water, flush a toilet, turn on a light switch, plug something into an outlet, open a door or test a smoke or carbon monoxide alarm, each of those activities will be performed by the occupant or owner/agent. The inspector will simply verify the results but will not be touching those surfaces.

Certificate of Occupancy (C of O)

- Our C of O program inspections present the most complicated challenge for this purpose. This is due to the extensive review of the entire structure and premises and because of the applicable lead testing. This protocol is designed to reasonably maximize our ability to ensure safe and habitable housing while ensuring the safety of both staff and the public and without compromising the integrity of our Lead Ordinance. Upon confirmation of any necessary inspection appointment the inspector will ask the owner/agent if they are feeling sick, have a fever or are being either treated for Covid or under quarantine. If any of these answers are yes the appointment will not be conducted.
 - One and Two Family Structures
 - Full exterior inspection will be performed, if code compliant and no previous lead history an affidavit can be submitted and signed off on by both the occupant(s) and owner/agent to satisfy the interior portion of the inspection.
 - Where there is a Monroe County Department of Health lead history the interior must be inspected.
 - During any necessary interior inspection there should be no more than one adult accompanying the inspector. An exception can be made for one adult resident and one owner/agent rep so long as the resident answers the same series of questions related to Covid previously answered by the owner/agent and all are wearing masks/face coverings and practicing social distancing.
 - Both the inspector and customer must be wearing masks/face coverings at all times during the inspection. If the customer does not possess either the inspector will provide a mask.
 - In the course of performing the interior inspection if there a need to open a window, turn on water, flush a toilet, turn on a light switch, plug something into an outlet, open a door or test a smoke or carbon monoxide alarm, each of those activities will be performed by the occupant or owner/agent. The inspector will simply verify the results but will not be touching those surfaces.
 - Where a dust wipe test is required it shall be performed separately from the initial inspection unless the subject unit is vacant and time permits.
 - Any previously cited interior violation(s) may be abated via video evidence of compliance upon inspector's verification. (See Virtual Inspection Guidelines)
 - Multiple Dwellings
 - A full inspection of the exterior and interior common areas will be performed. If code compliant a random sampling of 40% of the total units will be inspected. For the purposes of unit selection they will include any vacant unit, if present, and the additional occupied units must be selected randomly by the inspector upon arrival and not prior to the appointment; there will be a focus on equal distribution of units on each level of the structure.
 - The overall total number of units that will be inspected is based on those 40% units not containing any visible interior deteriorated paint, fire safety, or other hazardous violations. If any of the following violations are identified in the units inspected then all units will require an inspection.
 - Interior deteriorated paint
 - Smoke and/or Carbon Monoxide alarms missing or not working
 - Missing second means of egress
 - Other hazardous conditions
 - For the units not inspected the owner/agent shall supply an Affidavit attesting to the condition of those units.

- Any previously cited interior violation(s) may be abated via video evidence of compliance upon inspector's verification. (See Virtual Inspection Guidelines)
- Where a dust wipe test is required it shall be performed separately from the initial inspection.

Referrals

- The majority of our referrals come via the Fire Department. For those situations NBD will only be following up on those where there was a hazardous situation remaining upon the RFD exiting the unit and where NBD has been provided direct contact with the occupant as part of the referral. In situations that warrant an interior inspection the protocols above for interior complaints must be followed.
- Any and all other referrals from outside agencies must encourage the resident to come through the complaint process.

Rehab Grant and/or Home Buyer Inspections

- For our Rehab Grant and Home Buyer program inspections we will follow the same applicable protocols as the interior complaint inspections. The support staff person will ask the caller if they are feeling sick, have a fever or are being either treated for Covid or under quarantine. If any of these answers are yes the appointment will not be scheduled.
 - There shall be no more than one adult meeting the inspector and in the unit while the inspection is performed.
 - Both the inspector and the customer must be wearing masks/face coverings at all time during the inspection. If the customer does not possess a mask the inspector will provide one.
 - In the course of performing the interior inspection if there a need to open a window, turn on water, flush a toilet, turn on a light switch, plug something into an outlet, open a door or test a smoke or carbon monoxide alarm, each of those activities will be performed by the occupant or owner/agent. The inspector will simply verify the results but will not be touching those surfaces.
 - The inspection will be efficiently performed with a focus on the grant subject area.