



NSPIRE Inspection Protocol & Guidance

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1. INTRODUCTION

This inspection protocol establishes operative guidance for inspectors to perform thorough NSPIRE inspections. This protocol does not apply to Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) NSPIRE inspections. Relevant notices include:

- The [NSPIRE final rule](#).
- The [NSPIRE Administrative Notice \(PIH 2023-16/H 2023-07\)](#).
- The [NSPIRE Scoring Notice](#).
- [REAC Inspector Notice 2016-02 Part I Section D. Code of Conduct](#), until superseded.

2. OBJECTIVE

To provide guidance and direction to achieve:

- Consistent, accurate and objective REAC inspections using the NSPIRE Standards; and
- Appropriate inspector and contractor conduct and behavior during the inspection.

3. CONTRACTOR PERSONNEL AND HUD INSPECTOR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1. GENERAL GUIDANCE FOR INSPECTORS

Contractor personnel are governed under their contract and performance work statement. When contract and HUD Inspectors perform inspections for REAC they must:

- Comply with all applicable HUD regulations, policy notices, and guidance in effect at the time of an inspection. Inspectors performing inspections for REAC or on behalf of HUD must continue to follow [REAC Inspector Notice 2016-02 Part I Section D. Code of Conduct](#), until superseded.
- Dress in business casual attire, with closed-toe shoes suitable for walking.
- Maintain professional and respectful demeanor and conduct during the entire inspection process.
- Identify oneself as a HUD contract inspector, HUD contractor employee, or HUD Federal inspector, whichever applies.
- Always display prescribed inspection credentials.
- Perform an inspection in the presence of a property representative.
 - A property representative must accompany the inspector and assist in unit entry. If the property representative needs to temporarily step away from the inspection, the inspector will wait in an open public area or property office for the representative to return before resuming the inspection.
- Respect resident privacy and personal property. When inspecting units, remember that a resident has agreed to give access to their home.
 - Do not attempt to open an exterior or interior closed door subject to inspection. The property representative is responsible for providing access to inspectable areas.
 - Defer questions from residents regarding the property to the property representative accompanying the inspector.
 - Do not collect nor record personally identifiable information (PII) or depictions of anyone present during the inspection in photographs or the NSPIRE application (hereafter referred to as “NSPIRE app”).
- Comply with reasonable requests (e.g., wearing coverings over your shoes if available) from residents and property representatives during the inspection.
- Defer questions from third parties about the inspection or the results to the property owner or representative.
- Refrain from engaging in behavior that may be considered harassment, including making comments about an individual’s race, skin color, sex (including gender identity and sexual orientation), religion,

national origin, familial status, or disability. Comments applicable to the inspection, such as addressing accessibility features for persons with disabilities are exempt.

- Refrain from expressing opinions or comments about the nature or condition of the property or residents.
- If the inspector experiences issues during the inspection related to prohibited activities either impacting the safety of the inspector or violating NSPIRE regulations (e.g., unallowable repairs or disputing deficiencies during the inspection), they may halt the inspection and record it as unsuccessful.
- Provide additional information to REAC, if requested, about the inspection results or experience. For example, provide specific comments and details related to unusual or anomalous circumstances that impacted the inspection process or experience.
- Inspections are to be performed during normal business hours but shall not start before 8:00 a.m. and must end by 6:00 p.m. local time.
- Inspectors must refrain from entering resident units before 9:00 a.m. and must complete unit inspections by 5:00 p.m.

The inspector must contact the Technical Assistance Center (TAC) with questions, concerns, and to request a reference number as noted throughout this guide. The TAC can be contacted at 1-888-245-4860 or REAC_TAC@hud.gov. All reference numbers shall be recorded in the "Property Comments" field with a brief explanation of the issue.

4. PROPERTY ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

4.1. PUBLIC HOUSING AGENCY (PHA) AND MULTIFAMILY PROPERTY OWNER/AGENT (POA) REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for PHAs and POAs are in the [NSPIRE final rule](#) described in the [NSPIRE Administrative Notice](#).

The PHAs and POAs will:

- Provide required documentation not uploaded to the NSPIRE system prior to the inspection (e.g., certificates, lead-based paint (LBP) evaluations).
- Provide inspector adequate assistance during the inspection.
 - Escort and assist the inspector during the inspection. Announce the purpose of the visit when entering units and honor reasonable requests from residents, as they must consent to entry.
 - Provide access to all inspectable areas and items, including opening all inspectable area doors for the inspector during the inspection process.
 - Ensure appliances that will be inspected are plugged in. Property representatives shall also turn on and off all stoves and ovens in the presence of the inspector. If the pilot light is out on a gas oven, the property representative may attempt to re-light it.
 - Address resident questions and concerns.
 - Move or ask resident to move items to facilitate access to inspectable areas when they can reasonably be moved.
- Acknowledge receipt of the 24-hour Health & Safety (H&S) report by e-signing in the NSPIRE app at the end of each inspection day and at the conclusion of the inspection.

The PHA and POAs should not:

- Interfere with or delay the inspection.

- Block or inhibit access to inspectable areas.
- Send personnel ahead of the inspector during the inspection with the purpose of repairing deficiencies during the inspection unless action is allowed under section [5.3 Allowable Actions During Inspection](#) of this document.
 - It is allowable to correct deficiencies already noted in the inspection, since this would be required anyway.
- Dispute deficiencies or validity of observed defects with an inspector during the inspection.
 - Inspection deficiencies shall be disputed through the technical review process with HUD after the inspection is completed.
- Ask for the inspector's advice on how to correct deficiencies.
- Ask for the inspector's advice on how to improve their score or avoid future deficiency citations.

5. INSPECTION PROTOCOL (BEFORE, DURING, AFTER)

5.1. CHANGES TO THE INSPECTION SCHEDULE

Changes are defined as a variation to start date, start time, anticipated duration of inspection, agreed meeting location, assigned inspector or other staff assigned.

- Inspectors must inform the TAC and obtain a reference number to report a late start.
- Cancelled Day of Inspection: An inspection cancelled the day it is scheduled to occur only applies if the inspector is unable to arrive onsite to perform the inspection.
- If the inspector must cancel an inspection the day it was scheduled to be performed, the inspector must immediately notify the property representative and the TAC to secure a reference number for the subject cancellation. Reasons include inspector illness/emergency, severe weather, and other hazards that endanger the safety of the participants.
- Severe weather: A severe weather warning includes, but is not limited to, hurricanes, tornadoes, thunderstorms, hail, snowstorm, or any other adverse weather condition that would likely endanger the safety of the participants.
- Unsuccessful Inspection: An unsuccessful inspection occurs when the inspector arrives on site at the scheduled date and time but cannot proceed with the inspection at any point for any reason.
- If the inspection is unsuccessful, the inspector must contact TAC and obtain a reference number.

5.2. BEFORE INSPECTION

CONFIRM THE INSPECTION WITH THE PROPERTY

- The inspector should contact the property representative at least three (3) business days prior to an inspection via email to confirm inspection.
- The inspection confirmation email must contain, at a minimum, the following information:
 - Date, time, and meeting location.
 - Reminder to provide notification of inspection to residents.
 - Request the following documents be uploaded to the NSPIRE system and/or made available on inspection day:
 - Rent roll (with the number of buildings and units both vacant and occupied, and whether they are HUD-Assisted).
 - Site map.
 - Lead-Based Paint (LBP) report and LBP Disclosure Forms, or evidence of exemption, if applicable.
 - Certificates (e.g., Elevator, Boilers, Sprinkler Systems, Fire Alarms).
 - A copy of Resident Notification Letter.

- o The original construction date of the property reported to the NSPIRE System. If there are multiple dates for separate buildings/sections, provide the earliest date of construction.
- o Carbon Monoxide (CO) sources and locations, if applicable (e.g., fuel-burning appliance, attached garage).
- o Scattered site location details, if applicable.

The inspector should follow up the email with a phone call to confirm receipt if no reply is received from the POA.

SYNC/UPDATE NSPIRE APP

Prior to an inspection, ensure the NSPIRE app is updated to the latest version available. Complete a 'Full Sync' to retrieve new inspections and new data from Salesforce.

PREPARATION – DAY OF INSPECTION

- Before arriving to every inspection site, the inspector must:
 - o Open the NSPIRE Inspection app and perform a Full Sync. This is critical to ensure the assigned inspection sample and all updated property profiles are stored on the device. Ensure the unit sample is available on the device.
 - o Check the number of assisted units and resulting sample against [Annex 4- NSPIRE Sample Size Chart](#).
 - o Refer to [Annex 3 - Equipment and Resources](#) to ensure availability of all required tools and equipment (e.g., ambient temperature thermometer, electrical outlet tester, flashlight, tape measure or ruler) to perform the inspection.
- Inspectors must be prepared to display a photo identification (ID) card throughout the entire inspection (the photo ID must include the organization the inspector works for and be authorized by HUD).
- The inspector must confirm that their data collection device is in proper working order and has adequate storage space and battery level.
- The inspector shall immediately notify the property representative if they are running late for the inspection.
- If the inspector is late by one hour or more, the inspector must immediately notify the property representative and call the TAC to obtain a reference number.

RELEASING SAMPLE INFORMATION TO THE PROPERTY

The inspector must not share sample building or unit numbers with property representatives before the actual inspection of the building or unit. An exception to this policy may be made for properties which are not master keyed. In such cases, the property representative may be provided a partial list of sample units as the inspection progresses for the purposes of pulling keys only.

SAMPLING GUIDANCE FOR HUD'S FINANCIAL INTERESTS

Inspector shall contact TAC, verify HUD's financial interest, and record the TAC reference number and HUD's financial interest in the property in the "Property Comments" field of the NSPIRE app. The inspection shall not include the non-HUD assisted units in the total unit count used for the sample.

- For **insured** properties, all units are included in the total unit count.
 - o HUD-Held/HUD-Insured Loan
 - o Interest Reduction Plan (IRP)
 - o 202 Direct Loan/Capital Advance, Elderly Housing
 - o 811 Direct Loan/Capital Advance, Disability Housing
- For **uninsured** properties, only HUD-Assisted or ACC units are included in the total unit count.

- Section 8, Non-Insured Properties
- Section 9, Public Housing

If there is a discrepancy in the property profile based on HUD's confirmed financial interest, report to TAC, request a reference number, record the number in the "Property Comments" field, and follow TAC guidance.

5.3. DURING INSPECTION

CONFIRM PARTICIPANT INFORMATION

The inspector shall confirm an escort is available and enter contact information in the NSPIRE app.

CONFIRM THE RESIDENTS HAVE BEEN NOTIFIED

The inspector shall request to see the notification provided to residents regarding the scheduled inspection. If residents have not been notified, the inspector must immediately call the TAC and report the inspection as unsuccessful in the NSPIRE app.

REQUEST A RENT ROLL OR ALL-INCLUSIVE LIST

The rent roll must:

- List all buildings and units with a unique address and assigned identifier.
- Include non-revenue units (e.g., employee units).
- Clearly identify each unit as either OCCUPIED or VACANT.
- Specify which units are subsidized.

If the PHA/POA does not provide a rent roll and/or all-inclusive list, the inspector will refer to the property profile in the NSPIRE app and confirm property details with the PHA/POA. Create a list of all assisted buildings and units based on the bullets above.

IDENTIFY SAMPLE UNITS IN THE INSPECTION DOWNLOAD

Although the NSPIRE app displays the sample, it is the inspector's responsibility to carefully follow the NSPIRE protocol to ensure that the correct number of sample units are inspected. The inspector is responsible for confirming the correct alternate and sample units are utilized. Failure to verify this information may result in inaccurate samples that may invalidate the entire inspection.

- Public Housing
 - The sample download will include unit door numbers within each sample building.
 - Verify that sample unit and alternate unit door numbers correspond with door numbers in the rent roll.
 - If unable to identify the correct unit(s), the inspector must call TAC for guidance.

Refer to the [Selecting Alternate Units](#) section below whenever a sample unit is considered uninspectable.

- Multifamily Housing
 - The inspector will sequentially number all the assisted units in the rent roll starting with the lowest unit number for each building.
 - The inspector will compare the sample unit number from the download to the rent roll to determine the unit door number for each sample and alternate unit.
 - The inspector will update the sample and alternate unit door numbers in the NSPIRE app to match the unit door numbers from the rent roll.

If the inspector cannot reconcile the sample downloaded with the rent roll information provided or confirm the sample size is accurate, the inspector must call TAC for guidance.

The inspector must make every effort to inspect the required number of sample units based on the NSPIRE Sample Size Chart. Refer to [Annex 4 - NSPIRE Sample Size Chart](#).

Note: The Sample Size Chart is contained in the final [NSPIRE Scoring Notice](#) and may be subject to change.

CERTIFICATE AND OTHER VERIFICATIONS

As described in the [NSPIRE Administrative Notice, Section 7](#), PHAs and POAs will upload certificates or reports and provide additional information in the NSPIRE system in advance of the inspection. Certificates may be issued by a city or state government agency, insurance company, or any other entity that has jurisdiction and/or authority to issue such a certification. Certificates are considered valid if dated within one year of the inspection.

As of the date of this protocol, the system functionality for PHAs/POAs to upload documents is not yet available. Until this is available, the inspector must follow the below procedures to record the required documents or certificates.

- The inspector must record:
 - o “NO” if the certificate is expired or not present.
 - o “YES” and take a photo if the certificate is present and valid.
 - The inspector will only take a picture of the top portion of the LBP Inspection Report cover page or Executive Summary with the inspection type, property name and date.
 - The inspector will take a picture of the LBP disclosure form header or any portion of the document that does not capture any PII information.
 - o “N/A” if the system is not part of the built environment.

OFFSITE MONITORED SYSTEMS

If the property has systems that are monitored by a third party (e.g., call-for-aid or smoke detector), the inspector will not test the system. The inspector will only visually evaluate the physical components for defects.

EQUIPMENT ABANDONED OR REMOVED FROM SERVICE

Abandoned or removed from service (not positioned for use) equipment (e.g., elevators, boilers, trash chutes, call-for-aid) will be evaluated only for deficiencies such as exposed conductors, sharp edges, tripping hazards, or fuel leaks.

PROPERTY BRIEFING ON ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Inspectors shall brief the property representative on roles and responsibilities during the inspection.

CONSULTANT PRESENCE ON THE PROPERTY

Consultants working at the site for the PHA or POA on inspection day may not interfere (e.g., dispute observed deficiencies, provide information on behalf of the property, or create distractions) with the REAC inspection and are expected to adhere to the prohibitions above for the PHA, POA, or property representative. If consultants interfere with the inspection, the inspector may halt the inspection, and record it as unsuccessful in the NSPIRE app. For more information, see the [NSPIRE Administrative Notice, Section 8](#).

MEDIA PRESENCE ON THE PROPERTY

Any media inquiries made on-site must be referred to the HUD Office Public Affairs (OPA) at (202) 708-0980.

BUILDING INFORMATION

- The inspector will update the building name and roof access indicator in the NSPIRE app as the inspection proceeds.
- Prior to inspecting the Inside area and Units of a building, the inspector must determine the sources and locations of any fuel-fired appliances or attached garages that require CO device inspection.
- If the inspector is not able to access an Inside inspectable area due to a locked door, the inspector shall report to the TAC, obtain a reference number, and input a comment in the NSPIRE app.

UNITS-GENERAL

- A non-revenue unit (e.g., units housing the property site manager or maintenance supervisor) identified as a sample unit is subject to inspection.
- Converted units (e.g., unit converted to office, activity center) are subject to the Inside inspectable area standards only.
- Upon arriving at each unit in the sample, the inspector will verify the unit identifier (e.g., name or door number). The inspector will make any necessary changes to the unit information and record any disconnected utilities in the NSPIRE app.
- Sample unit selection:
 - If a sample unit has been converted to a non-dwelling space, it must be marked as “Uninspectable/Permanently Offline” in the NSPIRE app, and an alternate must be selected.
 - If a sample unit has an area that is not accessible during the inspection (e.g., locked bedroom), the inspector will select an alternate unit.

VACANT UNITS

- Public Housing

Vacant units shall not be inspected. The inspector must visually verify the sampled unit is vacant before selecting an alternate.

- Multifamily Housing
 - Vacancy rate = $(\text{Total HUD-Assisted Vacant Units}) / (\text{Total HUD-Assisted Units}) * 100$
 - Vacant units that are included in the random sample will be inspected only at properties with 15% or more total vacant units. This policy applies only to MF properties.
 - The inspector must confirm with the property representative the number of vacant units and determine if the 15% threshold is met.
 - The inspector must visually verify the sampled unit is vacant before selecting an alternate.
 - The inspector must replace any vacant units included in the sample with alternates for properties with less than 15% vacancy.
 - If 15% or more of the total units are vacant, any of the vacant units listed in the sample must be inspected.

PERMANENTLY OFFLINE BUILDINGS AND UNITS

Permanently offline buildings or units for MF or PH properties are not inspected. If permanently offline buildings/units are included in the sample, report discrepancy to TAC and follow provided guidance to correct sample.

TEMPORARILY OFFLINE UNITS

Temporarily offline units are considered vacant units. Refer to [Vacant Units](#) section.

RENOVATION AND MODERNIZATION WORK IN PROGRESS (MF & PH)

NSPIRE inspections typically occur either before or after a property undergoes extensive rehabilitation and should not be scheduled and conducted for properties that have extensive on-going modernization/rehabilitation activities currently in progress.

- If occupied sample buildings or units are undergoing renovation work, the inspector records the physical condition of the property as it exists at the time it is inspected.
- If the unit is vacant, refer to the [Vacant Units](#) section above.

SELECTING ALTERNATE UNITS

- To maintain a statistically valid sample, inspectors must inspect an alternate unit whenever a sample unit has been determined to be uninspectable.
- The inspector must follow these basic guidelines to select an alternate unit:
 - Select the first available alternate unit in the same building. If there are no available alternates:
 - Select the first available alternate in the next closest sample building until there are no remaining available alternate units within a sample building.
 - If all alternates from sample buildings have been exhausted, select a random alternate unit from an alternate building. All areas associated with that alternate building must now be inspected (i.e. Inside and Outside).
- If all available sample and alternate units have been inspected but the sample has not been met, the inspector shall call the TAC for guidance and record "Sample Not Met" in the "Property Comments" field.

NON-DWELLING BUILDINGS

As of the date of this issued protocol, inspectors will not inspect non-dwelling buildings (e.g., maintenance shop, non-resident storage, mechanical area).

COMMERCIALLY LEASED SPACE

Commercially leased space is defined as an area of a building or separate building that is being rented to a specific third-party business or organization (not being used as a residential unit). Commercially leased space is not considered "housing" under the NSPIRE final rule and shall not be inspected.

ELEVATOR ROOMS

- Inspectors will not inspect elevator rooms during the inspection.
- If the inspector must enter the elevator room to access another inspectable area, the property escort must be qualified/authorized to enter the elevator room.

DISCONNECTED UTILITIES

For sample units with disconnected utilities, the inspector is still required to evaluate all inspectable items and record comments on each observed defect noting where the disconnected utility may have caused the defect.

ALLOWABLE ACTIONS DURING INSPECTION IN THE PRESENCE OF THE INSPECTOR

While HUD generally prohibits PHAs and POAs from performing corrections during the inspection, some corrections are allowed. They include:

- Replacing a missing, damaged, or burned-out lightbulb to test a light fixture.
- Reattaching/plugging in electric stove elements or appliances.
- Removing child safety protectors (e.g., outlet covers, cabinet/door locks, or oven knob protectors).
- Plugging in bathroom exhaust vent fan.
- Lighting pilot light of a gas stove.

PROVISIONS FOR SPECIAL HOUSING OR HEALTHCARE FACILITIES

Guidance is forthcoming.

INSPECTABLE AREAS / EXCEPTIONS

The NSPIRE final rule defines three inspectable areas subject to the NSPIRE Standards.

- **UNITS:** A unit (or “dwelling unit”) of HUD housing refers to the interior components of an individual unit.

Examples of components included in the interior of a unit may include the balcony, bathroom, call-for-aid (if applicable), carbon monoxide devices, ceiling, doors, electrical systems, enclosed patio, floors, HVAC (where individual units are provided), kitchen, lighting, outlets, smoke detectors, stairs, switches, walls, water heater, and windows.

- **INSIDE:** Inside of HUD housing (or “inside areas”) refers to the common areas and building systems that can be generally found within the building interior and are not inside a unit.

Examples of “inside” common areas may include basements, interior or attached garages, enclosed carports, restrooms, closets, utility rooms, mechanical rooms, community rooms, day care rooms, halls, corridors, stairs, shared kitchens, laundry rooms, offices, enclosed porches, enclosed patios, enclosed balconies, and trash collection areas.

Examples of building systems include those components such as pipes that provide domestic water, electricity, elevators, emergency power, fire protection, HVAC, and sanitary services.

- **OUTSIDE:** Outside of HUD housing (or “outside areas”) refers to the building site, building exterior components, and any building systems located outside of the building or unit.

The inspector should only assess inspectable items visually observable while navigating between sample buildings and units.

Examples of “outside” components may include fencing, retaining walls, grounds, lighting, mailboxes, project signs, parking lots, detached garage or carport, driveways, play areas and equipment, refuse disposal, roads, storm drainage, non-dwelling buildings, and walkways. Components found on the exterior of the building are also considered outside areas, and examples may include doors, attached porches, attached patios, balconies, car ports, fire escapes, foundations, lighting, roofs, walls, and windows.

- **EXCEPTIONS:**
 - Detached garages will not be inspected for all building types.
 - Do not assess inspectable items on buildings that are not in the sample.

RECORDING DEFICIENCIES

- Only the inspector of record can conduct the NSPIRE inspection.
- Inspectors are required to record and call out all observed deficiencies to the property representative during the inspection.
- The inspector is required to evaluate and physically test all inspectable items using the [NSPIRE standards](#).
- If an inspectable item is inaccessible, the inspector will only record observable deficiencies associated with that item.

- If the inspector observes multiple, but different defects on the same inspectable item, the inspector must record each defect separately (i.e., unique defects on the same door such as missing hardware and missing seal would be recorded as separate deficiencies).
- Multiple counts of the same deficiency on an inspectable item shall be recorded once, and the number of observations shall be noted in the comments (e.g., 5 holes in the same door is recorded as one deficiency with comments noting “5 holes”). A single representative photo of all defects can be taken.
- Every deficiency recorded requires an image (or picture), comment, and room (or location).
 - Image
 - Pictures must clearly depict and substantiate the recorded deficiency, specifically the defective component, such that a person not present at the inspection could validate and locate the observation.
 - Take pictures at the highest resolution available on the data collection device and focus on the specific defect. Take pictures using the best possible perspective to reveal the defect. Use natural light whenever possible. Hold the camera still and avoid digital zoom features. Set the data collection device to automatically adjust for exposure, flash, and focus.
 - Take photos from multiple different angles to clearly document the deficiency if necessary.
 - Do not capture any personally identifiable information (PII) such as identification numbers, contact information, financial details, personal or medical records, and other identifiers. Delete the picture if PII is accidentally captured.
 - After capturing an image, view it on the data collection device screen to determine if the picture sufficiently records all relevant information.
 - Utilize measuring tools or a reference object (e.g. tape measure, penny, or pen, for example) if needed for accurate assessment of space dimensions for deficiencies.
 - Comment
 - Comments added must clearly reflect the defect being cited and specify the component of the item that is defective, along with any additional relevant details.
 - Room/Location
 - Select appropriate location from the dropdown list.
- Potential LBP deficiencies are recorded once per surface area (large and small). The inspector must take a representative photograph for each individual surface area.
- Inspectors are required to inspect all inspectable items up to 8 feet high without assistance from property representatives.
- Exception: The property representative shall assist in testing all ovens and stoves in the presence of the inspector.
- Property representatives, in the presence of the inspector, are required to test inspectable items that are more than 8 feet above the floor (e.g., smoke alarm, emergency lighting).
- Operable windows with their locking mechanisms at 8’ or higher from the floor or landing are not required to be inspected for correct operation. The inspector will perform a visual assessment only.
- Abandoned or removed from service (not positioned for use) equipment (e.g., elevators, boilers, trash chutes, call for aid) will be evaluated only for deficiencies such as exposed conductors, sharp edges, tripping hazards, and fuel leaks.
- INCLEMENT WEATHER: In the event of inclement weather, inspectors will make every reasonable attempt to complete the inspection. A reasonable attempt is to make every effort to inspect all inspectable areas, applying this protocol, without placing undue hardship on oneself, or the property. Any inspectable items that are snow covered and cannot be assessed will be recorded as “No Observed Deficiency” (NOD).
- Other than primary appliances, resident-owned property cannot be assessed for any deficiencies unless it affects the performance of a fire safety system or puts the building at risk.

- The inspector must ensure that all observations have a response (e.g. NOD, N/A, recorded deficiency) and no edits are needed before selecting the “Submit All” button to record the completed assignment manager.
- Every effort shall be made to complete the assignment manager as soon as that area has been inspected.

5.4. AFTER INSPECTION

COMPLETE 24-HOUR HEALTH & SAFETY REPORT

- At the end of each inspection day and the conclusion of the inspection, the property representative shall acknowledge receipt of the 24-hour Health & Safety (H&S) report by e-signing in the NSPIRE app.
 - For inspections spanning multiple days, a report will be provided at the end of each day.
- The inspector will inform the property representative that the property’s primary contact will receive a link to Salesforce to access the official H&S report within 24 hours.

INSPECTION SYNC INSTRUCTIONS

- SMART SYNC:
 - Inspectors will Smart Sync:
 - periodically throughout the day and,
 - prior to obtaining the H&S acknowledgement, and
 - after obtaining the H&S acknowledgement.

Note: Once deficiencies are Synced, they cannot be edited or deleted in Salesforce.

- FULL SYNC:
 - **Do NOT Full Sync during an inspection. Inspectors will only Full Sync upon completion of the inspection.**
 - Prior to Full Syncing, the inspector must do the following in order:
 - Review all inspectable areas for completion.
 - Complete the final H&S acknowledgement.
 - Smart Sync inspection.
 - Provide property representative with a copy of the H&S report electronically.
 - Enter "inspection end date/time".
 - Full Sync inspection while at the property or as soon as reliable internet connection is available.

Note: Full Sync clears data from the device, rendering it inaccessible to the inspector.

6. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1. PROTOCOL TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

AFFIRMATIVE REQUIREMENTS

Property attributes or requirements that must be met but are not currently scored.

BUILDING

Any structure that has a contiguous roofline, has a permanent foundation (including pier foundations poured to bearing soil and below the frost line), is enclosed on all sides, and has at least one utility servicing it such as electric, gas, water, or sewer.

CONTRACTOR

1. Any individual or other legal entity that:
 - a. Directly or indirectly (e.g., through an affiliate), submits offers for or is awarded, or reasonably may be expected to submit offers for or be awarded, a government contract, including a contract for carriage under Government or commercial bills of lading, or a subcontract under a government contract; or
 - b. Conducts business, or reasonably may be expected to conduct business, with the Government as an agent or representative of another contractor. (FAR 9.403)
2. Includes the terms prime contractor and subcontractor. (FAR 22.801)
3. Includes a subcontractor at any tier whose subcontract is subject to the provisions of the Services Contract Act. (FAR 22.1001)
4. For subcontracting requirements, the total contractor organization, or a separate entity of it, such as an affiliate, division, or plant, performs its own purchasing. (FAR 44.101)

DEFICIENCY

A defect or condition cited in a HUD physical inspection when there is an inspectable item that is observed to be missing, flawed, or not functioning as designed. Deficiencies differ by classification and severity, and deficiency definitions specify what must be recorded for a given deficiency. The categories of severity, as provided in the proposed NSPIRE Standards Notice, are Life-Threatening, Severe, Moderate, and Low.

FIRE SAFETY SYSTEM

A device or series of devices that protects structures from damage or destruction by fire, protects people from injury by fire or minimizes the effects of fire.

HCV (HOUSING CHOICE VOUCHERS) PROGRAM (SECTION 8)

The Federal Government's major program for assisting very low-income families, the elderly, and the disabled to afford decent, safe, and sanitary housing in the private market and not limited to units located in subsidized housing projects. Housing assistance is provided on behalf of the family or individual, which allows participants to find their own housing, including single-family homes, townhouses, and apartments, provided that housing meets program requirements. Housing choice vouchers are administered locally by public housing agencies that receive Federal funds from HUD. The Housing Quality Standards (HQS) used to inspect properties in the HCV program will be superseded by NSPIRE, once implemented.

HUD (DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT)

Created as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was established as a Cabinet Department by the Department of Housing and Urban

Development Act (42 U.S.C. 3532-3537), effective November 9, 1965. It consolidated other older federal agencies.

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is the Federal agency responsible for national policy and programs that address America's housing needs, that improve and develop the Nation's communities, and enforce fair housing laws. HUD's business is helping create a decent home and suitable living environment for all Americans, and it has given America's communities a strong national voice at the Cabinet level. HUD plays a major role in supporting homeownership by underwriting homeownership for lower- and moderate-income families through its mortgage insurance programs.

The primary programs administered by HUD include:

- Mortgage and loan insurance through the Federal Housing Administration
- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to help communities with economic development, job opportunities and housing rehabilitation
- HOME Investment Partnership Act block grants to develop and support affordable housing for low-income residents
- Rental assistance for low-income households
- Public or subsidized housing for low-income individuals and families
- Homeless assistance provided through local communities and faith-based and other nonprofit organizations
- Fair housing public education and enforcement

HUD-ASSISTED

Refers to properties with any of the following: Federal Housing Administration (FHA)-mortgage insurance, a federal mortgage interest subsidy, project based rental assistance such as Project Rental Assistance Contract (PRAC), HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME), Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP), or other HUD funding including HUD funds allocated through state and local jurisdictions.

INSIDE INSPECTABLE AREA

Inside of HUD housing (or “inside areas”) refers to the common areas and building systems that can be generally found within the building interior and are not inside a Unit. Examples of “inside” common areas may include, basements, interior or attached garages, enclosed carports, restrooms, closets, utility rooms, mechanical rooms, community rooms, day care rooms, halls, corridors, stairs, shared kitchens, laundry rooms, offices, enclosed porches, enclosed patios, enclosed balconies, and trash collection areas. Examples of building systems include those components that provide domestic water, electricity, elevators, emergency power, fire protection, HVAC, and sanitary services.

INSIDE COMMON AREAS

Inside inspectable areas that may include basements, interior or attached garages, enclosed carports, restrooms, closets, utility rooms, mechanical rooms, community rooms, day care rooms, halls, corridors, stairs, shared kitchens, laundry rooms, offices, enclosed porches, enclosed patios, enclosed balconies, and trash collection areas.

LIFE-THREATENING DEFICIENCY

A category of health and safety deficiencies that includes deficiencies that, if evident in the home or on the property, present a high risk of death to resident.

LOW DEFICIENCY

A category of deficiencies that includes deficiencies which are critical to habitability but do not present a substantive health and safety risk to a resident.

MODERATE DEFICIENCY

The moderate health and safety category includes deficiencies that, if evident in the home or on the property, present a moderate risk of an adverse medical event requiring a healthcare visit; cause temporary harm; or if left untreated, cause or worsen a chronic condition that may have long-lasting adverse health effects; or that the physical security or safety of a resident or their property could be compromised.

MULTIFAMILY HOUSING

Privately owned housing subsidized by HUD. HUD subsidizes these properties to reduce mortgage costs, rehabilitate existing housing, or build new housing units. In return, owners must reduce rents on a percentage of units to make them more affordable for people of lower socioeconomic means. HUD's Federal Housing Administration (FHA) Office of Multifamily Housing Programs (MFH) is responsible for the overall management, development, direction, and administration of HUD's Multifamily Housing Programs.

NSPIRE (NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR THE PHYSICAL INSPECTION OF REAL ESTATE)

Also known as the "NSPIRE final rule," NSPIRE establishes a new approach to defining and assessing housing quality. The purpose of NSPIRE is to strengthen HUD's physical condition standards and improve HUD oversight through the alignment and consolidation of the inspection regulations used to evaluate "HUD housing," as defined in [24 CFR 5.701\(c\)](#), across multiple programs. Implementation of the NSPIRE final rule ensures that residents of HUD housing live in safe, habitable dwellings, and the items and components located inside, outside, and within the units of HUD housing are functionally adequate, operable, and free of health and safety hazards.

NSPIRE ADMINISTRATIVE NOTICE ([PIH 2023-16/H 2023-07](#))

The NSPIRE Administrative Notice implements portions of the final rule. It covers the process and operational requirements for Public Housing programs and Multifamily Housing assistance programs covered by the final rule, including Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly, Section 811 Supportive Housing for Persons with Disabilities, Section 202 direct loan program, and housing with mortgages insured or held by HUD as listed in 24 CFR 5.701. This notice includes policies and procedures for:

- Properties participating in inspections.
- Submitting evidence of deficiency correction.
- Submitting technical reviews.
- Administrative review.
- Other administrative requirements changing with the final NSPIRE rule.

Additionally, it outlines roles and responsibilities for HUD's Real Estate Assessment Center (REAC), HUD field office staff, and property representatives from Public Housing Authorities (PHAs) and Property Owners and/or Agents (POAs). This notice also references existing requirements for inspectors performing inspections for REAC under contract.

NSPIRE INSPECTION

Physical inspections conducted mainly by contract inspectors and public housing agencies every one to three years, depending on a property's previous inspection score. NSPIRE inspections focus on deficiencies deemed to be the most important indicators of housing quality. NSPIRE inspections may use a high unit sampling rate and are intended to provide HUD a high level of confidence in the inspection results.

NSPIRE STANDARDS

Physical inspection standards developed to consolidate and align housing quality requirements and associated inspections standards across HUD programs. Each standard lists the definition of the inspectable item, its purpose and name variants, common materials and components, deficiency location(s), deficiency criteria, the health and safety determination, correction timeframes, rationale(s), inspection process, and tools/equipment required to perform the inspection. Refers to inspection, not housing, standards. See also NSPIRE.

NSPIRE SCORING NOTICE

This notice establishes the NSPIRE physical inspection scoring and ranking methodology to implement HUD's NSPIRE rule for Public Housing and Multifamily Housing programs, including Section 8 Project-Based Rental Assistance (PBRA) and other Multifamily assisted housing, Section 202/811 programs, and HUD-insured Multifamily as described in the NSPIRE rule. The scoring methodology converts observed defects into a numerical score and sets a threshold for HUD to perform additional administrative oversight by establishing a level for when a property fails an inspection (less than 60 points) and when an enforcement referral is automatic or required (less than or equal to 30 points).

NSPIRE STANDARDS NOTICE

This notice serves as a complementary document to the NSPIRE final rule. It provides the final NSPIRE physical inspection Standards.

OUTSIDE INSPECTABLE AREA

Outside of HUD housing (or “outside areas”) refers to the building site, building exterior components, and any building systems located outside of the building or unit. The inspector should only assess inspectable items visually observable while navigating between sample buildings and units. Examples of “outside” components may include facades, fencing, retaining walls, grounds, lighting, mailboxes, project signs, parking lots, detached garage or carport, driveways, play areas and equipment, refuse disposal, roads, storm drainage, non-dwelling buildings, and walkways. Components found on the exterior of the building are also considered outside areas, and examples may include doors, attached porches, attached patios, balconies, car ports, fire escapes, foundations, lighting, roofs, walls, and windows.

SEVERE DEFICIENCY

A category of health and safety deficiencies that includes deficiencies that, if evident in the home or on the property, present a high risk of permanent disability, or serious injury or illness to a resident; or the physical security or safety of a resident or their property would be seriously compromised.

UNIT INSPECTABLE AREA

A unit (or “dwelling unit”) of HUD housing refers to the interior components of an individual unit. Examples of components in the interior of a unit may include the balcony, bathroom; call-for-aid (if applicable); carbon monoxide devices; ceiling; doors; electrical systems; enclosed patio; floors; water heater; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) (where individual units are provided); kitchen; lighting; outlets; switches; smoke detectors; stairs; walls; and windows.

VENDOR

A supplier, or potential supplier, of goods and/or services under contract to the U.S. Government.

ANNEX 2. ACRONYM LIST

Acronym	Definition
CO	Carbon Monoxide
DCD	Data collection device
H&S	Health and Safety
HCV	Housing Choice Vouchers
HIP	Housing Information Portal
HUD	United States Department of Housing and Urban Development
HVAC	Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning Systems
iREMS	Integrated Real Estate Management System
LBP	Lead-Based Paint
LT	Life Threatening
MF	Multifamily
NOD	No Observed Deficiency
NSPIRE	National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate
OPA	Office Public Affairs
PHA	Public Housing Agency
PIC	PIH Information Center
PIH	HUD's Office of Public and Indian Housing
PII	Personally Identifiable Information
POA	Property Owners and Agents
REAC	Real Estate Assessment Center
TAC	Technical Assistance Center

ANNEX 3. EQUIPMENT AND RESOURCES

Inspectors are required to use special tools and equipment to perform an accurate, thorough NSPIRE inspection.

Required Tools/Equipment

The tools/equipment listed are required to perform an NSPIRE inspection:

- Data collection device (DCD) (e.g., computer, cell phone, iPad)
- Visual inspection device (telescoping mirror)
- Illumination device (flashlight)
- Distance measuring device (tape measure)
- Ambient temperature measuring device
- Electrical testing device (two wire tester OR two-prong adapter, three prong outlet tester with circuit interrupt button)
- Moisture detection device (pinless moisture meter)

Optional Tools/Equipment

Inspectors, per their agency requirements, convenience, or comfort may utilize other tools/equipment during inspections such as:

- Testing device (telescoping pole)
- Combustible-gas detector device
- Infrared Camera
- Carbon monoxide analyzer device
- Backup data collection device- If the original recording device goes out of service during an inspection, the inspector of record should have a backup recording device in case there is a situation that needs to be documented for the record.

ANNEX 4. NSPIRE SAMPLE SIZE CHART

Assisted Units in Property	Inspected Units Sample
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	6
8	7
9	8
10	8
11-12	9
13-14	10
15-16	11
17-18	12
19-21	13
22-24	14
25-27	15
28-30	16
31-35	17
36-39	18
40-45	19
46-51	20
52-59	21
60-67	22
68-78	23
79-92	24
93-110	25
111-133	26
134-166	27
167-214	28
215-295	29
296-455	30
456-920	31
921+	32