

Housing Trust Fund and Bridges Rental Assistance Updates

Thank you for all of your follow-up questions about the initial physical inspection requirements. We support your efforts to safeguard the health and safety of your staff and participants while meeting statutory requirements for initial physical inspections.

Additional Guidance about Initial Physical Inspections

To help provide safe and quality homes for residents, Minnesota law requires housing units to comply with the local housing maintenance code or, if no local housing maintenance code, the housing quality standards (HQS) adopted by HUD in order to qualify for Housing Trust Fund or Bridges assistance. Compliance is normally verified with an on-site physical inspection of the unit. To support the health and safety of residents, inspectors, and landlords, exceptions to the initial physical inspection requirement may be requested by unit. The exception must be documented in the participant file and approved by Minnesota Housing before reimbursement can be made for any rental assistance payments or housing related expenses. Physical inspections are still required and must be completed no later than 30 days after the Peacetime Emergency ends.

When applying for these exceptions, submit the following information to mhfa.grants@state.mn.us:

- Request the exception to the initial physical inspection, and state the hardship that is preventing the initial physical inspection from taking place.
- Indicate the unit and the participant (initials only) for whom the exception is being requested.
- Include documentation that supports that the unit is safe and habitable and meets the local housing maintenance code or HQS, as applicable (e.g. copy of the virtual physical inspection; self-certification form from the landlord).

Minnesota Housing will review and notify you if the documentation is sufficient to approve the initial physical inspection exception. Once approved:

- Proceed with moving the household into the unit or begin payment if they are already housed.
- Add a note to the “Comments” section of the payment request indicating that the unit passed the initial physical inspection by alternative means (such as virtual inspection or self-certification).
- Complete a physical inspection of the unit within 30 days of the end of the Peacetime Emergency.
- Notify Minnesota Housing staff via email of the physical inspection. On the applicable payment request in the “Comments” section, write the date that the unit passed the physical inspection.

If you are considering alternative methods for initial physical inspections and would like to verify that they are acceptable before proceeding, contact us at mhfa.grants@state.mn.us. However, each exception will still need independent approval for each household unit where an alternative method is used. If a household has recently moved into a new unit and you did not receive an exception, it is the expectation that an initial physical inspection was completed.

COVID-19 and Minnesota Housing

Minnesota Housing has a [COVID-19 webpage](#) on our website that includes previous eNews publications sent to our partners as well as other useful information. You will also find additional information about [Executive Order 20-14 Suspending Evictions and Writs of Recovery During the COVID-19 Peacetime Emergency](#).

If you have more questions as you navigate COVID-19 with participants and assess program requirements, please reach out to [Ellie Miller](#) or [Merideth Mayrand](#).

Prioritizing the health and safety of staff and participants and maintaining housing stability, are very important to Minnesota Housing. Thank you for all you are doing to provide continued services and rental assistance to participants during this challenging time.



www.mnhousing.gov

Share this email:



[Manage](#) your preferences | [Opt out](#) using TrueRemove™

Got this as a forward? [Sign up](#) to receive our future emails.

View this email [online](#).

400 Wabasha Street North Suite 400
Saint Paul, MN | 55102 US

This email was sent to .
To continue receiving our emails, add us to your address book.

emma®

[Subscribe](#) to our email list.