

Salisbury Township

Rental Property Inspection Guide

This document is a guide. The full text of the Ordinance is available on the Township's website at www.salisburytownshippa.org.

Rental Inspection Program

A "Rental" property, also referred to as "leased" property, shall be defined as any property for which the owner receives payment from the occupant(s), known as tenants, in return for occupying or using the property. Rental properties may be either commercial, storage, industrial, residential or vacation property and may include properties under lease purchase agreements as well as residential assisted-living facilities with permanent live-in-quarters as licensed as such by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; including providing meals, supervision and services for four or more elderly persons, or other persons needing such care.

This Rental Inspection Program consists of safety and basic maintenance inspections intended to maintain the character of Salisbury Township and quality of life for its residents and occupants.

This Rental Inspection Program does not serve as a comprehensive structural building inspection.

Rental Registration and Moving Permit

A \$10.00 moving permit is required for any person, firm, or corporation moving in, out or within the Township of Salisbury and shall be secured prior to moving.

The rental property owner is responsible for registration, inspection, repair and associated fees for the rental unit/property.

An annual rental registration fee must be paid prior to September 30 for the cycle of January 1st through December 31st the following year.

Registration Fees:

- a.) Properties with 1 – 20 units = \$20.00 each unit.
- b.) Properties with 21 – 50 units = \$500.00 flat fee.
- c.) Properties with 51 + units = \$750.00 flat fee.

Non-owner-occupied rental properties are also inspected annually to ensure compliance with property maintenance codes and ordinances.

Scheduling an Inspection

Property owners, legal representatives, or listing agents may schedule an inspection by completing a Rental Inspection and Registration Form.

Application and registration forms are available online at www.salisburytownship.org or at the Township Building located at 2900 South Pike Avenue Allentown, PA 18103.

Inspections shall occur prior to new tenant(s) occupying the premises.

Please allow up to (2) weeks for your inspection to be scheduled.

Inspection Fee

Payment of an inspection fee of \$50.00 shall be submitted with the inspection application (2) weeks prior to your inspection to be scheduled. Inspections are performed weekdays during regular business hours. Payment will not be accepted by inspectors at the time of inspection. Each re-inspection may be subject to an additional \$25.00 fee.

Cancelations and Re-inspections

Call 610-797-4000 if you need to cancel your inspection at least 24 hours prior to scheduled time. If an inspector shows up for a scheduled inspection and the owner or owner's agent is not present, the inspection will not be performed. The property owner must reschedule the inspection and a \$25.00 fee will be charged. Re-inspection fees will be invoiced after the inspection is conducted.

Preparing for the inspection

- Make sure all areas of the commercial of each residential unit or space, building and garage are accessible for the inspector. (inspectors will not move furnishings, personal items or appliances).
- Clean up exterior yard areas and property. Cut the lawn, trim overgrown bushes and shrubbery.
- Remove trash, debris and non-usable items throughout the property.
- Walkways must be maintained and free from hazardous conditions.
- The structure exterior shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and water tight.
- Repair broken or hanging shutters, awnings, light fixtures, etc.
- Loose or missing siding, chipped and peeling paint is not acceptable and should be repaired.
- Make sure fences are repaired, painted and in good condition.
- Windows must be properly glazed and sealed.

- Replace missing or broken storm windows, screens, door knobs or handles.
- Building interior shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and in sanitary condition.
- Handrails. Shall be secure and required at:
 - a.) All exterior and interior stairways three risers high or more.
 - b.) All porches, decks, landings, balconies, etc., over 30 inches above grade with guard separation that prevents a 4-inch sphere from passing through. A six-inch sphere cannot pass through the open side of stair risers.
 - d.) The height of a handrail must be at least 34 inches and not more than 38 inches measured vertically from stair tread nosing.
- A minimum 3 foot-by-3-foot landing shall be provided at the top and bottom of ramps, where doors open onto ramps and at the top and bottom of each stairway except where the door does not swing over the stairway.
- Check for leaking or dripping water supply lines, drain lines and shut-off valves throughout the space or building.
- All areas must be free of mold.
- Smoke detectors are required to be installed in each room used for sleeping, outside of each room used for sleeping and on each floor/story of the dwelling – including the basement.
- Ground -fault interrupter outlets (GFI's) are required to replace existing outlets in bathrooms, existing outlets within six feet of kitchen sink, existing wall outlets on the exterior of the property and within six feet of a laundry / slop sink.
- Outlet and light switch plate covers are required over all electrical switch and outlets.
- Handrails must be secure.
- Any sump pump that drains into the sanitary sewer system must be piped to the exterior of the building.
- Utilities must be turned on for the inspection. If an inspector cannot complete an inspection, another inspection must be scheduled and a fee of \$25.00 re-inspection fee may be charged.

The Inspection

The property owner or owner's agent must be present at the inspection.

An inspector has the right to refuse to inspect if an animal is not leashed or placed in a secure area.

Inspectors do not access roofs, crawl spaces or knee walls unless it is necessary to investigate a potential hazard.

The inspector may require an owner to obtain a certification of safety from an industry professional when a condition is determined to be beyond the expertise of the inspector.

The property owner shall be responsible to make all repairs and pay all fines and penalties for violations before any tenant is permitted to occupy or re-occupy the rental property and/or unit.

The Inspection Report

All repairs must be done in a thorough, neat and professional manner. Substandard work is not acceptable and will not be approved.

If an inspection report indicates any items that require a permit, please note the following:

- Permits and inspections are required when work being performed is within the scope of the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code;
- Allow up to 15 business days for processing residential permits and 30 business days for commercial permits;
- A Rental Certificate of Occupancy will not be issued for work performed in violation of the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code (UCC) where a permit(s) is required;
- The property owner is responsible for obtaining permits when required;
- The property owner is responsible for correcting any deficiencies, regardless of who performed the work.

The Re-inspection

After all items noted on the inspection report have been corrected or repaired, call to schedule a re-inspection. A re-inspection is required to ensure that all noted violations have been corrected and all repairs have been made satisfactorily.

Additional items may be noted during the re-inspection if they are health and / or safety related.

The re-inspection fee is \$25.00 per re-inspection and may be charged if work is not complete and requires additional re-inspections until all repairs are made.

Certificate of Occupancy

A Certificate of Occupancy will be issued after the re-inspection has been performed and all noted deficiencies have been corrected and all fees have been paid.

Tenant Complaints

- An occupying tenant may register a complaint with the inspector.
- The inspector will investigate complaints and violations.
- The owner is responsible to correct any condition that the inspector deems to be in need of repair or constitutes a danger to the occupants of a rental property/unit.

Fines for violating provisions of the Township Rental Property Ordinance

- Failure to address a notice of violation will result in the following:
 - First Violation. A fine up to \$300.00 or 30 days imprisonment, or both.
 - Second Violation. A fine up to \$500.00 or 60 days imprisonment, or both.
 - Third and Each Subsequent Violation. A fine up to \$1,000.00 or 90 days imprisonment, or both.