UPCS-V

HUD is in the process of transitioning its inspection protocol from the current Housing Quality Standards (HQS) to the new UPCS-V protocol. The new protocol would have a new system for describing and classifying deficiencies. The protocol would also include a new data transmission tool that would allow data taken from the inspection to be turned into a unit condition index, which would provide information about the state of the unit to tenants, homeowners, and PHAs. The protocol would also allow for greater information technology integration. HUD envisions the use of a handheld portable device, which would capture deficiencies, photographic evidence, and other inspection findings.

The PHA would be responsible for adopting both the UPCS-V protocol and a written Administrative Plan that establishes local policies. Within the Administrative Plan, the PHA would establish a tenancy approval procedure, a method for calculating amenities in rent reasonableness, HUD-approved variances, policies and procedures related to scheduling, which testing devices to use, a procedure to verify the correction of UPCS-V deficiencies, abatement procedures, and procedures for the termination of HAP assistance. In addition, the PHA would be responsible for informing the tenant and owner of necessary corrections and the time period for corrections. The PHA would be also responsible for maintaining records and protecting owner and tenant privacy.

Inspectors, owners, and tenants would also have certain responsibilities under the UPCS-V protocol. Inspectors would participate in HUD-required trainings. Owners would be responsible for maintaining the unit in accordance with UPCS-V or a higher standard. Tenants would be responsible for complying with the terms of their lease and keeping the unit safe and sanitary.

The new protocol would contain five inspectable areas: building exterior, unit, building systems, common areas, and site. The protocol is primarily concerned with the unit, but the inspector would have to look at all areas and evaluate all inspectable items.

Defects would be classified into levels of severity, ranging from L1 (Minor Defect) to L3 (Significant Defect). Defects may also be classified as “observations” or “deficiencies.” Observations would be noted, but would not cause the unit to fail, while deficiencies would cause the unit to fail the inspection. Observations and deficiencies may also be classified as “Life Threatening or Emergency” (LTE), which would have to be addressed within 24 hours. All other deficiencies must be addressed in 30 days.

Currently, HUD is in the process of conducting a UPCS-V Demonstration. Data collected from the Demonstration will be used to refine the protocol and make necessary changes. NAHRO is closely monitoring the demonstration to see how the UPCS-V protocol is being implemented and is working with HUD to make sure that any final protocol takes into consideration the viewpoints of our membership. In addition to working with HUD, NAHRO will continue to bring its members the latest developments about the UPCS-V protocol.

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