

RESOLUTION NO. R-10-2024

**A RESOLUTION OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF
UNITY, COUNTY OF WESTMORELAND, COMMONWEALTH OF
PENNSYLVANIA, ESTABLISHING STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS FOR THE
UPKEEP, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR OF REGULATED RENTAL UNITS
WITHIN THE TOWNSHIP OF UNITY**

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors of Unity Township enacted Ordinance No. O-4-2023 on June 8, 2023, establishing, defining and setting forth provisions for the regulation of “Regulated Rental Units” within the Township (hereafter the “Ordinance”); and

WHEREAS, the Ordinance defines a “Regulated Rental Unit” as A DWELLING UNIT occupied by four (4) or more OCCUPANTS who are unrelated by blood or marriage under a RENTAL AGREEMENT, or a BOARDING HOUSE, GROUP HOME, STUDENT HOME, BED AND BREAKFAST or a SHORT-TERM RENTAL as same is defined in the Unity Township Zoning Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, regulated rental units may be created by property owners within existing single-family residential dwellings; and

WHEREAS, the Ordinance requires Owners of regulated rental units to, among other things, apply for and obtain annual permits and inspections by the Township to ensure that such units do not pose a threat to either the public health, safety and welfare in general, or to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of same; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors desire to establish standards and protocols for the upkeep, maintenance and repair of regulated rental units with which the units must meet in order to obtain a permit for the occupancy of same; and

WHEREAS, the Township’s Code Enforcement Officers, Building Code Inspectors and Building Code Official have developed standards and protocols for the upkeep, maintenance and repairs of regulated rental units which are consistent with the Township’s Dangerous Buildings and Ground Ordinance, the Township’s Fire Code, the Uniform

Construction Code in effect in the Township and the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code, a copy of such standards and protocols being attached hereto, made a part hereof and marked Exhibit "A"; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Supervisors desire to approve and implement such standards and protocols by the adoption of this Resolution.

NOW, THEREFORE, WITH THE FOREGOING RECITALS BEING INCORPORATED HEREIN BY REFERENCE THERETO, THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE TOWNSHIP OF UNITY, WESTMORELAND COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA HEREBY RESOLVE AS FOLLOWS:

1. THAT, those minimum standards and protocols for the upkeep, maintenance and repair of regulated rental units set forth in the attached Exhibit "A" shall be and are hereby approved as the standards and protocols for the upkeep, maintenance and repair of regulated rental units within the geopolitical boundaries of Unity Township;

2. THAT, no regulated rental unit shall be authorized to continue, and no regulated rental unit shall be permitted to be occupied, unless it complies with the standards and protocols set forth in Exhibit "A";


3. THAT, in the event the nature of the occupancy of a regulated rental unit (e.g. a Group Home, Short-Term Rental, Ded & Breakfast, etc.) requires such occupancy to meet additional standards for occupancy under the Township's Uniform Construction Code, Fire Code or under any state or federal statute, rule or regulation, then those additional standards shall also be applied;

4. THAT, in the event any state or federal statute, rule or regulation associated with the operation or occupancy of a particular regulated rental unit imposes additional or more restrictive requirements for the permitting and/or occupancy of the regulated rental unit than required in the attached Exhibit "A", then those more restrictive requirements shall apply.

THIS RESOLUTION IS APPROVED AND ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF UNITY TOWNSHIP AT A PUBLIC MEETING HELD THE 11th DAY OF APRIL, 2024 AND SHALL BE EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY.

ATTEST:

THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF
UNITY TOWNSHIP



Sharon C. Sweeney, Secretary

By: 

Michael J. O'Baro, Chairman

**UNITY TOWNSHIP – WESTMORELAND COUNTY – PENNSYLVANIA
STANDARDS AND PROTOCOLS FOR THE UPKEEP, REPAIR AND
MAINTENANCE OF REGULATED RENTAL UNITS**

SECTION I - EXTERIOR PROPERTY CONDITIONS

- A. Sanitation.** The exterior of the premises shall be maintained in a clean, safe and sanitary condition.
- B. Grading and drainage.** The exterior premises shall be graded and maintained to prevent the erosion of soil and the accumulation of stagnant water on the premises or within any structure located thereon.
- C. Sidewalks and driveways.** All sidewalks, walkways, exterior stairs, driveways, parking spaces and similar areas shall be kept in good repair, easily passable and maintained free from hazardous conditions.
- D. Weeds.** The exterior of the premises shall be maintained free from weeds or plant growth in excess of ten (10') inches. All noxious weeds shall be prohibited. Weeds shall be defined as all grasses, annual plants and vegetation, other than trees or shrubs provided; however, this term shall not include cultivated flowers and gardens.
- E. Rodent & insect harborage.** The property shall be kept free from rodent harborage and infestation insect infestation. Where rodents and insects are found, they shall be promptly exterminated by approved processes which will not be injurious to human health. After extermination, proper precautions shall be taken to eliminate rodent harborage and insect prevent reinfestation.
- F. Exterior exhaust vents.** Pipes, ducts, conductors, fans or blowers shall be kept free of blockage and not discharge gases, steam, vapor, hot air, grease, smoke, odors or other gaseous or particulate wastes directly upon abutting or adjacent public or private property.
- G. Motor vehicles.** No inoperative or unlicensed motor vehicle shall be parked, kept or stored on any premises, and no vehicle shall at any time be in a state of major disassembly, disrepair, or in the process of being stripped or dismantled.

SECTION II - EXTERIOR STRUCTURE CONDITIONS

- A. General.** The exterior of the structure shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and sanitary so as not to pose a threat to the public health, safety or welfare.
- B. Premises identification.** The exterior of the building shall have *approved* address numbers placed in a position to be plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property. These numbers shall contrast with their background. Address numbers shall be Arabic numerals or alphabet letters. Numbers shall be a minimum of 4 inches (102 mm) high with a minimum stroke width of 0.5 inch (12.7 mm).
- C. Stairways, decks, porches and balconies.** Every exterior stairway, deck, porch, balcony, and all appurtenances attached thereto, shall be structurally sound, maintained in good repair, be properly anchored and capable of supporting the imposed loads.
- D. Window, skylight and door frames.** Every window, skylight, door and frame shall be weather tight and maintained and kept in good repair.

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E. Glazing. All glazing materials shall be maintained free from cracks and holes.

F. Openable windows. Every window, other than a fixed window, shall be easily openable and capable of being held in position by appropriate window hardware designed for that purpose.

G. Exterior doors. All exterior doors must shut completely, be airtight and lock. A deadbolt, chain or other security lock openable only from the inside, must be installed on each exterior door

H. Screens and screen doors. Every door, window and other outside opening required for ventilation of habitable rooms, food preparation areas, food service areas or any areas where products to be included or utilized in the preparation of food for human consumption shall be supplied with tightly fitting screens of not less than 16 mesh per inch (16 mesh per 25 mm), and every screen door used for insect control shall have a self-closing device in good working condition.

SECTION III - INTERIOR CONDITIONS

A. Content. The interior of the structure must contain at least one separate bathroom, at least one separate bedroom, a common kitchen and a common living room area. No cooking facilities shall be located within a bedroom, living room or bathroom.

B. General. The interior of a structure and equipment therein shall be maintained in good repair, structurally sound and in a sanitary condition. Occupants shall keep that part of the structure which they occupy or control in a clean and sanitary condition. The Owner of the premises shall maintain any shared or public areas of the structure and exterior property in a clean and sanitary condition

C. Stairs and walking surfaces. Stairs, landings, ramps, balconies and all similar walking surfaces, shall be structurally sound, properly anchored with connections capable of supporting all required loads and resisting all load effects.

D. Handrails and guardrails. Every exterior and interior flight of stairs having more than four (4) risers shall have a handrail on one side of the stair and every open portion of a stair, landing, balcony, porch, deck, ramp or other walking surface which is more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below shall have guardrails. Handrails shall not be less than 30 inches (762 mm) high or more than 42 inches (1067 mm) high measured vertically above the nosing of the tread or above the finished floor of the landing or walking surfaces. Guardrails shall not be less than 30 inches (762 mm) high above the floor of the landing, balcony, porch, deck, or ramp or other walking surface. All handrails and guardrails shall be firmly fastened, maintained in good condition and capable of supporting normally imposed loads.

E. Interior doors. All interior doors shall fit reasonably well within its frame, shall be capable of being opened and closed by being properly and securely attached to jambs, headers or tracks as intended by the manufacturer of the attachment hardware.

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SECTION IV - RUBBISH AND GARBAGE

A. Accumulation of rubbish or garbage. The interior of the building and exterior of premises, shall be kept free from the accumulation of trash, rubbish or garbage.

B. Disposal of rubbish and garbage. Every occupant of a structure shall dispose of all rubbish in a clean and sanitary manner by placing such rubbish in approved containers. Owner shall maintain a contract with a licensed sanitary landfill hauler for the removal of trash, rubbish and garbage from the premises.

SECTION V - BATHROOM FACILITIES

A. Ventilation for Bathrooms and toilet rooms. Every bathroom and toilet room shall have sufficient ventilation for its habitable space, except that a window shall not be required where such spaces are equipped with a mechanical ventilation system. Air exhausted by a mechanical ventilation system from a bathroom or toilet room shall discharge to the outdoors and shall not be recirculated.

B. Water closet accessibility. Every bedroom shall have access to at least one (1) water closet and one lavatory without passing through another bedroom. Every bedroom shall have access to at least one water closet and lavatory located in the same story as the bedroom or in an immediately adjacent story.

C. Required facilities. Every dwelling unit shall contain its own bathtub or shower, lavatory, water closet and kitchen sink which shall be maintained in a sanitary, safe working condition. The lavatory shall be placed in the same room as the water closet or located in close proximity to the door leading directly into the room in which such water closet is located. A kitchen sink shall not be used as a substitute for the required lavatory.

D. Connections to water supplies. Every sink, lavatory, bathtub or shower, faucet, water closet or other plumbing fixture shall be properly connected to either a public water system or to an approved private water system. All kitchen sinks, lavatories, laundry facilities, bathtubs and showers shall be supplied with hot or tempered and cold running water in accordance with the International Plumbing Code.

E. Water heating facilities. Water heating facilities shall be properly installed, maintained and capable of providing an adequate amount of water to be drawn at every required sink, lavatory, bathtub, shower and laundry facility at a temperature of not less than 110°F (43°C). A gas-burning water heater shall not be located in any bathroom, toilet room, bedroom or other occupied room normally kept closed, unless adequate combustion air is provided. An approved combination temperature and pressure-relief valve and relief valve discharge pipe shall be properly installed and maintained on all water heaters.

F. Maintenance. Every plumbing stack, vent, waste and sewer line and toilet shall function properly and be kept free from obstructions, leaks and defects.

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SECTION VI - HEATING AND MECHANICAL APPLIANCES

A. Residential occupancies. Dwellings shall be provided with heating facilities capable of maintaining a room temperature of 68°F (20°C) in all habitable rooms, *bathrooms* and *toilet rooms* based on the winter outdoor design temperature for the locality indicated in Appendix D of the *International Plumbing Code*. Cooking appliances shall not be used to provide space heating to meet the requirements of this section.

B. Mechanical appliances. All mechanical appliances, fireplaces, solid fuel-burning appliances, cooking appliances and water heating appliances shall be properly installed and maintained in a safe working condition, and shall be capable of performing the intended function.

C. Removal of combustion. All fuel-burning equipment and appliances shall be connected to an *approved* chimney or vent.

SECTION VII - ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS

A. Installation. All electrical equipment, wiring and appliances shall be properly installed and maintained in a safe and approved manner. All outlets, switches and light fixtures shall be installed and maintained in good working order.

B. Receptacles. Every habitable space in a dwelling shall contain at least two separate and remote receptacle outlets. Every laundry area shall contain at least one grounded-type receptacle or a receptacle with a ground fault circuit interrupter. Every bathroom shall contain at least one receptacle. All bathroom outlets, and kitchen receptacle outlets near water supplies, shall have ground fault circuit interrupter protection.

C. Electrical system hazards. Where it is found that the electrical system in a structure constitutes a hazard to the occupants or the structure by reason of inadequate service, improper fusing, insufficient receptacle and lighting outlets, improper wiring or installation, deterioration or damage, or for similar reasons, the code official shall require the defects to be corrected to eliminate the hazard.

SECTION VIII - EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS

A. Emergency escape and rescue required. *Basements.* habitable attics and every sleeping room shall have at least one operable emergency escape and rescue opening. Where *basements* contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency egress and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room. Where emergency escape and rescue openings are provided they shall have a sill height of not more than 44 inches (1118 mm) measured from the finished floor to the bottom of the clear opening. Where a door opening having a threshold below the adjacent ground elevation serves as an emergency escape and rescue opening and is provided with a bulkhead enclosure, the bulkhead enclosure shall comply with Section

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R310.3. The net clear opening dimensions required by this section shall be obtained by the normal operation of the emergency escape and rescue opening from the inside. Emergency escape and rescue openings with a finished sill height below the adjacent ground elevation shall be provided with a window well of sufficient size to accommodate escape and rescue operations consistent with the terms of the 2009 International Property Maintenance Code. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall open directly into a public way, or to a *yard* or court that opens to a public way.

1. **Minimum opening area.** All emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet. Grade floor openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5 square feet.
2. **Minimum opening height.** The minimum net clear opening height shall be 24 inches.
3. **Minimum opening width.** The minimum net clear opening width shall be 20 inches.

B. Operational constraints. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall be operational from the inside of the room without the use of keys, tools or special knowledge.

C. Ladders and steps. Window wells with a vertical depth greater than 44 inches shall be equipped with a permanently affixed ladder or steps usable with the window in the fully open position. Ladders or rungs shall have an inside width of at least 12 inches, shall project at least 3 inches from the wall and shall be spaced not more than 18 inches on center vertically for the full height of the window well.

D. Window wells. The minimum horizontal area of the window well shall be 9 square feet, with a minimum horizontal projection and width of 36 inches. The area of the window well shall allow the emergency escape and rescue opening to be fully opened. Provided, however, that the ladder or steps required above shall be permitted to encroach a maximum of 6 inches into the required dimensions of the window well.

SECTION IX - FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND ALARM SYSTEMS

A. Fire extinguishers. A working fire extinguisher must be available in the kitchen and on each level of the structure occupied by an occupant.

B. Smoke detection and notification. All smoke alarms shall be listed and labeled in accordance with UL 217 and installed in accordance with all applicable codes and ordinances of Unity Township and the household fire warning *equipment* provisions of NFPA 72.

C. Combination smoke and fire detection systems. Household fire alarm systems installed in accordance with NFPA 72 that include smoke alarms, or a combination of smoke detector and audible notification device installed as required by this section for smoke alarms, are required for each rental unit. The household fire alarm system shall provide the same level of smoke detection and alarm as required by this section for smoke alarms. Where a household fire warning system is installed using a combination of smoke detector and audible notification device(s), it shall become a permanent fixture of the premises and be the responsibility of the Owner to keep in good working order and repair.

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The system shall be monitored by an approved supervising station and be maintained in accordance with NFPA 72 and a copy of a monitoring agreement shall be made available to the Township Code Enforcement Officer upon request.

D. Locations. Smoke alarms shall be installed in the following locations:

1. In each sleeping room.
2. Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.
3. On each additional story of the dwelling, including basements and habitable attics but not including crawl spaces and uninhabitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full *story* below the upper level.

E. Carbon monoxide alarms. An approved carbon monoxide alarm shall be installed outside of each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms in *dwelling units* within which fuel-fired appliances are installed and in dwelling units that have attached garages.

**Unity Township
Regulated Rental Unit Inspection Checklist**

AREA				PASS			FAIL
I	EXTERIOR PROPERTY CONDITIONS						
II	EXTERIOR STRUCTURE CONDITIONS						
III	INTERIOR CONDITIONS						
IV	RUBBISH AND GARBAGE						
V	BATHROOM FACILITIES						
VI	HEATING AND MECHANICAL APPLIANCES						
VII	ELECTRICAL SYSTEMS						
VIII	EMERGENCY ESCAPE AND RESCUE OPENINGS						
IX	FIRE EXTINGUISHERS AND ALAM SYSTEMS						

* The reasons for a "FAIL" are set forth in a writing attached to this Report. No occupancy permit can be issued unless and until corrections are made to the satisfaction of the Township.