

Grand Rapids Housing Commission Maintenance Policy

The Director of Housing Management of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission is responsible for managing the maintenance function in the most cost effective manner possible while maximizing the useful life of Housing Commission properties and providing the best service to Housing Commission residents. The following policy statements are designed to establish the structure of an effective and efficient maintenance system. Where policy says “employee” it can also mean “employees of subcontractors.”

1.0 COMPONENTS OF A MAINTENANCE SYSTEM

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission maintenance system shall include certain components:

- A. A system of priorities for work requests;
- B. comprehensive working procedures;
- C. performance goals;
- D. a work order system;
- E. a skills training program; and
- F. a long-range planning system.

1.1 PRIORITY SYSTEM

The work priorities adopted by the Grand Rapids Housing Commission exemplify its philosophy of delivering maintenance services. This priority system ensures that the most important maintenance work is done at a time it can be performed most cost-effectively. Minimizing vacancy loss is part of the cost-effectiveness calculation. The maintenance priorities of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission are the following:

- A. Emergencies
- B. Annual Inspections
- C. Urgent Requests
- D. Unit Turnover
- E. Standard Work Orders

Placing planned maintenance and vacancy preparation work ahead of resident work requests does not indicate that resident requests are unimportant. It emphasizes the importance of maintaining control of the maintenance work by performing scheduled routine and preventive

work first. By doing so the Housing Commission will decrease on-demand work and maintain the property in a manner that will keep and attract good tenants.

1.2 DEVELOP PROCEDURES

The Director of Housing Management will ensure that there are sufficient clear procedures in place to allow staff to implement this maintenance policy statement. All procedures will include the following:

- A. Local housing codes;
- B. HUD Housing Quality Standards;
- C. Public Housing Assessment System (PHAS) standards;
- D. Grand Rapids Housing Commission Maintenance Contract.

Nothing in the documents listed above will prevent the Housing Commission from setting a standard that is higher than that contained in the documents.

These standards and goals will be used to evaluate current operations and performance and to develop strategies to improve performance and meet the standards that have been set.

1.3 DEVELOP PERFORMANCE STANDARDS AND GOALS

The Director of Housing Management will establish measures that will allow the effectiveness of maintenance systems and activities to be evaluated. In establishing these standards the Housing Commission will take into consideration certain factors:

Work orders will contain, at a minimum, the following information:

- A. Preprinted Number
- B. Source of Request (Tenant or Management)
- C. Priority Assigned
- D. Location of Work
- E. Date and Time Received and Assigned
- F. Worker(s) or Contractor(s) assigned
- G. Description of work requested
- H. Description of work performed

- I. Estimated and actual time to complete
- J. Materials used to complete work
- K. Resident charge
- L. Resident signature

1.5 TRAINING

In order to allow its staff members to perform to the best of their abilities, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission recognizes the importance of providing the staff with opportunities to refine technical skills, increase and expand craft skills, and learn new procedures. Each employee must participate in annual training classes.

The Director of Housing Management is responsible for developing a training curriculum for the departmental staff and working with personnel department staff to identify the means of delivering the training.

1.6 LONG-RANGE PLANNING

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will put in place a long-range maintenance planning capability in order to ensure the most cost-effective use of Housing Commission resources and the maximum useful life of Housing Commission properties.

The Director of Housing Management will develop a property-specific long-range planning process that includes the following components:

- A. A property maintenance standard;
- B. an estimate of the work required to bring the property to the maintenance standard;
- C. an estimate of the work required to keep the property at the maintenance standard including routine and preventive maintenance workloads, vacant unit turn-around, inspection requirements and resident on-demand work;
- D. An estimate of the on-going cost of operating the property at the maintenance standard;
- E. a market analysis of the property to determine if there are any capital improvements needed to make the property more competitive;
- F. a cost estimate to provide the specified capital improvements; and
- G. a revised work plan and cost estimate of maintaining property at the improved standard.

By developing a work plan, the Housing Commission will be able to anticipate its staff, equipment and materials needs. It will also be possible to determine need for contracting particular services.

2.0 MAINTAINING THE PROPERTY

All maintenance work performed at Housing Commission properties can be categorized by the source of the work. Each piece of work originates from a particular source—an emergency, the routine maintenance schedule, the preventive maintenance schedule, a unit inspection, a unit turnover, or a resident request.

2.1 RESPONDING TO EMERGENCIES

Emergencies are the highest priority source of work. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will consider a work item to be an emergency if the following occur:

- A. The situation constitutes a serious threat to the life, safety or health of residents or staff;
or
- B. the situation will cause serious damage to the property structure or systems if not repaired within twenty-four (24) hours.

If a staff member is unsure whether or not a situation is an emergency, he or she will consult with his or her supervisor. If a supervisor is not available, the employee will use his or her best judgment to make the decision.

For emergencies that occur after regular working hours, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall have a twenty-four (24) emergency response system in place. This response system includes the designation of a maintenance employee in charge for each day as well as a list of qualified pre-approved contractors, open purchase orders for obtaining required supplies or equipment, and access to Housing Commission materials and supplies. The designated employee shall prepare a work order and report on any emergency within twenty-four hours after abatement of the emergency.

2.2 PREPARE VACANT UNITS FOR REOCCUPANCY

It is the policy of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to reoccupy vacant units as soon as possible. This policy allows the Housing Commission to maximize the income produced by its properties and operate attractive and safe properties.

The Director of Housing Management is responsible for developing and implementing a system that ensures an average turn-around time of seven (7) calendar days. In order to do so, he or she must have a system that can perform the following tasks.

- A. Forecast unit preparation needs based on prior years' experience;
- B. estimate both the number of units to be prepared and the number of hours it will take to prepare them; and
- C. control work assignments to ensure prompt completion.

The maintenance procedure for reoccupying vacant units relies on the prompt notification by management of the vacancy, fast and accurate inspection of the unit, ready availability of workers and materials, and good communication with those responsible for leasing the unit.

The Director of Housing Management has the ability to create special teams for vacancy turnaround or to hire contractors when that is required to maintain Housing Commission goals.

2.3 PREVENTIVE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

Preventive maintenance is part of the planned or scheduled maintenance program of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. The purpose of the scheduled maintenance program is to allow the Housing Commission to anticipate maintenance requirements and make sure the Housing Commission can address them in the most cost-effective manner. The preventive maintenance program focuses on the major systems that keep the properties operating. These systems include heating and air conditioning, electrical, life safety and plumbing.

A. General Operating Systems

The heart of any preventive maintenance program is a schedule that calls for the regular servicing of all systems. The development of this schedule begins with the identification of each system or item that must be checked and serviced, the date it must be serviced, and the individual responsible for the work. The servicing intervals and tasks for each system must be included in the schedule. The completion of all required tasks is considered a high priority for the Grand Rapids Housing Commission.

The systems covered by the preventive maintenance program include but are not limited to:

1. Catch basins
2. Compactors
3. Condensate pumps
4. Electric transformer and emergency generators
5. Elevator equipment
6. Emergency lighting
7. Exhaust fans
8. Exterior lights
9. Fire extinguishers and other life safety systems
10. Heating plants
11. Mechanical equipment and vehicles

12. Sanitary drains
13. Air conditioning equipment
14. Domestic water

A specific program will be developed for each system. This program shall include a list of the scheduled service maintenance for each system and the frequency and interval at which that service must be performed. The equipment and materials required to perform the service will be listed as well so that they will be on hand when needed. As assessment of the skills or licensing needed to perform the tasks will also be made to determine if an outside contractor must be used to perform the work. The preventive maintenance schedule must be updated each time a system is added, updated, or replaced.

B. Roof Repairs/Replacement

Maintenance of roofs requires regular inspections by knowledgeable personnel to ensure that there is no unauthorized access to roof surfaces and that there is good drainage, clear gutters and prompt discovery of any deficiencies.

The Director of Housing Management is responsible for the development of a roof maintenance plan that includes these features:

1. The type, area, and age of roof
2. Warranties and/or guarantees in effect
3. Company that installed the roof
4. Expected useful life of roof
5. History of maintenance and repair
6. Inspection schedule

The Housing Commission maintenance staff will usually undertake only minor roof repairs. Therefore there should be a list of approved roofing contractors to take on more serious problems for roofs no longer under warranty.

C. Vehicle/Equipment Maintenance

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will protect the investment it has made in vehicles and other motorized equipment by putting in place a comprehensive maintenance program. The vehicles and equipment to be covered include:

1. Cars, trucks and vans

2. Tractors
3. Bobcats
4. Snow blowers
5. Leaf blowers
6. Weed cutters
7. Lawn Mowers
8. Chain saws

The Director of Housing Management is responsible for the development of this plan which shall contain components for the minimal routine service as well as servicing for seasonal use. Serviceable components for each vehicle or piece of motorized equipment will be listed in the plan along with the type and frequency of service required.

The Director of Housing Management shall also maintain a system to ensure that any employee that operates a vehicle or piece of motorized equipment has the required license or certification.

D. Lead-Based Paint

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission is committed to controlling lead-based paint hazards in all its dwellings, especially family dwellings constructed before 1978. If any hazards are discovered, the Housing Commission will develop a plan to abate the hazard. The Director of Housing Management shall have the Housing Commission and responsibility to direct all activities associated with lead hazard control. The control plan will include such activities as:

1. Detecting the possible presence of lead paint;
2. protection of residents and workers from lead-based paint hazards;
3. surface protection of non-painted surfaces;
4. equipment use and care;
5. paint quality; and
6. method application.

Other responsibilities include directing training sessions, issuing special work orders, informing residents, responding to cases of children with elevated blood lead levels, correcting lead-based paint hazards on an emergency repair basis, and any other efforts that may be appropriate.

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission's plan to control such hazards is detailed in a risk assessment report and lead hazard control plan.

E. Life Safety Systems

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission shall have a comprehensive program for maintenance of life safety systems to ensure that they will be fully functional in the case of an emergency. The Director of Housing Management shall be responsible for the development and implementation of a schedule that includes the inspection, servicing and testing of this equipment. The equipment to be included in the plan includes the following:

1. Fire alarms and fire alarm systems
2. Fire extinguishers
3. Fire hoses
4. Emergency generators
5. Emergency lighting
6. Smoke detectors
7. Sprinkler systems

The plan will include the required testing and servicing as required by the manufacturer's recommendations. It will also include a determination of the most reliable and cost effective way to perform the work including the decision to hire a contractor.

2.4 INSPECTION PROGRAM

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission's goals of efficiency and cost-effectiveness are achieved through a carefully designed and rigorously implemented inspection program. This program calls for the inspection of all areas of the Housing Commission's facilities—the dwelling units, the grounds and building exteriors, and major service systems.

C. Dwelling Unit Inspections

The unit inspection system of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission has two primary goals;

1. To assure that all dwelling units comply with standards set by HUD and local codes; and
2. to assure that the staff of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission knows at all times the condition of each unit for which it is responsible.

The achievement of these goals may require more than the annual HUD required inspection. The Director of Housing Management is responsible for developing a unit inspection program that schedules inspections at the frequency required.

For all non-emergency inspections, the resident shall be given at least two (2) days written notice of the inspection.

The management staff shall perform the unit inspection program of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission. During each inspection, the staff shall perform specified preventive and routine maintenance tasks. Any other work items noted at the time of the inspection will be documented on the Grand Rapids Housing Commission inspection form. All uncompleted work items shall be converted to a work order within twenty-four hours of the completion of the inspection. The maintenance staff shall endeavor to complete all inspection-generated work items within 30 days of the inspection.

All maintenance staff is responsible for monitoring the condition of dwelling units. Whenever a maintenance staff member enters a dwelling unit for any purpose, such as completing a resident request for service or accompanying a contractor, he or she shall record on an inspection form any required work he or she sees while in the apartment. These work items shall also be converted to a service request within twenty-four hours of discovery.

D. Building and Grounds Inspections

Regular inspections of the property grounds and building exteriors are required to maintain the curb appeal of the property. This curb appeal is required to maintain the attractiveness of the property for both current and prospective residents. The inspection procedure will specify the desired condition of the areas to be inspected. This defined condition will include any HUD or locally required standards. The existence of these standards shall not prevent the Housing Commission from setting a higher standard that will make the property more competitive in the local market.

Building and grounds inspections must cover these areas:

1. Hallways
2. Stairwells
3. Community room and other common space such as kitchens or public restrooms
4. Laundry facilities
5. Lobbies
6. Common entries
7. Basements

8. Grounds
9. Porches or patios
10. Parking lots
11. Sidewalks and fences
12. Lawns, shrubs and trees
13. Trash compactors or collection areas
14. Building foundations

An inspection form will be developed for common areas and building exteriors and grounds. The staff member responsible for the inspection shall note all deficiencies on the form and ensure that these deficiencies are recorded on work orders within twenty-four hours of the inspection. The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will complete all inspection-generated work items within thirty (30) days of the inspection.

Nothing in this policy shall prevent any Grand Rapids Housing Commission staff member from reporting any needed work that is seen in the regular course of daily activities. Such work items shall be reported to the site manager of the appropriate property.

E. Systems Inspections

The regular inspection of all major systems is fundamental to a sound maintenance program. The major systems inspection program overlaps with the preventive maintenance program in some areas. To the extent that inspections, in addition to those required for scheduled service intervals, are needed, they will be a part of the inspection schedule. Any work items identified during an inspection shall be converted to a work order within twenty-four hours and completed within thirty (30) days.

2.5 SCHEDULED ROUTINE MAINTENANCE

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission includes in this work category all tasks that can be anticipated and put on a regular timetable for completion. Most of these routine tasks are those that contribute to the curb appeal and marketability of the property.

A. Pest Control/Extermination

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will make all efforts to provide a healthy and pest-free environment for its residents. The Housing Commission will determine which, if any, pests infest its properties and will then provide the best possible treatment for the eradication of those pests.

The Director of Housing Management will determine the most cost-effective way of delivering the treatments—whether by contractor or licensed Housing Commission personnel.

The extermination plan will begin with an analysis of the current condition at each property. The Director of Housing Management shall make sure that an adequate schedule for treatment is developed to address any existing infestation. Special attention shall be paid to cockroaches. The schedule will include frequency and locations of treatment. Different schedules may be required for each property.

Resident cooperation with the extermination plan is essential. All apartments in a building must be treated for the plan to be effective. Resident will be given information about the extermination program at the time of move-in. All residents will be informed before treatment. The notification will be in writing and will include instructions that describe how to prepare the unit for treatment. If necessary, the instructions shall be bilingual to properly notify the resident population.

B. Landscaping and Grounds

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will prepare a routine maintenance schedule for the maintenance of the landscaping and grounds of its properties that will ensure their continuing attractiveness and marketability.

Routine grounds maintenance includes numerous activities:

1. Litter control
2. Lawn care
3. Maintenance of driveways, sidewalks and parking lots
4. Care of flower and shrubbery beds and trees
5. Maintenance of playgrounds, benches and fences
6. Snow removal

The Director of Housing Management shall be responsible for the development of a routine maintenance schedule that shall include the following:

1. A clearly articulated standard of appearance for the grounds that acknowledges but is not limited to HUD and local code standards;
2. A list of tasks that are required to maintain that standard and the frequency with which the tasks must be performed;
3. The equipment, materials, and supplies required to perform the tasks and a schedule for their procurement; and

4. A separate snow removal plan including a schedule for preparing equipment for the season and the procurement of other necessary materials and supplies.

C. Building Exteriors and Interior Common Areas

1. Lobbies
2. Hallways and stairwells
3. Elevators
4. Public restrooms
5. Lighting fixtures
6. Common rooms and community spaces
7. Exterior porches and railings
8. Building walls
9. Windows

The Director of Housing Management is responsible for the development of a routine maintenance schedule for building exterior and interior common areas. The schedule shall be based on the following:

1. A clearly articulated standard of appearance for the building
2. A list of tasks required to maintain that standard
3. The frequency with which the tasks must be performed
4. A list of materials, equipment and supplies required to perform the tasks

D. Interior Painting

The appearance and condition of the paint within each unit is important to unit condition and resident satisfaction. Accordingly, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission will develop a plan to ensure that interior paint in resident dwelling units is satisfactorily maintained.

As part of this plan painting standards will be developed that include:

1. Surface preparation
2. Protection of non-painted surfaces
3. Color and finish

4. Paint quality
5. Methods of application approved
6. Lead paint testing and abatement if required

The plan will set out the conditions for the consideration of a painting request. These standards include the period of time that has elapsed since the last time the unit was painted. Alternatives for performance of the work will be included including the conditions under which a resident will be allowed to paint his or her own unit.

2.6 RESIDENT ON-DEMAND SERVICE

This category of work refers to all resident generated work requests that fall into no other category. These are non-emergency calls made by residents seeking maintenance service. These requests for service cannot be planned in advance or responded to before the resident calls.

It is the policy of the Grand Rapids Housing Commission to complete these work requests within seven (7) days. However, unless the request is an emergency or entails work that compromises the habitability of the unit, these requests will not be given a priority above scheduled routine and preventative maintenance. By following this procedure, the Grand Rapids Housing Commission believes it can achieve both good resident service and a maintenance system that completes the most important work first and in the most cost-effective manner.

3.0 CONTRACTING FOR SERVICES

The Grand Rapids Housing Commission will contract for maintenance services when it is in the best interests of the Housing Commission to do so. When the employees of the Housing Commission have the time and skills to perform the work at hand, they will be the first choice to perform a given task. When the employees for the Housing Commission have the skills to do the work required, but there is more work than there is time available to complete it, the Housing Commission will determine whether it is more cost effective to use a contractor to complete the work. If the Housing Commission staff does not have the skills to complete the work, a contractor will be chosen. In the last instance, the Housing Commission will decide whether it will be cost effective to train a staff member to complete the work.

Once the decision has been made to hire a contractor, the process set out in the Grand Rapids Housing Commission Procurement Policy will be used. These procedures vary depending on the expected dollar amount of the contract. The Director of Housing Management will work with the approved Procurement Policy to facilitate the contract award. The Director will be responsible for the contribution of the Maintenance Department to this process. The most important aspect of the bid documents will be the specifications or statement of work. The clearer the specifications the easier it will be for the Housing Commission to get the work product it requires.