



WAGE AND HOUR DIVISION
UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

ETA Housing Safety and Health Checklist

This Housing Safety and Health Checklist may be used as an aid by agricultural employers, farm labor contractors, and others providing housing subject to requirements under the Migrant and Seasonal Agricultural Worker Protection Act (MSPA) or the H-2A visa program. The standards below are applicable to housing that was completed or under construction prior to April 3, 1980, or was under a signed contract for construction prior to March 4, 1980. For housing constructed after this time, please see the [Housing Safety and Health Checklist for the OSHA Standards](#).

Housing Site – 20 CFR 654.404

- Adequate drainage
- Located away from conditions that create or could create offensive odors, noise, traffic, or similar hazards
- Grounds free from debris, poisonous plants, uncontrolled weeds or brush
- Site provides space for recreation reasonably related to the size of the facility and the type of occupancy

Water Supply – 20 CFR 654.405

- Adequate and convenient water supply that meets standards of the State Health authority
- Cold water taps available within 100 feet of each living unit (unless water is provided in the unit)
- Adequate drainage facilities for overflow or spillage
- Individual drinking cups used

Excreta and Liquid Waste Disposal – 20 CFR 654.406

- Facilities provided for effective disposal of sewage
- Raw or treated liquid waste not allowed to accumulate on the ground surface
- Connected to public sewer systems where available; privies or portable toilets provided where public sewers are not available
- Provided facilities in compliance with requirements of the State health authority

Housing – 20 CFR 654.407

- Housing is structurally sound, in good repair, maintained in sanitary condition, and provides protection against the elements
- Floors made of smooth, rigid, cleanable surface and prevent entrance of water
- 50 sq. ft. or more per person for sleeping purposes in housing with single beds or in family units
- 40 sq. ft. or more per person for sleeping purposes in housing with double bunk beds
- 60 sq. ft. or more per person for combined cooking, eating, and sleeping purposes
- Housing used by families have separate or partitioned sleeping areas for parents made of rigid materials and installed to provide reasonable privacy, where there are children over 6 years old

- Separate sleeping facilities provided for each sex in non-family groups
- Separate sleeping facilities provided for each family
- Adequate and separate facilities to hang clothes and store personal effects for each person or family
- Ceiling height is 7 ft. for more than half of the floor area in each living unit
- Each habitable room (not including partitioned areas) has at least one window or skylight opening directly to the outdoors
- Window space is 10% or more of usable floor space
- Total openable space is at least 45% of the minimum window area required unless other comparable mechanical ventilation is available

Screening – 20 CFR 654.408

- Openings in shelter screened with not less than 16-mesh materials
- Any screen doors present are in good repair, tight fitting, and equipped with self-closing devices

Heating – 20 CFR 654.409

- Operable, properly installed heating equipment in living quarters and service rooms
- When the temperature falls below 68°F, heating equipment is capable of maintaining a temperature of 68°F in living quarters or service rooms
- Any stoves or other sources of heat utilizing combustible fuel must be installed and vented to prevent fire hazards and a dangerous concentration of gases
- No portable heaters used other than those operated by electricity

Solid or liquid fuel stove:

- Where used in a room with wooden or combustible flooring, stove is on a concrete slab, insulated metal sheet, or other fireproof material on the floor under each stove, extending at least 18 inches beyond the perimeter of the base of the stove.
- Only used in a room with proper insulation or fireproofing on walls, and ceiling within at least 18" of stove
- Heating pipes of fireproof material; stovepipes have vented metal collars installed through openings
- Any automatic controls cut off the fuel supply upon the failure or interruption of the flame or ignition, or whenever a predetermined safe temperature or pressure is exceeded

Electricity and Lighting – 20 CFR 654.410

- Electricity provided with all wiring and lighting fixtures in safe condition
- Adequate ceiling or wall-type light fixtures in all rooms
- At least one electrical outlet provided in each living room
- Adequate lighting for yard and pathways to common-use facilities

Toilets – 20 CFR 654.411

- Toilets constructed, located, and maintained in a manner to prevent nuisance or public health hazard
- Water closets or privy or outhouse seats for each sex provided in a ratio of at least 1 unit for each 15 occupants
- Common use facilities have a minimum of 1 water closet or privy seat for each sex
- Urinals constructed of non-absorbent materials

- Urinals substituted for men's toilets in the proper ratio of 1 urinal or 24 inches of trough-type urinal for 1 toilet seat up to a maximum of 1/3 of the required toilet seats, when applicable
- Separate toilet facilities provided for each sex (except in family units)
- Toilets facilities for each sex in the same building separated by a solid wall from wall to ceiling/roof
- Toilets marked "men" and "women" and in native language of occupants
- Adequate and accessible supply of toilet tissue (with holders) provided in common-use toilet facilities
- Common use toilets and privies or outhouses well-lighted, ventilated, clean, and sanitary
- Toilet facilities located not more than 200 ft. from living units
- Privies or outhouses located at least 50 ft. from living, cooking, or dining areas
- Privy or outhouse structures and pits are fly-tight and have adequate capacity for the required seats

Bathing, Laundry, and Hand-washing – 20 CFR 654.412

- Hot and cold water under pressure provided for bathing and hand-washing
- Bathing and hand-washing facilities in sanitary condition
- Bathing and hand-washing facilities located within 200 ft. of each living unit
- Showerheads provided at a ratio of 1 per every 15 persons and not less than 3' apart
- Shower area includes at least 9 sq. ft. of floor space per unit
- Adequate, dry dressing space in common-use facilities
- Shower floors constructed of nonabsorbent, nonskid materials with proper drains
- Separate shower facilities provided for each sex (except in family units)
- Shower facilities for each sex in the same building separated by a solid wall from wall to ceiling/roof
- Shower facilities for each sex in the same building marked "men" and "women" and in native language of occupants
- Lavatories/wash basins provided in a ratio of at least 1 per every 15 persons
- Laundry facilities with hot and cold water under pressure
- Laundry trays or tubs provided in the ratio of at least 1 per 25 persons (or washing machines in the ratio of 1 per 50 persons plus 1 laundry tray per 100 persons)

Cooking and Eating Facilities – 20 CFR 654.413

Individual and Family Units

- Space or equipment provided for cooking and eating
- Cookstove or hot plate with at least two burners provided
- Adequate food storage shelves and counter for food preparation
- Provisions for mechanical refrigeration at 45°F or less
- Table and chairs or equivalent seating and eating arrangements proportional to capacity of the unit
- Adequate lighting and ventilation

Common Use Facilities

- Common facility, room, or building separate from sleeping facilities for cooking and eating
- Stoves or hot plates with at least 2 burners provided in ratio of 1 to 10 persons, or 1 to 2 families
- Adequate food storage shelves and counter for food preparation
- Provisions for mechanical refrigeration at 45°F or less
- Adequate tables and chairs or equivalent seating

- Adequate sinks with hot and cold water under pressure
- Adequate lighting and ventilation
- Floors made of nonabsorbent, easily cleaned materials

Central Mess Facilities

- In proportion to the capacity of the housing
- Separate from sleeping quarters
- Facilities, equipment, and/or operation in accordance with applicable state codes
- Walls in all cooking and food preparation areas of nonabsorbent, easily cleaned material
- Walls adjacent to cooking areas of fire-resistant material

Garbage and Other Refuse – 20 CFR 654.414

- Fly-tight, durable, clean 20-gallon+ refuse containers provided adjacent to each housing unit
- Fly-tight, durable, clean 20-gallon+ refuse containers provided in a ratio of 1 per every 15 persons
- Refuse collected at least twice per week, or more often if necessary
- Disposal of refuse is in accordance with State and local law

Insect and Rodent Control – 20 CFR 654.415

- Housing and facilities are free of insects, rodents, and other vermin

Sleeping Facilities – 20 CFR 654.416

- Comfortable beds, cots, or bunks provided for each person
- Mattresses and bedding provided are clean and sanitary
- Triple deck bunks not provided for use
- Double bunks have a minimum of 27" between them and the top bunk is 36" or more from ceiling
- Double beds used only for family accommodations

Fire, Safety, and First Aid – 20 CFR 654.417

- Buildings used for sleeping or eating purposes meet applicable State or local fire and safety laws
- Housing for less than 10 persons and family housing of one-story construction have two means of fire escape provided, one of which is a readily accessible window with an openable space of not less than 24 × 24 inches
- Sleeping quarters for 10 or more persons, central dining facilities, and common rooms have at least two different doors in separate parts of the room or facility for fire escape
- Second floor sleeping rooms and common rooms have a stairway and a permanently affixed ladder or second stairway
- Sleeping and common rooms above the second story comply with State and local fire and building codes
- Working fire extinguishers provided and are readily accessible, less than 100 ft. from housing unit
- First aid facilities equivalent to the 16-unit first aid kit recommended by the Red Cross provided and readily accessible
- Required first aid facilities provided in the ratio of 1 per 50 persons
- Volatile or flammable liquids (except household products) not stored in or adjacent to living quarters

Pesticides and/or toxic chemicals not stored in housing area

MSPA General Obligations – MSPA Section 203(a), 29 U.S.C. 1823(a)

The person who owns or controls the housing facility complies with all applicable Federal, State, and/or local standards for such housing

H-2A General Obligations – 20 CFR 655.135(e)

The employer complies with all applicable Federal, State, and/or local standards for the housing facility

This publication is for general information and is not to be considered in the same light as official statements of position contained in the regulations.