



## Session 2 of the HOPWA NSPIRE Notice

FR-6469-N-01

National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate, Carbon Monoxide Detection Requirements, and Smoke Alarm Requirements: Implementation Guidance and Inspection Standards for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS Program

January 30, 2026

2:30 – 4:00 pm Eastern Time



# Presenters and Panelists

## **Presenters: The Cloudburst Group**

Steve Ellis, Senior Analyst

## **Panelists: HUD's Office of HIV Housing (OHH)**

Lisa Steinhauer, Senior Program Specialist

# Agenda

- Continue reviewing FR-6469-N-01, including:
  - Defining important terminology relevant to NSPIRE and implementation.
  - Reviewing changes to smoke alarm and carbon monoxide (CO) requirements for HOPWA-assisted units
  - Sharing some best practices to assist with operationalizing the materials
  - Outlining next steps to prepare for implementing NSPIRE

## Disclaimer

We will **not** be reviewing materials presented from the first webinar, **nor** will we be reviewing the HOPWA NSPIRE standards during this webinar, only reviewing FR-6469-N-01.

- This includes not reviewing the new standards for smoke alarm and CO requirements.

## Reminder: Compliance Extension

- Per FR-6469-N-01, the NSPIRE compliance date for the HOPWA program is 180 days after publication of the Notice to allow time for grantees and project sponsors to implement the changes.
- The HOPWA NSPIRE compliance date is **February 2, 2026**.

# Reminder: Dates Applicable to FR-6469-N-01

- December 27, 2022 - HOPWA grantees were expected to comply with CO detection requirements.
- December 29, 2024 - HOPWA grantees were expected to comply with smoke alarm requirements.
- February 2, 2026- HOPWA grantees are expected to comply with the HOPWA NSPIRE standards no later than February 2, 2026.
  - Grantees do not need to wait until February 2, 2026 to update their policies and procedures and begin inspecting units under these standards.
    - Grantees should not implement NSPIRE until their policies and procedures are updated.
    - If implemented early, NSPIRE should be implemented for all applicable eligible activities and for the entire service area.
    - The grantee must document the chosen compliance date in program records.

## HOPWA NSPIRE Standards - Continued

### Lead-Based Paint and Compliance with State and Local Codes

# NSPIRE Standards - Lead-Based Paint

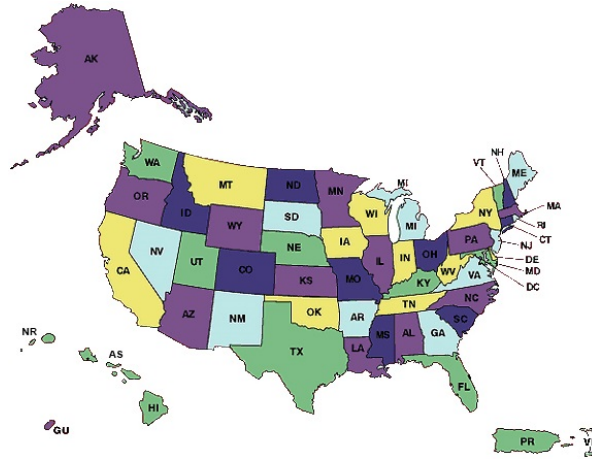


# Lead-Based Paint

- Per 24 CFR 5.703(e)(2) and 24 CFR 574.635, HOPWA grantees and project sponsors shall **continue** to comply with the requirements and timeframes in [24 CFR Part 35](#) (the Lead Paint Regulations).
  - The NSPIRE rule did not alter any of the lead-based paint requirements in part 35 for the HOPWA program.
- Reminder, lead paint regulations, including a possible [lead-based paint visual assessment](#), apply to target housing.
- “Target housing” is
  - A unit of any size that was constructed **prior** to 1978, **AND**
  - Children under the age of six reside or are expected to reside in the unit.

# NSPIRE Standards -

## Compliance with State and Local Codes



## Compliance with State and Local Codes

- In accordance with 24 CFR 5.703(f), the NSPIRE standards for the condition of HUD housing do not supersede State and local codes (such as fire, mechanical, plumbing, carbon monoxide, property maintenance, or residential code requirements).
  - If your local city, county, or state has more stringent requirements, those requirements should be followed in place of NSPIRE standards.
- As provided in 24 CFR 574.310(b)(1), all HOPWA-assisted units must also comply with State or local housing codes to pass an inspection.
  - During the inspection of HOPWA-assisted units, HOPWA grantees must verify that the housing complies with all applicable State and local housing codes, licensing requirements, and any other applicable state or local requirements regarding the condition of the structure and the operation of the housing.

## Compliance with State and Local Codes (continued)

- State and local codes/laws are not included in HOPWA NSPIRE standards; therefore, compliance is not part of the determination of whether a unit passes NSPIRE standards, but it is part of the determination of whether assistance can be provided.
  - Therefore, programs will need to add any code requirements to their process/checklist and notify the landlord/owner of whether found deficiencies are NSPIRE or code-related.
- HOPWA programs should reach out to your local code enforcement office, Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program, local housing legal assistance organization, and/or local HUD CPD Office for more information on local codes and laws that would affect inspections.

# Clarification on Standards for Single Room Occupancy (SRO) Dwellings

# Clarification on Standards for SRO Dwellings - Defining SRO

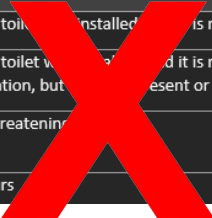
- A Single Room Occupancy (SRO) is an eligible type of HOPWA housing subject to the NSPIRE rule and the housing quality standards at 24 CFR 574.310(b).
- SRO means a single-room dwelling unit that provides **private** living and sleeping space for the **exclusive** use of the occupant and contains no sanitary facilities or food preparation facilities (or contains either, but not both) types of facilities.
  - An SRO unit may not be occupied by more than one individual.
- To clarify, SROs are not:
  - Shared housing - For example, a unit where a family rents one bedroom in a 2, 3, etc. apartment or house for their private use while sharing the kitchen, bathroom, living room, etc.
  - Zero bedroom - For example, a unit where the unit (private space) contains the living/sleeping space **AND** a bathroom **AND** a food preparation area.

## Clarification on Standards for SRO Dwellings - Affirmative Requirements

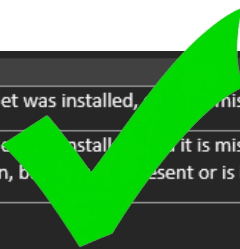
- SROs are only required to comply with unit affirmative requirements and standards to the extent that those components exist within the unit.
  - Please note that all Inside and Outside affirmative requirements still apply.
  - For example, if an SRO does not have a kitchen/food preparation area, the unit is not required to comply with affirmative requirements or Unit standards pertaining to kitchens.
    - But Inside affirmative requirements and standards continue to apply; therefore, you will inspect any shared kitchen/food preparation areas under Inside standards.
- However, if the SRO **unit** has sanitary facilities and/or a kitchen, the affirmative requirements and standards do apply to those components.
  - For example, if an SRO has a private bathroom for the family, the bathroom must meet unit affirmative requirements and standards pertaining to bathrooms.

# Clarification on Standards for SRO Dwellings - Standards

- For example, if an SRO does not have a private bathroom for the family, the SRO does not need to meet **Unit** NSPIRE standards but will need to meet **Inside** NSPIRE standards.



Deficiency 1 – Toilet: Unit	
Deficiency	Only 1 toilet was installed, but it is missing.
Deficiency Criteria	Only 1 toilet was installed, but it is missing (i.e., evidence of prior installation, but not present or is incomplete).
Health and Safety Determination	Life-Threatening
Correction Timeframe	24 hours



Deficiency 1 – Toilet: Inside	
Deficiency	Only 1 toilet was installed, but it is missing.
Deficiency Criteria	Only 1 toilet was installed, but it is missing (i.e., evidence of prior installation, but not present or is incomplete).
Health and Safety Determination	Moderate

# Variation Allowability

# Variation Allowability - Process

- HOPWA **grantees** have the option to propose variations for housing that is unable to meet the affirmative requirements in 24 CFR 5.703 and/or the HOPWA NSPIRE standards.
- Variations must be approved by HUD **before** HOPWA assistance can be provided to a specific housing **unit** covered by a proposed variation.
- Grantees must maintain a record of the approved variation and document when the approved variation is used in the family file.
  - Please note that an approval is only for a specific housing unit, meaning that a grantee will need to seek approval for each specific unit; there will not be a blanket waiver for a certain situation or special housing type.
  - Once a variation has been approved for a specific housing unit, a grantee will not need to seek approval from HUD for that specific housing unit again unless the grantee wants to propose a different variation.

## Variation Allowability - Requests

- To apply for a variation, **grantees** must send an email with the following information to the Community Planning and Development Director of the HUD Field Office serving the grantee:
  - The grantee's name, title, and contact information.
  - Written justification for why a variation to the affirmative requirements and/or the HOPWA NSPIRE standards is required to provide HOPWA housing assistance **and how the variation will continue to make available housing that is functionally adequate, operable, and free of health and safety hazards.**
  - The specific units covered by the variation including the number of housing units, the family size the unit is able to support, and the type of housing.
    - The address of the unit should not be included in the request.
  - Proposed updated policies and procedures documenting the housing variation and the housing inspection standards to be used for the proposed variation.

# Variation Allowability - Overview

- Any variation request must come from the grantee
- The variation is rooted in justifying why a variation to the affirmative requirements in 24 CFR 5.703 and/or the HOPWA NSPIRE standards is required to provide HOPWA housing assistance **AND**
- Grantees must still explain how any variation will continue to make available housing that is functionally adequate, operable, and free of health and safety hazards.
- The variation cannot be used until approved.
- The variation is only for specific units; this is not a blanket variation request.
- A draft update to policies and procedures must be created and submitted documenting the housing variation and the housing inspection standards to be used for the proposed variation.

# Inspection Process

# Inspection Process for HOPWA NSPIRE Standards

- The inspection process for both initial and annual inspections should follow the same process to ensure that all HOPWA-assisted households live in safe, habitable dwellings.
- The party responsible for the inspection (grantee, project sponsor, contracted third-party vendor) will complete inspections of the inspectable areas to include items and components located inside the building, outside the building, and within the unit to ensure that the property meets all NSPIRE affirmative requirements and standards.
- Please note that between initial and annual inspections, the unit must still meet all standards and affirmative requirements.
  - If the program is notified of a specific issue that does not pass HOPWA NSPIRE standards between regular inspections, only that specific issue has to be addressed; a full re-inspection is not required.

## Inspection Process - Notification

- If deficiencies are found during an inspection, the party responsible must provide notification to the landlord/owner of the deficiencies and the corrective timeframe to address the issues for the unit to begin or continue receiving HOPWA housing assistance.
- Please note that the program's notification requirements should be outlined in policies and procedures. Best practices include:
  - A phone call to the landlord/owner for any affirmative requirement issues at initial inspection or life-threatening deficiencies during any inspection.
  - Following up via letter even if a phone call has been made.
  - Making sure all written notifications include how to address the deficiencies, how to notify the program when deficiencies are addressed, and information on abatement.

# Inspection Process - Passing Inspection

- For a unit to pass an inspection and be eligible to receive HOPWA funding, all affirmative requirements and any deficiencies (life-threatening, severe, or moderate) must be met and/or corrected within the corrective timeframe (including any approved extension).
  - Remember, extensions are not possible for life-threatening deficiencies.
  - For units that are not currently receiving assistance, HOPWA grantees should establish policies and procedures for when HOPWA funding can begin assisting a unit that has a failed affirmative requirement or life-threatening deficiency vs. correcting a severe or moderate deficiency.
- HOPWA assistance cannot be provided to a **new** unit that does not meet the affirmative requirements or has an identified life-threatening deficiency prior to a family moving into the unit.
  - Please note that even if the NSPIRE standard associated with the affirmative requirement gives a longer corrective timeframe, assistance cannot be provided to a **new** unit if the affirmative requirement is not met.

## Inspection Process - Passing Inspection (continued)

- Deficiencies that are not corrected within the correction timeframe or approved extension would be cause for a unit to fail the inspection and no longer be eligible to continue receiving HOPWA funding.
  - HOPWA funding **can** continue to be provided to occupied HOPWA-assisted units during a correction timeframe or approved extension while a non-life-threatening deficiency or affirmative requirement is being addressed.

# Inspection Process - Virtual Inspections

- Grantees and project sponsors are allowed to utilize virtual inspections to meet HOPWA NSPIRE inspection requirements; however, staff conducting inspections must be trained on how to conduct HOPWA NSPIRE inspections virtually.
- HOPWA NSPIRE inspections may be conducted on behalf of a grantee or project sponsor by a **proxy** using video streaming technology; in these cases, there must be a written agreement kept on file by the grantee and project sponsor.
  - The proxy can be the landlord, property representative, tenant, or any adult associated with the eventual tenancy of the unit.
- The grantee must ensure there are written policies and procedures established for virtual inspections, and staff are properly trained before virtual inspections occur.
  - More guidance on this topic coming soon!

# Frequency of Inspections

## Frequency of Inspections - Policies

- As a reminder, all housing assisted with the following HOPWA activities must be inspected prior to a family moving and HOPWA funds being used:
  - Acquisition, rehabilitation, conversion, lease, and repair of facilities to provide housing and services (24 CFR 574.300(b)(3));
  - New construction (24 CFR 574.300(b)(4));
  - Project or tenant-based rental assistance (24 CFR 574.300(b)(5)); and
  - Operating costs (24 CFR 574.300(b)(8))
- The grantee must also establish policies and procedures that provide reasonable assurance that each housing unit continues to meet the HOPWA NSPIRE standards throughout the period for which the grantee expends HOPWA funds with respect to that unit.
- Accordingly, HUD recommends that grantees and project sponsors conduct inspections on an annual basis.

# Paying for Inspections

## Paying for Inspections - NSPIRE

- HOPWA grantees and project sponsors may bill staff time and costs associated with preparing for, scheduling, collecting, completing, and following up with landlords and assisted families about inspections from the HOPWA housing assistance budget line for the type of housing assistance being provided.
  - For example, staff conducting inspections for TBRA should bill their time training, preparing for, and conducting NSPIRE inspections to the TBRA budget line item; staff conducting inspections for Leasing should bill their time training, preparing for, and conducting NSPIRE inspections to the Leasing budget line item.
- Staff time associated with policy and procedure updates may be billed to administrative costs.

## Paying for Inspections - Necessary NSPIRE Tools

- Costs for supplies necessary to conduct NSPIRE inspections should also be charged to the housing budget line item for the type of housing assistance being provided.
  - Recommended Necessary Tools:
    - Data collection device (e.g., checklist, computer, cell phone, iPad)
    - Camera (to record pictures or videos of any deficiencies) if not part of the data collection device
    - Flashlight
    - Tape measure
    - Ambient temperature measuring device
    - Two-prong outlet tester
    - Ground-fault circuit interrupter (GFCI) outlet tester
    - Telescoping pole or long stick to test smoke and CO detectors

## Paying for Inspections - Optional NSPIRE Tools

- Costs for supplies necessary to conduct NSPIRE inspections should also be charged to the housing budget line item for the type of housing assistance being provided.
  - Recommended Optional Tools:
    - Telescoping mirror
    - Combustible-gas detector device
    - Gloves
    - Masks
    - Other protective equipment

## Paying for Inspections - CO and Smoke Alarm Requirements

- For compliance with CO detection and smoke alarm requirements, HOPWA grantees and project sponsors may bill staff time spent conducting landlord outreach and education on the CO detection and smoke alarm requirements, performing inspections to assess for compliance with the requirements, and/or assessing for and self-certifying compliance with the requirements to the applicable housing assistance line item.
- Staff time associated with policy and procedure updates may be billed to administrative costs.

Clarification on Carbon Monoxide Alarms or Detectors

And

Clarification on Qualifying Smoke Alarms

# Clarification on Carbon Monoxide Alarms or Detectors

- This Notice updates the standards for CO detection in HOPWA-assisted units from the International Fire Code to NSPIRE standards.
- For housing activities subject to NSPIRE, grantees and project sponsors should apply the HOPWA NSPIRE Standards for CO detection and screen as part of their inspection.
- For housing activities not subject to NSPIRE (STRMU and PHP), grantees and project sponsors should still apply the HOPWA NSPIRE standards for CO Alarms, but may rely on the self-certification of the assisted family or owner that the dwelling unit meets the CO detection requirements.
  - Please note that any State or local law that imposes more **stringent** standards relating to the installation and maintenance of CO alarms or detectors in housing should be followed instead of NSPIRE standards.

## Clarification on Qualifying Smoke Alarms

- HOPWA grantees and project sponsors must ensure that qualifying smoke alarms are installed as required in all HOPWA-assisted units.
- For housing activities subject to NSPIRE, grantees and project sponsors should apply the HOPWA NSPIRE Standards for smoke alarms and screen as part of their inspection.
- For housing activities not subject to NSPIRE (STRMU and PHP), grantees and project sponsors should still apply the HOPWA NSPIRE standards for smoke alarms, but may rely on the self-certification of the assisted family or owner that the dwelling unit meets the smoke alarm requirements.
- Please note that any State or local law that imposes more **stringent** standards relating to the installation and maintenance of CO alarms or detectors in housing should be followed instead of NSPIRE standards.

# Clarification on Inspections for STRMU and PHP

# Clarification on Inspections for STRMU and PHP - Information

- Neither the final NSPIRE Rule nor HOPWA regulations require housing quality inspections for short-term rent, mortgage, and utility payments (STRMU) or permanent housing placement (PHP).
  - Units assisted with only STRMU or PHP do not need to meet NSPIRE affirmative requirements or HOPWA NSPIRE standards.
- However, HOPWA grantees must ensure that units assisted with STRMU or PHP meet carbon monoxide detection and smoke alarm requirements.
  - Remember, grantees may rely on the self-certification of the assisted family or owner that the dwelling unit meets the smoke alarm requirements.
  - Best practice would include having a form with specific elements to verify that CO and smoke alarm standards are met.

## Next Steps

# Next Steps for Implementation of HOPWA NSPIRE Standards

- Read and study [FR-6469-N-01 National Standards for the Physical Inspection of Real Estate, Carbon Monoxide Detection Requirements, and Smoke Alarm Requirements: Implementation Guidance and Inspection Standards for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS Program](#)
- Read and study the HOPWA NSPIRE standards as found in [Attachment to Docket No. FR-6469-N-01: HOPWA NSPIRE Standards](#)
- Reach out to the HOPWA AAQ with questions
- More information coming soon!

# HOPWA Technical Assistance and Ask-A-Question

## Get Assistance!

HOPWA Technical Assistance (TA)

- HUD Exchange at: <https://www.hudexchange.info/program-support/technical-assistance/>

## Get Answers!

Submit a question to the HOPWA Ask-A-Question (AAQ) desk

- Grantees and Project Sponsors may ask HOPWA-related questions through the HOPWA AAQ: [HOPWA Ask A Question \(AAQ\) Portal](#)

# Final Questions

