



## What happens during a residential rental inspection?

Public Safety or Inspection Department representatives will meet the owner/agent at a scheduled time on the property. Below are some of the items inspected and basic requirements. For more information, please review the IPMC and City website.

**Smoke Detectors** – must be located in the hallway, basement, on all levels of the building, and in each bedroom.

**Carbon Monoxide Detectors** – required if there are fuel-fire appliances (gas stove, fireplace, water heater, furnace) and/or an attached garage.

**Interior Finishes** – walls/doors must be free of holes/breaks; flooring/ stairs must be securely fastened with no trip hazards; handrails must be securely attached to the walls where stairs are located; and premises without infestation.

**Proper Egress** – bedrooms, basement bedrooms must have a proper exit window, windows must open. Double-keyed deadbolt doors are prohibited.

**Mechanical Hazards** – bathrooms must have either natural or mechanical ventilation; no storage can be located within three (3) feet of any gas appliance. Water heaters must have a drop pipe (PRV).

**Plumbing Hazards** – Plumbing fixtures must be working and draining properly with tempered water.

**Electrical** – each room must have two properly grounded electrical receptacles; laundry and bathrooms must each have one GFCI receptacle. Covers must be on all junction boxes, outlets and switches; the service panel must be accessible for all occupants; and there can be no over-use of extension cords.

**Exterior Structure** – exterior staircases must have guard rails; screen doors must be self-closing; windows must be screened, unbroken, and free of peeling paint; the foundation and chimney must be in good condition; the site may not have junk, inoperable vehicles or weeds; accessory structures/fencing must be in good condition.

**How many people can live in a rental unit?**  
The number of people allowed in a rental unit is determined during the inspection based on the square footage of each of bedroom or allowed sleeping area.

**What if the inspection finds that items need correction?**

Corrections may be made during the inspection (i.e. bring batteries) or later. If the unit substantially complies, the owner/agent may complete and return an Affidavit of Completion form, stating corrections have been made or will be made by a specific date. In such case, a Provisional Rental Unit Permit will be temporarily issued.

**When will I get a Rental Permit?**

A Rental Permit is mailed when the unit passes the inspection or upon receipt of the Affidavit of Completion. (see above).

*Rental permits can be revoked for noncompliance.*



# St. Joseph

CITY OF

## RESIDENTIAL RENTAL REGISTRATION PROGRAM

## INFORMATIONAL GUIDE

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### **Why have a residential rental program?**

The purpose of the Residential Rental Inspection Program, authorized by Chapter 8, Article VI of the City of St. Joseph's Code of Ordinances, is to safeguard and preserve decent, safe and sanitary rental housing within the City and to protect persons entering or renting them by providing for a regular and comprehensive system of inspection. Through such inspections and/or owner certifications, substandard conditions can be identified and corrected.

The City also adopted the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) in Chapter 8, Art VI, which is updated from time to time. The IPMC regulates minimum maintenance requirements for existing buildings and including basic equipment, light, ventilation, heating, sanitation and fire safety. It helps to regulate the safe use of existing structures with the interest in the social, economic, and safety of the community.

### **How do I register or find additional information?**

Application forms are available on the website [www.sjcity.com](http://www.sjcity.com) under "Forms & Permits" on the main page and under "Residential Rental Programs and Permits".

### **When do I have to register a rental?**

Any time a residential unit is going to be rented to a non-family member, it must be registered.

### **I just bought a property that is already being rented. What do I do?**

As the new owner, you need to complete a new Rental Registration Application and submit it to the Inspection Department within ten days of buying the property.

### **I don't live in the area, can I still rent the property?**

Yes; however, a local agent must be listed on the application.

### **How often are inspections performed?**

Inspections are completed biennially (every 2 years) during the month the unit was originally registered. Inspection times are scheduled with the owner/agent.

### **What happens if I don't register my rental?**

Unfortunately, failure to register a rental property or advertising for rent a property that does not have a permit is a civil infraction punishable by fines starting at \$1,000.00. The City uses this method of enforcement when other avenues for compliance have not worked.

### **What if I stop renting a unit?**

Please contact the Inspection Department for the simple steps to close the rental file.

### **Are there different types of rental programs?**

Yes, there are two types of rental permits: rentals having rental periods of one month or more, which is allowed in all residential districts, and short-term rentals which rent for periods of less than one month. Short-term rentals are not allowed in all residential districts. Please contact the Inspection Department for additional information regarding short-term rentals.

### **Where can I have a short-term rental?**

Since 2013, short-term rentals are allowed under certain conditions in only the R-3 Multiple-Family and the W Water Recreation Districts and, at a minimum, require a Conditional Use Permit. In January 2024, short-term rentals became allowed in the D Downtown District with a Conditional Use Permit. Short-Term Rental Certificates that are not renewed for rentals in these districts will require new applications and a Conditional Use Permit.

Compliant existing properties with a valid Short-Term Rental Permit in the R-1 or R-2 Single Family and Two-Family Residential Districts are allowed to continue as a nonconforming use. If the Permit lapses, it cannot be reestablished. Please contact the Inspection Department for additional guidance regarding Short-Term rentals.

### **What are the fees?**

The City establishes fees to help cover the cost of providing certain services. Rental program fees include the following:

- Initial Registration Application
- Biennial Inspection of each rental unit
- Renewal of expired Rental Certificate
  - Less than 30 days:
  - Between 31 - 60 days:
  - Greater than 61 days:
- Missed inspection appointment fee
- Reinspection fee, if necessary
- Failure to return affidavit before deadline
- Conditional Use Permit Application for Short-Term Rental