



THE CHICAGO LOW-INCOME HOUSING TRUST FUND

CLIHTF

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To: CLIHTF Property Owner Participant

From: The Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund

Date: 10/28/2024

Subject: Landlord Safety Requirements

Smoke Alarms

Chicago has several requirements for smoke detectors, including:

Number of alarms: There must be at least one smoke alarm on each level of a multi-story home or apartment, including the basement and attic. Apartment buildings must also have a smoke alarm at the top of each shared indoor stairway.

Location: Smoke alarms should be installed on the ceiling, at least 4 inches from a wall, and within 15 feet of any bedroom. They should not be placed within 10 feet of cooking appliances, 3 feet of a bathroom entrance, or 4 inches from where the ceiling meets the wall.

Battery type: New and replacement smoke alarms must have a 10-year sealed battery. Existing smoke alarms can remain in place if they are less than 10 years old from the date of manufacture.

Testing: Smoke alarms should be tested monthly.

Replacement: Smoke alarms should be replaced every 10 years.

Escape plan: A family should practice their escape route at least twice a year.

Carbon Monoxide

The City of Chicago requires carbon monoxide detectors in homes and buildings that have a potential source of carbon monoxide:

- **Single-family homes**

Homes with a fuel-burning appliance, such as a furnace, boiler, water heater, stove, or oven, must have a carbon monoxide detector within 40 feet of all sleeping areas.

- **Multi-family dwellings**

Apartment buildings with a basement-located fossil fuel-burning boiler must have a carbon monoxide detector in the room with the central heating unit. Apartments with a fossil fuel-burning heating plant, such as a portable furnace or space heater, must have a carbon monoxide detector within 40 feet of all sleeping areas.

- **Homes connected to a garage**

Homes with a door leading directly to a garage without independent ventilation, or homes located directly over a garage without independent ventilation, must have a carbon monoxide detector.

Carbon monoxide detectors must be installed according to the manufacturer's instructions and comply with the most recent standards of the Underwriters Laboratories or the Canadian Standard Association. They can be battery operated, plug-in with battery back-up, or wired into the home's AC power.

Building owners who do not provide working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms at required locations face fines of \$500 to \$2,000 per day, per violation. Tampering with, deactivating, or removing a required smoke and carbon monoxide alarms is against the law and can result in criminal penalties and is the responsibility of the landlord.

Heat Ordinance

If you are a renter and your landlord is not providing adequate heat or no heat at all, you may create a request to file a complaint. The Department of Buildings will inspect your unit and we will take action against delinquent owners.

The Department of Buildings enforces the Chicago Building Code, which includes the Chicago Heat Ordinance. The Heat Ordinance mandates that during cold weather months landlords supply heat to rental units or to any unit where owners do not have individual control of the heat.

From September 15 through June 1, the temperature inside a rental residence is required to be at least 68 degrees from 8:30 AM to 10:30 PM, and at least 66 degrees from 10:30 PM to 8:30 AM.

Landlords face fines of up to \$1000 per day, per violation, for each day they do not supply adequate heat. The reason for lack of heat does not matter -- landlords must follow the law, and apartments must be heated.

Best regards,

The Chicago Low-Income Housing Trust Fund

