



How do the Fort Collins Rental Housing Standards affect me?

Rental housing standards, found in the adopted 2006 International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC) affects both renters and landlords by providing basic minimum standards to make rental housing safe places to eat, live, sleep and play. Whether you live in or own a house, mobile home, townhouse, condominium, apartment, fraternity/sorority house, hotel, a boarding house, or any other livable facility, the City of Fort Collins regulates minimum habitability requirements for:

- shelter from the weather,
- light & ventilation,
- comfort heating,
- sanitation,
- exits, and
- electrical, plumbing, heating and structural safety.

If you feel a rental unit does not meet the City's minimum habitability requirements, we encourage you to contact us. Our goal is to create and maintain a safe living environment for all residents.

Need more information? Learn more at fcgov.com/building or call us 970-416-2740. Building Services is located at 281 North College Avenue, Fort Collins.

The complete ordinance is available at: colocode.com/ftcollins/municipal/chapter5.htm#articleVI.

What if I want to renovate?

Renovations to rental housing (e.g., structural alterations to floors, foundations, walls, roofs, masonry fireplaces; or alterations to plumbing, electrical, heating and the sprinkler systems; or re-roofing), require a building permit and inspections. Furthermore, a city-licensed contractor MUST do the work. Contact the Building Services for more information.

What am I responsible for?

The owner or owner's agent must provide safe rental housing and lodging which meets the basic minimum standards.

Tenants are legally required to maintain the premises in a clean and sanitary manner, including regular disposal of indoor and outdoor trash.

What if I have a rental agreement dispute?

City regulations address ONLY occupant and public health, safety, and welfare. The City is not involved with rental agreements in any way. Compliance efforts do not relieve tenants of the obligations under their rental contracts.

Should I be concerned about zoning?

Yes, if you live in or own an "illegal" apartment or dwelling unit which is situated within a zone that disallows it; or, if a group of more than three unrelated people occupy the unit. Both cases are violations and you will receive a discontinuation notice. Even if the zone allows the unit, but was never approved by the City, it must meet current City codes via a building permit.

City of
Fort Collins
Building Services
281 N College Av
Fort Collins, CO 80524



WINDOWS

Basement apartments after October 1945, and ALL housing after October 1958, have minimum window area for light and ventilation requirements.

Insect screens are required during the summer months on ALL doors and windows used for ventilation.

Security locks required on ALL entrance doors and ALL windows with access from ground.

Stairs, hallways and exits which serve more than one unit must always be lighted (natural or artificial).

KITCHENS & BATHS

All houses and apartments must have a kitchen and a bathroom, both with sinks supplying hot and cold running water.

One bathroom must have a bathtub or shower, sink and toilet and ensure privacy.

EXITS

It's important to remember every rented apartment, lodging or room must have direct access outside OR to a public corridor leading directly to an exterior exit.

Exits must be maintained in safe condition and in accordance with the applicable code when the unit was first authorized for occupancy.

FIRE & CARBON MONOXIDE

All rentals/houses must have smoke detectors throughout and in each bedroom.

A carbon monoxide alarm is required if there are gas heating/cooking appliances or an attached garage.

When there's a fire, it's crucial all bedrooms below the fourth story have an operable exterior emergency exit window or door.

1. Be "operable" from the inside without special tools or knowledge.
2. Have a clear opening no more than 44" or 48" above the floor.
3. Have a minimum clear opening area of five square feet (30" x 24")

ELECTRICITY

All electrical equipment and appliances must be maintained safe and according to the following:

1. All habitable rooms must have at least two electric outlets.
2. Outlets within reach of laundry appliances and piping must be electrically grounded or be provided with GFCI (ground fault circuit interrupter) protection.
3. Branch circuits, feeder panels, etc. must be protected by properly-sized fuses or circuit breakers.
4. Extension ("zip") cords wired directly to permanent wiring, inside walls, through floors, under carpets, etc. are prohibited.
5. All outlets in bathrooms, garages, kitchens and exteriors shall be protected with GFCI.

Rental Housing Standards



HEATING

All habitable rooms and bathrooms must be capable of maintaining the indoor temperature of 68° Fahrenheit except when it's colder than 4° Fahrenheit outside.

Portable kerosene, propane heaters or non-vented gas heaters are dangerous and illegal.

All heating equipment and appliances must be maintained safe according to the code.

All gas-fired heating equipment must:

1. Have automatic safety fuel shut-off.
2. Have accessible manual fuel shut-off.
3. Have listed appliance fuel connector.
4. Have approved vent (chimney).
5. Have adequate combustion air to prevent carbon monoxide escaping into the unit.
6. NOT have the only access to the equipment through a bedroom or bathroom unless the equipment is sealed-combustion or is in an enclosed room with direct outside combustion air.
7. NOT discharge air from one housing unit to another through central heating.

STAIRWAYS

Stairs from basement apartments and stairs serving more than one unit must be at least 30" wide with 75" of headroom and have handrails.

All occupants must have direct access outside OR to a public corridor leading directly outside.

VIOLATIONS & COMPLIANCE

City inspectors are authorized to inspect rentals accompanied by the tenant or owner at reasonable times when there is cause to believe unsafe conditions are present.

Depending on the conditions, the City could allow several weeks for corrections or quickly post the unit unsafe and condemn it from occupancy.

Once the property owner is notified, the needed corrections must be completed within the time specified or an appeal must be filed.

Rentals with two or more units must have a CO (certificate of occupancy) or equivalent document on file with the City.

KEEP VEHICLES OFF THE GRASS

Parking on the front lawn is illegal in Fort Collins.

IN GOOD WORKING ORDER

Plumbing, fire sprinklers, structural elements, foundations, floors, walls, roofs, masonry fireplaces and chimneys must be maintained in safe condition and according to the code in effect at the time of their legally-authorized installation or construction.

SHELTER

Rental housing must provide shelter from the weather.