

Frequently Asked Questions: Rental License Tiers

What does tiering tell me about my rental?

The Property Conditions Tier is like a grade that tells what it is like to live at the property. The tier ranges from 1 to 3, with a Tier 3 being a property with the most issues known to the City. The Property Management Score tells you how responsive the owner or manager may be to the City, and how well they are addressing issues we have identified at the property.

How does the city give out tiers?

We look back at the past two years of information we have for your rental and count all the violations of our city code we found during that time. Since your health and safety matters to us, some violations are worth more points than others. We call these Life Safety and Quality of Life violations. The more of these violations we find, the better chance there is that the property will be in a higher tier. More information on all the violations we count can be found on the next pages.

Does the city treat rentals differently if they have a high tier?

Yes, the City has a schedule to inspect rental property. Tier 3 rentals are inspected every year, Tier 2 rentals are inspected every five years, and Tier 1 rentals are inspected every eight years. The City will charge more in fees to the property owner if the tier is higher.

Where can I find out my rental's tier?

The tiers and violation data for all rentals in Minneapolis is public data that you have the right to see. We share the tiers for all properties on our website: tinyurl.com/MplsTiering. Your rental tier is also written on the Rental License Certificate that is required to be posted and clearly visible in a common area of your rental. If you want, you can always call 311 to ask about your tier or ask any other questions about your rental unit.

My rental is a Tier 1, but I know there are several serious problems here. Why is this and what should I do?

The City is always working to ensure safe and stable housing for all renters. If your property is a Tier 1 and currently has problems, it simply means we are not yet aware of them. This is where we need your help.

If you have contacted your landlord and they haven't fixed the issues, please call 311. We will reach out to you and your landlord to make sure they are housing code violations and work to get them fixed. Calls to 311 are 100% confidential. This means that your landlord will know the issue was reported, but they can't find out who made the call. If you are still worried about your landlord raising your rent or punishing you for calling, please let us know that when you make the call.

Do you look at other things besides code violations?

Yes! While violations are some of the most important things we know about a property, we look at other things too. For example, if we have visited a property too many times to make sure a violation is fixed, these extra visits will count against the manager of the property. These management related issues are used for a separate score called the Property Management Score. This score can increase a rental license fee beyond the fee we charge for the Property Conditions Tier. The next page has more information on this score as well as the violations we count for the tiers.

2021 Rental License Tier & Billing Elements

Property Conditions Tier Elements		
Element	Description	Points per Violation
Life Safety Violation	Life Safety Violations indicate an urgent health or safety risk to the renter. Examples include smoke or carbon monoxide detectors, fire exits or emergency lighting.	6
Quality of Life Violations	Quality of Life Violations indicate an urgent issue with a direct impact on habitability. Examples include pests and water heater repair.	5
Additional Code Violations	Any other housing or fire code violations are counted here. Examples include signage, cleanliness, and doorbells.	1
Nuisance Violations	Nuisance Violations include all trash, tall grass, and solid waste orders and letters.	0.5
Notice to Condemn	Notice to Condemn was given to their properties.	10

Property Management Score Elements		
Element	Description	Points per Violation
Inspections	Re-inspections conducted by Regulatory Services at a given property. Does not include initial or final inspections.	2
Administrative Citations	A fee charged to gain compliance.	5
Delinquent License Fee	Late payment on a rental license.	3
Assessments/ Authorizations	Special assessments for unpaid citations & authorizations for grass or trash.	3
Rental License Actions	Actions including Operating Condition Agreements and Tenant Remedy Actions.	10
Revocations	Action taken to revoke a rental license.	40

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
0 – 19	20 – 39	40+

PC + PM =	Fee Level 1	Fee Level 2	Fee Level 3
	0 – 19	20 – 39	40+

Life Safety Violations

Specific requirements may vary building to building. Discuss with your inspector or call 311 for more details.

Violation	Code(s)	What to look for:
Carbon Monoxide Detectors & Smoke Detectors	HIS322, F70, HIS320	Make sure all required smoke detectors are operational, and there is a carbon monoxide detector within 10 feet of each bedroom. Test it to make sure they still work and don't need a new battery.
Combustible Materials	F038, HIS335	Flammable materials need to be secured and stored, and not piling up or accumulating near gas fired appliances.
Corridor Openings - Doors	F010	All doors in any hallway or common area are open and accessible.
Exit (Egress) Stairways	HIS331	All stairways leading to exits are open, safe, and accessible.
Emergency Lighting Required	F015	Exits must have lighting in the event of a power outage.
Escape Windows	F291, HIS771, HIS772	Each bedroom below the fourth floor must have a window at least or larger than 20 inches wide by 24 inches high. Make sure there isn't anything blocking the window.
Fire Alarm Systems	F288B, F068	The building needs an alarm system capable of alerting all residents in case of fire, and each apartment must be connected to the alarm.
Fire Extinguishers	F063	Make sure all required fire extinguishers are working and re-filled if needed.
Maintenance Of Extinguishing Systems	F092	Systems must be serviced annually with any required repairs done by a licensed contractor. Keep records of your maintenance
Obstruction Of Exits Prohibited	F016	Make sure all exits are open and not blocked by furniture, trash, or other debris.
Open Gas Line	HIS504	All gas lines must be capped as required.
Provide Fire Exits	HIS261	Make sure the building has the required number or fire exits.
Remove Illegal Appliances/Fixtures	HIS227	Any appliance or item affixed to a ceiling or wall needs to be installed correctly. Applies to all areas of the property. Make sure they are up to code and safe for use.
Repair Or Replace Fire Door	HIS263	Make sure all required fire doors close and latch on their own and that they are rated to have one hour of fire resistance.
Repair Support System	HIS251	The structure of the property needs to be sound and not in need of repair. This includes the foundation, beams, footing and joists.
Repair/Remove Illegal/Hazardous Wiring	HIS417	Make sure all wiring is installed to code. Make there isn't any exposed or unsafe wiring.
Storage Under Exit Stairways Prohibited	F027	Applies to buildings with four or more units. Storage under stairways needs to be protected by a barrier rated for one hour of fire resistance.

Quality of Life Violations

Specific requirements may vary building to building. Discuss with your inspector or call 311 for more details.

Violation	Code(s)	What to look for:
Dwelling or Garage Open to Trespass	HISDOT, GOT	On vacant property, make sure no windows or doors are missing or open to let someone easily get into the building. This includes the main structure and any garage or shed.
Electrical Violation	FH499	All electrical needs to be up to code and safe. Make sure all outlets and switches have covers. All light fixtures should be working. There should be no exposed wiring.
Exterminate Insects/Vermin/Rodents	HIS737, FH737, HIS733	Applies to properties with two or more units. Make sure any pest infestations have been dealt with, and there is no evidence of an active pest problem.
Illegal Bedroom	HIS208, HIS226, HIS223	Rooms that are clearly being used for sleeping should be legal bedrooms. The most common example is using an attic or basement as a bedroom when it is not up to code. Sheds or other detached structures that are being used as bedrooms are also illegal.
Install Or Repair Water Heater	HIS519	The property's water heater should be installed as required and working correctly.
Low Heat; MCO 244.430	HIS609	The system heating the property should be able to maintain a temperature of 68 degrees between October 1 st and April 30 th .
Over Occupancy	HIS230	Bedrooms cannot have more people staying in them than is allowed by ordinance.
Plumbing Violation	FH599	Plumbing fixtures need to be working as intended. Make sure there are no leaks or hazardous water conditions.
Security Doors	FH210	All required security doors to the outside need to close and lock automatically. Make sure your outside doors close and latch completely when you let go of them in the open position.
Unsafe Buildings	F295, F166	Buildings that are unsafe include those that are over-occupied, have fire hazards, don't have easy ways to exit in case of emergency, or have other hazardous conditions.
Snow/Ice Removal	NA	Snow and ice on public walkways need to be cleared within 48 hours. Apartment buildings and commercial buildings need to be cleared within 4 hours.
Lead Orders	NA	Any order to fix lead safety issues from the Health Department.