

**Certificate of Fitness
Inspection Fees**

Initial Inspection: \$50

First re-inspection: Free

Additional re-inspections: \$50 each

Certificate of Fitness

Fine for Non-Compliance

\$50 per day

Chronic offense may result in court action and/or additional penalties as allowed under law.

Contact

Health Dept.: (978) 741-1800
Building Dept.: (978) 619-5641
Legal Dept.: (978) 619-5638
inspections@salem.com

98 Washington Street
Salem, MA 01970

Monday–Wednesday, 8am-4pm
Thursday, 8am-7pm
Friday, 8am-noon



Residential Rental Inspections

View the ordinance and find more information online at www.salem.com/rentals. You will also find the required residential rental inspections form that must be submitted to the City by anyone who rents out rental property, including short term rentals, in the City of Salem.

Salem’s residential rental inspections program is designed to protect tenants, landlords, and neighbors.

Exemptions

A dwelling unit occupied by its owner is exempt from needing a Certificate of Fitness or being inspected. If a unit is owned by a trust or LLC, then it must be inspected. Also exempt are units with proof of passing a HUD inspection within the previous three years and any unit constructed within five years of the date of vacancy.

Residential Rental Inspections

City of Salem



Required inspections for all residential rental units in Salem.

- All rented units in Salem require a Certificate of Fitness of inspection. Units are inspected once every three years or upon a change of tenant.
- Units without health, building, or police violations are eligible to change to a once every five-year inspection schedule.
- Buildings that are considered “problem properties” may be inspected as frequently as once per year.
- All units in two- and three-family buildings where the owner occupies one of the units in the building are only required to be inspected upon a change of tenant.



Problem Property: (1) Police have been called at least 4 times in the preceding 12 months for any arrestable offenses or (2) Health or Building departments have received at least 4 sustained complaints in the preceding 12 months.

The updated requirements and schedule for Certificate of Fitness inspections is now in effect city-wide. To ensure your property is in compliance, contact the Health Department at 978-741-1800. It is the responsibility of the property owner to ensure compliance with the ordinance and sanitary code.



What changes for short term rentals?

If you rent out a unit that you own in Salem on a short-term basis (14 days out of the calendar year or fewer), for example using AirBnB or VRBO, you are required to notify the Health Department, register the property with the department, and undergo a Certificate of Fitness inspection. Short term rentals are inspected annually or upon a change of property owner. Even if a short-term rental is in an owner-occupied two- or three-family building it still must be inspected annually as long as the unit is rented out on a short-term basis.

Program Goals

The City of Salem inspects between 500 and 600 rental units each year, but there are over 9,700 rental units in Salem. A review of data collected by the City’s Problem Properties Task Force identified that some of the most egregious nuisance properties were correlated with lacking a valid Certificate of Fitness.

Requiring all rental properties to be inspected (a) levels the playing field between good landlords and negligent landlords, (b) ensures all renters – including those who may be fearful of reporting dangerous conditions or unaware of how to – can live in a safe and healthy place, (c) provides critical data on the scope and extent of short-term rentals, and (d) allows the City to better and more pro-actively address nuisance issues such as code violations, zoning or overcrowding violations, and so forth.

This program will help educate owners and tenants about state and local housing codes, provide owners with an inspection report on the compliance of their units, ensure units meet all code requirements, improve the quality of residential rental units in Salem, and improve the quality of life for neighborhood residents.