

POSTVILLE, IOWA HOUSING CODE PLANS OF INSPECTION

(Adopted by Resolution #1473-25)

I. INTRODUCTION

The Postville Housing Code requires that Plans of Inspection be developed and presented to the City Council for adoption as part of the City's Housing Inspection Program. These Plans of Inspection are applicable to the inspection of all dwelling units, subject to the provisions of the Postville Housing Code, including:

The regular inspection of all rental dwelling units, rooming houses, congregate housing, independent group residences or mobile homes held out for rental.

II. LANDLORD LICENSE AND RENTAL REGISTRATION

The purpose of the landlord license is to maintain an accurate database of landlords in the City of Postville. The rental registration is used to maintain a database of rental properties. The cost of these processes is listed on the fee scheduled in Section IX below.

- A. Operating as a landlord or renting a unit as listed above without registration will result in a civil penalty and possible suspension of landlord license if it is already possessed.
- B. Failure to pass a regular inspection within three (3) inspections may result in a suspension of a landlord license.
- C. Owning a nuisance property, as defined in the Postville Code of Ordinances Chapter 50, may result in a landlord license suspension.
- D. Failure to pay any fees imposed in accordance with these Plans of Inspection in a timely manner will result in a suspension of a landlord license.

If a landlord license is suspended, the landlord will not be able to reinstate the license for six (6) months after the suspension occurred.

- A. While under suspension a landlord cannot register any new rental properties. All obligations pertaining to existing rental properties remain in full effect, including, but not limited to, the Landlord's responsibility for conducting and/or cooperating with all regular and complaint-based inspections.
- B. License reinstatement fees are as stated in Section IX below.

Landlord licenses and registration fees shall not apply to interim occupancy agreements associated with the purchase or sale of single-family residences unless the duration of the interim occupancy agreement is longer than ninety (90) days.

III. REGULAR INSPECTIONS – FREQUENCY

For all existing units currently operating as renter-occupied at the time of these Plans of Inspection.

1. Registration and Zone Assignment: All landlords must license and register all their rental units with the City on or before June 1, 2026. At the time of registration, the City will assign and record each property to one of the designated Inspection Zones (Zones 1, 2, 3, etc.)
2. Initial Inspection Cycle: The first (initial) inspection requirement for all existing rental units will be staggered based on the unit's assigned zone and tied to calendar years:
 - a. Zone 1: Initial inspection must be completed and submitted to the City on or before June 1, 2027 (Year 1).
 - b. Zone 2: Initial inspection must be completed and submitted to the City on or before June 1, 2028 (Year 2).
 - c. Zone 3: Initial inspection must be completed and submitted to the City on or before June 1, 2029 (Year 3).
3. Subsequent Inspections (3-Year Cycle): Following the initial inspection, regular inspections shall be required every three (3) years thereafter. These subsequent inspections must also be completed and submitted to the City on or before June 1st of the applicable inspection year, consistent with the unit's assigned zone cycle.

If a dwelling unit is newly constructed or converted from owner-occupied to renter-occupied status after June 1, 2026, the following requirements apply:

1. Registration: Such a unit must be registered as a rental with the City within three (3) months after completion of construction or conversion.
2. Initial Inspection Integration: The initial inspection for the unit shall be required at the time of the next (or current, if applicable) zone cycle requirement for its location. The inspection must be completed and submitted to the City on or before June 1st of the zone's applicable inspection year.

IV. FORM OF INSPECTION

The Housing Code establishes performance requirements and acceptability criteria for the Housing Inspection Program. To assure uniformity and consistency in the housing inspection, a Housing Inspection Form will be used in the inspection of dwelling units.

If a dwelling unit complies with the housing quality standards, and upon the submission of a passing Housing Inspection Form from the licensed housing inspector as defined in Section V, a Certificate of Inspected Housing shall be issued as provided in the Housing Code upon receipt of payment per Section IX below.

V. REGULAR INSPECTION PROCESS

The owner of the rental dwelling unit is responsible for obtaining their own licensed housing inspector to complete the required regular inspections outlined in Section III above. A “licensed housing inspector” means an inspector that satisfies the conditions of Iowa Code § 558A.4A to issue a home inspection report. When completing their inspection(s), the licensed housing inspector is required to use the Housing Inspection Form identified in Section IV above and promulgated by the City of Postville. No other types of forms or reports will be accepted.

Submission of Inspection Results

1. Passing Inspections

Passing Housing Inspection Forms shall be submitted to the City via postal mail or hand delivery, and must include a cover letter identifying the name/business, phone and email address of the inspector, the inspector’s credentials as identified in Iowa Code § 558A.4A, the address or addresses of the property being inspected, the name/business of the owner of the property, and the person that requested the inspection if different from the property owner. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in the withholding of Certificate of Inspected Housing until corrected.

2. Failed Inspections and Corrective Action

- a. Notification and Timeline for Correction: If the inspection report indicates that the unit has failed an initial or subsequent regular inspection (a "Failed Inspection"), the landlord must submit the Failed Inspection Report to the City and the Landlord shall have 60 days from the date of the Failed Inspection Report to complete all necessary repairs and corrections.
- b. Re-Inspection Requirement: Following the completion of the required repairs, the landlord must request and pay for a re-inspection by a licensed housing inspector. The passing re-inspection report must be completed and submitted to the City within ninety (90) days of the date of the Failed Inspection report, following the submission requirements outlined in section 1 above.
- c. Failure to Comply: If the landlord fails to complete the necessary repairs, or fails to submit a passing re-inspection report within the ninety (90) day window, the City may initiate legal action to compel compliance and/or the rental license for the unit may be suspended or revoked until a passing inspection is achieved. The unit may be deemed unfit for human habitation if conditions pose an immediate threat to the health and safety of the occupants.

Fees and Responsibility

The owner of the rental dwelling unit is solely responsible for any costs and fees charged by the licensed housing inspector for their services, including the initial inspection and any subsequent re-inspections.

VI. COMPLAINTS

It is the policy of the City of Postville to investigate all complaints within an appropriate amount of time of receipt of the complaint. Complaint inspections shall be handled by the Housing Official, or their designee, including the City's contract licensed housing inspector.

The Housing Official, or designated representative shall attempt to notify the property owner or agent by email correspondence, telephone, or by personal contact (any verbal or non-written communication shall be followed up with a written confirmation) that a complaint has been filed with the City alleging housing code violation(s) and that the City intends to inspect the dwelling in question. The property owner or designated agent shall be advised of the time and date of the inspection and shall be given an opportunity to accompany the inspector on the inspection. In the event that contact cannot be made with the property owner or designated agent within the twenty-four (24) hours of the scheduled inspection, the property owner or designated agent shall be notified in writing that the complaint has been filed with the City and that the inspection has been conducted.

All the items below are required to constitute a Confirmed Complaint:

- A Housing Code Violation is found.
- Tenant has provided written proof of maintenance request to property owner and/or designated agent.
- Tenant has allowed acceptable time for property owner and/or designated agent to make necessary repairs.
- The Housing Inspector has verified that the complaint has not been repaired.

Corrective Action and Re-Inspection for Confirmed Complaints

Upon a Confirmed Complaint resulting in the issuance of a notice of code violation(s), the following shall apply:

1. Notification and Timeline for Correction: The City will provide the landlord with a report detailing the necessary repairs to bring the unit into compliance with the Housing Code and other applicable codes. The landlord shall be required to complete all necessary repairs and corrections within forty-five (45) days of the date of the violation report.
2. Complaint Re-Inspection Requirement: Following the completion of the required repairs, the landlord must request and pay for a re-inspection by the Housing Official, or their designee. The unit must pass this re-inspection with the time provided for addressing the violations as outlined in the original violation report.

3. Failure to Comply: If the landlord fails to complete the necessary repairs, or fails to pass the re-inspection within the forty-five (45) day window, the following enforcement actions shall be applied.

Enforcement and Remedies

The code violations shall be processed in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Postville Code of Ordinances, additionally any applicable fees shall be charged as stated in Section IX below. A code violation that goes unremedied, including failure to pass the required re-inspection, may result in the City pursuing remedies including:

- Posting the premises as condemned or for non-occupancy.
- Suspension or revocation of the landlord license.
- A municipal infraction
- Abatement.
- Any other remedies allowed pursuant to the Postville Code of Ordinances and the Code of Iowa.

Nothing in this policy precludes the Housing Official from sharing information relating to code violations with other relevant City departments, including the Postville Police Department or the Frontier Fire Department. Likewise, nothing in this policy precludes the Frontier Fire Department or Postville Police Department receiving and/or investigating alleged violations of the Postville Code of Ordinances pursuant a policy specific to that department.

VII. VACANT OR EVICTED PROPERTIES

If a property becomes vacant or is involved in an eviction process, then the inspection can be pushed back ninety (90) days from the original inspection to allow for cleanup and repair of the property. The City must be notified of this request prior to the regular inspection, or it will be treated as a normal inspection with applicable deadlines. This is the only time an inspection can be changed within five (5) working days of the scheduled inspection.

VIII. APPEAL

Any person aggrieved by an action taking pursuant to these Plans of Inspection may appeal said action consist with Section 155.06 of the Postville Code of Ordinances.

IX. FEES

Landlord License Fees	
Landlord License Fee (annual assessment)	\$50.00
Late Inspection Fees	
30 days past due	\$50.00
60 days past due	\$100.00
90+ days past due	\$150.00

(a) Fees not paid after 90 days are subject to property tax assessment which will include the past due fees. If the landlord is not the owner of the property, just owns the structure sitting on the property, then any fees that are not paid or able to be assessed through property tax assessment are subject to a municipal infraction against the landlord. (b) If for any reason a Landlord License is suspended or revoked, a fee of \$500.00 will be assessed for re-instatement.	
Rental Unit Registration Fees	
Single-Family Dwelling (one time)	\$40.00
Multi-Family Dwelling (one time)	\$40.00 plus \$20.00 per additional unit
Unregistered Rental Fee	
An additional fee of \$100 will be assessed on a property if it is found that the licensed landlord rented, leased, or let a property be occupied without it being registered as a rental unit. This fee may be waived if the property is registered as a rental within the time allotted by the Housing Official.	
Confirmed Complaint Inspection Fees	
These fees are charged when a violation is found as stated in the Postville Housing Code Plans of Inspection document as approved by the Postville City Council. If no violation is found, the complaint is considered unconfirmed, and the person making the complaint shall be billed and responsible for the costs incurred by the City in completing the complaint inspection.	
Initial Founded Complaint Inspection	\$75.00
1 st Reinspection	\$100.00
2 nd Reinspection	\$150.00
(a) If the property fails the 2nd reinspection the City will start a municipal infraction against the landlord to get the housing violations corrected. (b) All certified mail fees will be assessed to the landlord in addition to the above fees.	
Appeal Fees	
Appeal Application Fee	\$50.00

X. INSPECTION MAP