

RALEIGH HOUSING AUTHORITY BED BUG POLICY

Bed bugs are a growing national problem, and as a result, this policy has been created for both the Public Housing program and the Housing Choice Voucher program. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the roles and responsibilities of all parties (RHA, Tenant, and Landlord) in minimizing the potential for bed bugs. The policy will also provide guidance in cases where bed bugs are present in order to eliminate them as quickly as possible.

Bed bugs are difficult to contain without the proper treatment. Therefore it is imperative that all parties (RHA, Tenant, and Landlord) work simultaneously toward a common goal, extermination and elimination. Left untreated bed bugs can spread throughout a residence affecting current and future tenants.

Housing Choice Voucher program

Landlord Roles and Responsibilities:

The Housing Assistance Payment (HAP) contract requires the landlord to maintain the contract unit and its premises in accordance with Housing Quality Standards (HQS). If bed bugs are present, it is the responsibility of the landlord, as stated in the HQS (CFR 982.401), to ensure that the dwelling unit and its equipment be in sanitary condition and free of vermin and rodent infestation. In order to comply with the HQS, if the presence of bed bugs is suspected, the landlord must notify RHA immediately and it is strongly recommended that the landlord contact an extermination professional for an immediate inspection. If the landlord chooses to perform their own initial inspection, RHA has created a "Landlord Inspection Checklist" that may assist in the assessment of potential problems. If treatment is deemed necessary, a copy of the contract the landlord entered into with the extermination professional (including all treatment performed) must be provided to RHA by the landlord within 48 hours of initial determination that treatment is required. In addition, the landlord must complete the "Landlord Certification Statement" document and send to RHA within 72 hours of the initial determination that treatment is required.

Failure to comply with the above requirements is a direct violation of the HAP contract and may result in abatement, suspension or termination of housing assistance payments, termination of the HAP contract, and suspension of eligibility to participate in the Housing Choice Voucher program.

Tenant Roles and Responsibilities:

The HAP contract requires the tenant to keep the unit and its premises free from damage. Therefore, if the presence of bed bugs is suspected, it is the tenant's responsibility to notify the landlord and RHA immediately in order to minimize any potential damage to the unit. In addition, it is the responsibility of the tenant to work cooperatively with the landlord and/or extermination professional to ensure the successful elimination of bed bugs. Tenant non-compliance may result in the loss of their Housing Choice Voucher.

If the tenant notifies the landlord of the presence of bed bugs and the landlord fails to take action within a reasonable period of time, the tenant should notify RHA. RHA will assist the tenant in relocation if it is deemed necessary and appropriate. Prior to relocation, RHA will notify new landlord of tenant's prior exposure to bed bugs. In addition, the tenant must complete all items on the "Relocation Task List" document.

RHA Roles and Responsibilities:

RHA will ensure the landlord maintains the unit within HQS guidelines and provide guidance on the resolution of any potential bed bug problems. RHA will assist in tenant relocation, including the scheduling of moves, if it has been determined relocation is necessary and appropriate. When relocation is necessary, RHA will ensure the tenant completes the "Relocation Task List" prior to relocation in order to minimize the transfer of bed bugs to the new unit. RHA will also require all program participants and landlords to disclose at intake, recertification, and inspection all exposure to bed bugs within the last twelve month period.

Raleigh Housing Authority

P.O. Box 28007
Raleigh, NC 27611

**Bed Bug Management Plan
Landlord Inspection Checklist**

Tenant Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Alt. Phone: _____

Email: _____

Inspection List

Check bed including mattress, box spring, and headboard for blood spots and fecal matter. Strip back the covers, stand up the mattress, remove the box spring and flip it over paying close attention to all seams.

Inspect furnishings close to the bed for the presence of bed bugs. Pull out dresser drawers and check inside drawers and crevices. Look under televisions, stereos, and other equipment, behind pictures, in the crevice behind the baseboard, and in stacks of clothing.

Check drapes, wall decorations, and cracks in the ceiling-wall junction for presence of bed bugs.

Check other areas of the residence for the presence of bed bugs paying specific attention to furniture, seams, and crevices.

Discuss and inspect (where appropriate) bed bug bites with tenant.

Bed Bug presence noted: Yes No

This documents is provided as a reference only. If the presence of bed bugs is suspected and you are not comfortable inspecting the unit thoroughly, you should consider contacting an extermination professional.

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Bed Bug Management Plan Landlord Certification Statement

It is the goal of the Raleigh Housing Authority to promote and provide safe, quality housing to our program participants. If bed bugs are present, it is the responsibility of the landlord, as stated in the HQS (CFR 982.401), to ensure that the dwelling unit and its equipment be in sanitary condition and free of vermin and rodent infestation. It is the responsibility of the tenant to work cooperatively with the landlord and/or extermination professional to ensure the successful elimination of bed bugs. It is imperative that all parties (Tenant, Landlord, and Extermination Professional) work together toward a common goal, **extermination and elimination**.

To assist RHA in its goal of providing safe, quality housing, RHA requests the following information be completed by the landlord upon completion of treatment (within 72 hours of initial determination that treatment is necessary):

- 1) Date unit was treated _____.
- 2) Type of treatment provided (methods, products used, areas treated):

- 3) Did tenant complete required (should be detailed in landlord/tenant lease agreement) pre-treatment activities? For example:
 - Furniture moved to center of room being treated? **YES NO N/A**
 - All items removed from floors and closets? **YES NO N/A**
 - Mattresses encased in bed bug mattress encasements? **YES NO N/A**
 - All pictures removed from walls? **YES NO N/A**
 - All areas being treated vacuumed including furniture, dresser drawers, night stands, mattresses, and box springs? **YES NO N/A**
 - All cardboard hangers, boxes, etc. discarded? **YES NO N/A**
 - All clothing, linens, towels, etc. washed in hot water (+120 degrees), dried on highest heat setting for at least 30 minutes, and stored in tightly sealed plastic garbage bags? **YES NO N/A**
- 4) Please list any additional items required to be completed prior to treatment and indicate if items were completed.

- 5) Was follow up or additional treatment recommended by the Extermination Professional? **YES or NO** If yes, please provide date when follow up or additional treatment will be conducted: _____

LANDLORD STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

I, _____, certify that I have had the unit located at _____ professionally treated by a licensed extermination professional in order to eliminate the presence of bed bugs.

Landlord Signature

Date

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Bed Bug Management Plan Relocation Task List

Bed bugs are difficult to contain without the proper treatment. Therefore if a tenant relocates and the proper treatment has not taken place, the bed bugs will move with the tenant as bed bugs can be carried in furniture, bedding, clothing, etc. If it has been determined that you must relocate to a new unit, certain steps must be followed to ensure that bed bugs are not transferred to the new residence. To prevent further infestation, the Relocation Task List below **MUST** be completed in preparation for relocation.

RELOCATION TASK LIST (initial each item)

_____ Remove all sheets, blankets, mattress covers, pillowcases, etc. from beds and wash in hot water (120+ degrees recommended) and dry in clothes dryer on the highest heat setting for at least 30 minutes. Fold them and place them in plastic garbage bags, seal bags tightly. Do not put them back on the bed until move is complete.

_____ Wash all clothing, toys, towels, and other linens in hot water (120+ degrees recommended) and dry in clothes dryer on the highest heat setting for at least 30 minutes. Place clean items inside airtight plastic storage bins or plastic garbage bags that are sealed tightly and store until relocated.

_____ Vacuum (using disposable vacuum cleaner bags) all furniture, dresser drawers, night stand drawers, mattresses, and box springs. Place disposable vacuum cleaner bag inside plastic garbage bag, seal plastic garbage bag tightly, and discard in outdoor trash receptacle immediately.

_____ Purchase and place special bed bug mattress and box spring encasements around all mattresses and box springs. Bed bug mattress and box spring encasements are an effective bed bug killer when combined with treatment and **must remain on all mattresses and box springs for at least one year**. Bed bug encasements can be purchased locally at Bed, Bath, and Beyond for approximately \$10.00 – \$20.00 depending on size needed. The tenant is solely responsible for the purchase of this item.

_____ Discard or have all infested furniture professionally treated by a licensed exterminator. If tenant chooses to keep furniture, proof of treatment must be provided to RHA prior to relocation. RHA **will not** relocate tenant to a new unit with infested furniture.

TENANT STATEMENT OF CERTIFICATION

I, _____, certify that I have read and understand the information above and commit to performing the Relocation Task List. I also understand that if I do not complete the above listed items, there is the potential for the bed bugs to be carried to the new residence and RHA will not authorize a transfer to a new unit.

Tenant Signature

Date

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Bed Bug Management Plan
Exterminator Selection Tips

The information listed below is from the New York Times article “Sleeping with the Enemy (Bed Bugs).” Please note that the information listed is provided as a reference only. If the presence of bed bugs is suspected, immediate action should be taken.

- Most successful treatment efforts include a combination of a thorough cleaning and sorting, along with repeated professional bed bug treatment applications.
- Many pest control companies will perform a visual inspection at no charge in hopes that if you have bed bugs, you’ll hire them to do the treatment.
- According to the article, you should be wary of pest control companies that emphasize their bed bug expertise.
- Find an established pest control company that has been in business at least five years.
- The article states that exterminators may charge \$250 to \$900 a room to get rid of bed bugs, depending on the level of infestation and the types of treatments used. Prices in our local area may vary.
- Be sure the exterminator makes at least one follow-up visit. According to the article it’s near impossible to kill all bed bugs in a given area with one treatment.
- Ask if follow-up treatments are included in the price quoted to you.
- Check to see that the company and technician you hire are licensed in your state.
- Check the Better Business Bureau for any complaints filed against the exterminators you are considering.

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Bed Bug Management Plan
Prevention Tips

- Wash all bedding regularly in hot water. The water should be at least 120 degrees.
- Use bed bug encasements on all mattresses and box springs.
- Check your own bed for bed bugs from time to time. Catching them early will make bedbug treatment easier if bed bugs do occur.
- Vacuum floors regularly. Use the brush tool of your vacuum to vacuum your mattress. Use the crevice tool to vacuum crevices in the mattress and your baseboards.
- Clean up clutter to reduce hiding spots.
- Caulk holes in floors and walls.
- When purchasing second hand clothing, place all garments in a sealed bag until they can be washed and place in a dryer on high heat for 15 to 30 minutes.
- If you purchase used furniture, examine it for bed bugs. Pay special attention to used mattresses and bed frames.
- When traveling, check your room for signs of bed bugs such as bloodstains on the pillows or linens. Inspect mattress seams, look behind headboards and pictures. If you suspect you may have brought bed bugs home, place infected items in the dryer or freezer.
- After you return from a trip, check your luggage for insects that might have hitched a ride.