

## NEW CONSTRUCTION INSPECTION GUIDELINES

### **.01 INTRODUCTION**

In accordance with Alaska Statute (AS) 18.56.300, residential housing constructed on or after **July 1, 1992**, must undergo an approved inspection process to be eligible for financing by Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC). The minimum number of inspections, documentation, and other requirements are outlined below.

Residential housing located in approved municipalities as described in .08 is exempt. However, such housing is subject to the building codes adopted and enforced by the approved municipality.

### **.02 INDEPENDENT INSPECTOR REQUIREMENTS**

Only an authorized inspector meeting the following definition may perform the required inspections. An authorized inspector is not hired by, and has no relationship to, AHFC, nor a relationship (personally or financially) to the builder, developer, owner, real estate professional or other person that is a party to the transaction.

An authorized inspector is:

- An individual who is registered under AS 08.18 to perform home inspections for new construction.
- An architect licensed under AS 08.48, an engineer licensed under AS 08.48, or such other person acceptable to AHFC who has received prior approval in writing from AHFC.
- An inspector from any governmental agency outside the State of Alaska, whose function is the inspection of prefabricated/modular units which may be transported to the State of Alaska, and who inspects prefabricated units for compliance with the state building code. This inspector may not be an employee of the manufacturer.

### **.03 REQUIRED INSPECTIONS**

A minimum of five (5) inspections is required; more may be necessary, depending on the construction methods used. An authorized inspector performs each inspection and completes AHFC Form PUR-102, Summary of Building Inspections.

A. Plan Approval

Plan review and approval is the first inspection and should be completed prior to the beginning of construction. (Refer to .11.B for the definition of “construction start.”)

B. Footings and Foundation

Footings and foundation should be supported by undisturbed natural soils or engineered fill that complies with the applicable state building code. Footings and foundation construction should be capable of accommodating all loads and of transmitting the resulting loads to the supporting soil according to the applicable state building code.

1. Footings

Exterior walls should be supported on continuous solid or fully grouted masonry or concrete footings, wood foundations, or other approved structural systems.

An inspection is made after excavations for footings are completed and any required reinforcing steel is tied in place. When applicable, ground cable should be installed.

2. Foundation

Inspections may vary depending on the type of construction and the supporting soil. The foundation inspection includes, but is not necessarily limited to, an inspection of the foundation’s reinforcement, depth, drainage, anchorage, elevation, backfill, and waterproofing or damp-proofing.

C. Rough-In Inspections (Framing, Electrical, Plumbing, and Mechanical)

1. Framing

Interior and exterior walls should be constructed according to the type of material used as specified in the state building code.

The framing inspection should be made after all electrical, plumbing, and mechanical rough-in has been inspected and all ducts, chimneys, hold-downs and shear walls are installed and framing is complete.

Pre-assembled walls must be ICC listed. The manufacturer must comply with ICC's quality control requirements, continuing to keep the wall assemblies listed, as long as the wall assemblies are used in new construction.

Either the manufacturer of the pre-assembled walls or the contractor using them must provide the authorized inspector with a copy of the third-party evaluation report on the wall assembly.

The authorized inspector must verify that each wall assembly is, at a minimum, stamped with: 1) the name and address of the manufacturer and 2) the third-party evaluation report number.

2. Electrical

The electrical inspection includes an examination of the materials, components, and electrical equipment installed. All rough wiring for the structure and the electrical service is inspected at the same time. Rough-in inspection includes, but is not necessarily limited to, all wiring within the walls, all circuit breakers, panel boards and ground splices terminated by mechanical means.

The inspection takes place after all wiring systems, including the ground conductor, have been installed in approved boxes, cabinets, and service equipment. Switches, receptacles and fixtures should not be installed at the rough-in.

3. Plumbing/Mechanical

In accordance with the state building code, the plumbing and mechanical systems are inspected prior to covering or concealing any portion of the system. The inspection takes place after the installation of all water piping, drain, waste vent piping, fuel gas piping, HVAC ducting, range, dryer and bath exhaust ducting, furnace, boiler, water heater, unit heaters, and/or other fuel fired appliances and their venting system.

Also in accordance with the state building code, water or air pressure testing is required on all water, drain, waste and vent piping. Air pressure testing is required on all fuel gas piping.

D. Insulation and Vapor Barrier

Generally, the insulation/vapor barrier inspection is completed after the rough-in framing, electrical, plumbing and mechanical inspections are approved, all insulation has been installed in ceilings and walls, and all vapor retarder is in place and sealed. The authorized inspector must also have adequate access to determine compliance with Alaska Building Efficiency Standard (BEES).

E. Conditional Approval

A conditional approval is acceptable **only** when unfinished items cannot

be completed due to weather or other delays beyond the builder's/contractor's control. Conditioned items must not pose a risk to health or life/safety. The lender is responsible for ensuring timely completion of the work and obtaining final documentation.

F. Final Approval

Generally, the final inspection takes place when a residential unit is 100% complete. All health or life/safety items must be addressed and the final inspection performed prior to occupancy.

**.04 PREFABRICATED/MODULAR HOMES**

Prefabricated/modular homes are constructed in a factory under "ideal" conditions, structurally engineered to be built in sections or modules, which can be transported to the site. During construction modular units must be inspected by the appropriate governmental entity in the state or country in which the unit is manufactured, **or** by an authorized inspector. The purpose of the inspection is to provide oversight and to ensure compliance with current adopted building codes.

An authorized inspector may perform all the inspections listed on the applicable Form PUR-102, or in some cases, do so in combination with a governmental entity who certifies compliance with framing, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, insulation, and vapor barrier. (Refer to .06 for a description of PUR-102 forms.)

A. Plans and Inspections

If a governmental entity in the state or country where the construction takes place performs the inspections, an authorized inspector must complete a plan review **prior** to the plans being submitted to the governmental agency.

The plans must clearly specify the seismic zone, along with the wind and snow loading requirements for the community where the unit is to be located.

The governmental agency must conduct a plan review as well as inspecting the construction of the unit.

B. Governmental Seal/Insignia

Modular units **must** have an insignia/seal attached to each completed unit.

For inspections performed by an authorized inspector in conjunction with a governmental entity, the seal shall be attached by the governmental entity at the factory.

Modular manufacturers who are using authorized inspectors for the entire inspection process must develop a seal/insignia. The seal/insignia must include, at a minimum; the manufacturer's name and address, serial number of the unit along with the year built, wind and snow loading requirements and seismic zone for which the unit has been designed, construction codes used, dates of inspections, and the inspector's name. The authorized inspector must permanently affix the seal/insignia to the unit.

C. On-site and Final Inspections

An authorized inspector must complete the foundation inspection. When the modular unit is placed on the foundation, the authorized inspector must verify that the sections have been properly joined and connected according to the manufacturer's recommendations; the vapor retarder has been properly sealed, all service connections are complete and all systems are operational. The manufacturer's seal/insignia must be present and permanently attached to each section.

**.05 MANUFACTURED HOMES**

Manufactured homes placed on permanent foundations must comply with all the requirements of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Regulations 24 CFR Parts 3280 and 3282 for the specific area of Alaska in which the unit is being placed.

An authorized inspector must approve the foundation plans, and inspect the footings and foundation. The inspector must be on site to certify that multi-section units are joined according to manufacturer instructions, the vapor retarder has been properly sealed, and all service connections are properly secured and operational.

Once the manufactured home has been placed on its foundation, the authorized inspector performs the final inspection to ensure the unit is properly secured, tied down and the HUD seal/insignia is in place.

**.06 INSPECTION FORMS**

AHFC designed Form PUR-102, Summary of Building Inspections, for the authorized inspector to sign certifying that the residential unit is in compliance with the state building code. The applicable PUR-102 should remain on the construction site until all the inspections are completed and the inspector has signed off on the final inspection.

- [Form PUR-102](#) for site built homes.
- [Form PUR-102-MD-Gov](#) for prefabricated/modular homes inspected by a

governmental entity inspector **and** an authorized inspector. In addition, the governmental entity's inspection report must be recorded as addendum "A."

- [Form PUR-102-MD-Fee](#) for prefabricated/modular homes inspected by an authorized inspector only.
- [Form PUR-102-MH](#) for manufactured/mobile homes.

AHFC recognizes that more than one authorized inspector may perform inspections at various stages of construction. A certification must be made for each of the required inspections. The final inspector may rely on the certifications of the previous inspectors when signing the final inspection certifying compliance with the law.

After the builder/contractor signs the applicable PUR-102 certifying compliance with AS 18.56.300 and 15 AAC 150.030, the form should be recorded.

**Recording the PUR-102 is the only means of tracking compliance with the law.** Any interested party, such as the builder, owner, or lender may take responsibility for doing so.

**Note:** If the PUR-102 is not recorded, the property **is not** eligible for AHFC financing.

## **.07 CODES AND APPENDIXES**

All inspections are based on the "state building code." The state building code means:

- For building standards, the code for all residential buildings, including those for buildings with four dwellings or less, set out in the version of the Building Code adopted by the Department of Public Safety under AS 18.70.080, even though the Department of Public Safety does not apply that code to buildings with fewer than four dwellings.
- For mechanical standards, the code for all residential buildings, including those for buildings with fewer than four dwellings, set out in the version of the Mechanical Code adopted by the Department of Public Safety under AS 18.70.080, even though the Department of Public Safety does not apply that code to buildings with fewer than four dwellings.
- For plumbing standards, the code adopted by the Department of Labor under AS 18.60.705 except where such code conflicts with requirements for residential wastewater disposal established by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in which case the requirements of the DEC shall be the standard.

- For electrical standards, the minimum electrical code prescribed by AS 18.60.580.

## **.08 APPROVED MUNICIPALITIES**

Annually, AHFC reviews all municipalities who submit documentation for inspection approval. In order for a municipality to obtain approval, it must **adopt and enforce** codes that meet or exceed the state building code for residential housing. (Refer to .07 Codes and Appendixes.)

AHFC determines which municipalities comply with the inspection procedures mandated by AS 18.56.300 and prepares a list for public use. The [List of Approved Municipalities](#) in the Appendix consists of the municipalities that have building codes and enforcement procedures that meet or exceed the state building code for residential housing. An approved municipality issues a "Certificate of Occupancy" or "CO" as evidence of compliance.

## **.09 LIABILITY OF INSPECTORS**

In accordance with AS 18.56.300 (c), a person may not bring an action for damages against an authorized inspector who inspected a residential unit unless the action is for damages caused by the gross negligence or intentional misconduct of the inspector.

## **.10 WHEN INSPECTIONS ARE REQUIRED**

### **A. Inspections Required**

Following are examples of construction projects that must undergo the approved inspection process.

1. Any dwelling unit where construction began on or after **July 1, 1992**.
2. Improvements to any dwelling where the original construction began on or after **July 1, 1992**. If the original construction required inspections, improvements to the living space, whether a total renovation or small addition, also require inspections.
3. Newly constructed manufactured and modular housing units placed on permanent foundations.

### **B. No Inspections Required**

Following are examples of projects that **do not** require construction inspections.

1. Improvements to dwellings where the original construction began **prior to July 1, 1992**. However, AHFC may require an inspection for an addition or renovation to determine the quality of construction and compliance with adopted building, fire and safety codes. If requested, the inspection may be performed by an architect, engineer, appraiser, or other qualified building inspector. AHFC's decision is made on a case-by-case basis and depends upon the scope and nature of improvements.
2. Non-living spaces such as garages, sheds, decks, fences, patios, workshops, and boat sheds do not require inspections.
3. Non-conforming housing as determined by AHFC and defined in the Selling Guide Section 5006.

## .11 DEFINITIONS

### A. Inspection

Except for plan approval, an inspection means an "on-site" inspection(s) of the construction project.

**Exception:** With AHFC's prior written approval, foundation inspections in rural areas (those meeting the definition of "rural" in the Selling Guide Section 1003), may be conducted by videotape, representative stationary photos, or other acceptable methods. A disinterested third party should take the videotape and/or representative photos, which must fully represent the work performed and the inspection being conducted.

### B. Construction Start

AHFC considers construction to have begun if the pilings, footings, or foundation has been started. Any improvement to a dwelling where the original construction began on or after **July 1, 1992**, must meet the minimum required inspections. If the original construction required inspections, inspections are required when making improvements to the living space.