



Commonwealth of Massachusetts
**DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING &
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

Charles D. Baker, Governor ♦ Karyn E. Polito, Lieutenant Governor ♦ Jennifer D. Maddox, Undersecretary

Public Housing Notice 2022-17

To: All Local Housing Authority (LHA) Executive Directors
From: Robert Garrett, Facilities Management Supervisor
MA Department of Fire Services (DFS)
Re: Fire Alarm Testing and Maintenance Requirements
Date: September 28, 2022

The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and the Department of Fire Services (DFS) has issued this public housing notice to outline fire alarm testing and maintenance requirements at your Local Housing Authority (LHA) and is providing the following guidance and technical resources to help ensure compliance.

Like all property owners in MA, LHAs are required to comply with the applicable provisions of [527 CMR 1.00](#), the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code, which is based on [NFPA 1](#), with amendments particular to Massachusetts. The purpose of [527 CMR 1.00](#) is to set minimum requirements and controls to safeguard life, property and public welfare from the hazards of fire and explosion created by the storage, handling or use of substances, materials or devices, or from conditions, or materials hazardous to life, property and the public welfare as prescribed in M.G.L. chs. [22D](#) and [148](#).

LHAs are responsible for the periodic testing and maintenance of ALL fire protection systems and devices. Additionally, all testing and maintenance, as well as, any repair or replacement work, shall be done by qualified and/or licensed personnel.

LHAs should be familiar with manufacturer prescribed and/or code required replacement schedules for ALL fire protection devices including, but not limited to:

- Smoke Detectors
- Heat Detectors
- Carbon Monoxide Detectors
- Sprinkler Heads
- Fire Extinguishers

DHCD requests that all Executive Directors review and familiarize applicable staff to the following provisions under the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code:

- [527 CMR 1.00: 13.1.2](#): The property owner shall be responsible for the proper testing and maintenance of the equipment and systems.

- [527 CMR 1.00: 13.1.5](#): Detailed records documenting all systems and equipment testing and maintenance shall be kept by the property owner and shall be made available upon request for review by the Authority having Jurisdiction (AHJ).
- [527 CMR 1.00: 13.1.7](#): All fire protection systems and devices shall be maintained in a reliable operating condition and shall be replaced or repaired where defective or recalled.

LHAs should utilize their Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and allotted formula funding to prioritize and address any deficient and/or expiring fire alarm systems and/or components.

If formula funding has been exhausted, LHAs should revise their CIP and submit it to DHCD, requesting DHCD Emergency Funding to address deficient and/or expired fire alarm & suppression systems. Please reach out to your DHCD Project Manager for questions on that process, or to discuss project eligibility for Emergency Funding.

Additionally, LHAs should clearly identify the frequency of testing and maintenance in a preventive maintenance plan and schedule of work, clearly indicating whether the LHA or a qualified contractor performs the required work. LHAs should also include the contractor name and confirm the existence of any service contracts within their adopted preventive schedule. The Regional Capital Assistance Team (RCAT) created the below linked template to assist LHAs with service contract procurement.

Any LHA may utilize it: [Fire Alarm Service Contract Template](#)

Documentation of ALL tests and maintenance must be kept on file, for review by your local Fire Department, and/or AHJ.

The ability for a local housing authority (LHA) to provide safe and sanitary housing is a core value of our collective mission. As such, the regular testing and maintenance of fire protection systems and devices is not only required by law, but necessary to support this goal.

DHCD encourages LHAs to contact their local Fire Department or AHJ for tailored guidance, to be sure the minimum testing, maintenance and/or replacement requirements are being satisfied. Please contact your assigned DHCD Facilities Management Specialist (FMS) for further assistance.

If you have any questions regarding the MA State Fire Code, the Department of Fire Services, Code Compliance & Enforcement Unit may be reached at 978-567-3375.