



Bruce Simpson City of Detroit Ombudsman 2024-2025 Ombudsman Budget Recommendations

“Improving Your Quality of Life on a Daily Basis”



Subsidized Housing Lead Inspections

Individuals who reside in subsidized housing are among the most vulnerable members of our society. These are citizens who have been provided financial assistance or subsidized rent from the government. However, it is crucial that the housing location be completely safe and free from any hazardous materials, such as lead, to ensure the well-being of these individuals. *The City of Detroit has strict and stringent requirements for lead, enforced through our **Rental Ordinance, Sec. 8-15-83**. This ordinance was modified and approved by the Detroit City Council in October 2021, based on the recommendation of BSEED, which had incorporated significant input from landlords and advocates. The ordinance’s focus on lead safety is part of the city’s multi-faceted efforts to reduce lead exposure, especially in children, whose cognitive abilities can be impaired at younger ages.*

Rental Ordinance Sec. 8-15-84 and 8-15-85 Outlines Inspection Acceptance from Other Governmental Agencies.

Sec. 8-15-84. - Landlords and staff are required to obtain HUD Visual Assessment Certification and annual inspections.

Per the ordinance, the City of Detroit accepts inspections from other governmental agencies if they have declared the location compliant, meaning that the City of Detroit may rely on their due diligence when inspecting the property.

*Landlords must hire a person with a current HUD Visual Assessment Certification to inspect all units annually and after changing tenants. **The landlord must certify to the Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department that the visual assessment has been completed according to HUD guidelines and that any hazards found have been addressed.** If hazards are found, a risk assessment must be done within one month.*

Sec. 8-15-85. - Federal and Other Governmental Agency Inspections Accepted

Pursuant to Section 126(3) of the Michigan Housing Law, MCL 125.526(3), The Buildings, Safety Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED) may approve inspections of single—or double-family houses, multiple dwellings, and rooming houses conducted by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under the Real Estate Assessment Center inspection process or other government agencies. The condition for approval is that the inspections certify that the inspected properties comply with the standards and requirements of this article.

Ombudsman Recommendation - We recommend the amendment of **Sec. 8-15-85** to ensure that the other governmental agencies meet our city's high standards. Noting that **MCL 125.526(3)** does not prevent our Building Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) inspectors from exercising their authority. State law reads that inspections of *multiple dwellings or other dwellings conducted by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development under the real estate assessment center inspection process or by other government agencies **may** be accepted by a local governmental unit and an enforcing agency as a substitute for inspections required by a local enforcing agency. To the extent permitted under applicable law, a local enforcing agency or its designee **may** exercise inspection authority delegated by law or agreement from other agencies or authorities that perform inspections required under other state or federal law.*

