


<b>Category:</b>	Housing	<b>INCA Community Services ESG Program Standards</b> 
<b>Sub Category:</b>	Emergency Shelter	
<b>Effective Date:</b>	4/16	
<b>Revised Date:</b>	4/18	
<b>Forms:</b>		
Responsible: Community Specialist, ESG Manager		
<b>Shelter and Housing Standards</b>		
<b>Policy</b>		
<p>In addition to the household being eligible, the unit to be assisted must also meet certain requirements. These include size requirements based on household size and composition, documentation that the rent is both reasonable and at or below the Fair Market Rent market rent, and a determination that the unit meets habitability standards.</p> <p>INCA will conduct initial any appropriate follow-up inspections of housing units in which program participants will be moving to insure the house is safe and habitable and meets the standards of the funding source.</p>		
<b>Determining the Unit Size Requirements</b>		
<p>INCA will determine the appropriate number of bedrooms needed by an individual or family when it determines family eligibility for financial assistance, based on the Occupancy Standards guidelines outlined below.</p> <p>The primary intent when developing occupancy standards for the rental homes is to provide for the smallest number of bedrooms needed by a household without overcrowding. Allowances for special needs or circumstances must be approved by the Executive Director. However, the standards developed by the program must be applied equally and fairly to all program participants.</p>		
<b>Occupancy Standards for ESG Rental Assistance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The head (and spouse/partner, if applicable) of household will be eligible for a separate bedroom.</li> <li>• Single persons are eligible for a studio or one-bedroom unit only.</li> <li>• Except as provided below, all other family members will use the standard of two persons per bedroom.</li> <li>• Persons of the opposite sex will not be required to occupy the same bedroom except in the case of infants or children up to age 12.</li> <li>• In some cases, relationship, age , sex, health, or handicap of a family member may warrant assignment of a larger unit size or bedroom configuration. Approval of such exceptions will be based on individual case review.</li> </ul>		

Unit Size Chart		
Unit Size	Minimum # of persons in household	Maximum # of persons per household
Studio (Efficiency Apartment)	1	1-2
1 Bedroom	1	2
2 Bedrooms	2	4
3 Bedrooms	4	6

| **Rent Reasonableness and Compliance with Fair Market Rent**  INCA will perform both a rent reasonableness determination and document that the rent falls at or below the Fair Market Rent on every unit assisted, whether for prevention or re-housing. The determinations must be made before approving rental assistance for a unit and before entering into an agreement with the landlord.  **Rent Reasonableness**  The total rent charged for a unit must be reasonable in relation to the rents being charged during the same time period for comparable units in the private unassisted market and must not be in excess of rents being charged by the owner during the same time period for comparable unassisted units. To make this determination INCA will consider:   - The location, quality, size, type, and age of the unit; and - Any amenities, housing services , maintenance and utilities to be provided by the owner.   INCA will use the Fair Market Rents in effect at the time of their determination. The Fair Market Rents is updated and published by HUD every year. Link: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/datasets/fmr.html>  When possible, rents shall not exceed:   - The fair market rent for existing housing for comparable units in the area as established by HUD under 24 CFR 888.111; or - A rent that does not exceed 30 percent of the adjusted income of a family whose annual income equals 65 percent of the median income for the area, as determined by HUD, with adjustments for the number of bedrooms in the unit. |  |  |
| **Shelter and Housing Standards**   - The structure must be structurally sound so as not to pose any threat to the health and safety of the occupants and so as to protect the residents from the elements. - The housing must be accessible and capable of being utilized without unauthorized use of other private properties. Structures must provide alternative means of egress in case of fire. - Each resident must be afforded adequate space and security for themselves and their belongings. - Each resident must be provided an acceptable place to sleep. |  |  |

- Every room or space must be provided with natural or mechanical ventilation. Structure must be free of pollutants in the air at levels that threaten the health of residents.
- The water supply must be free from contamination.
- Residents must have access to sufficient sanitary facilities that are in proper operating condition, may be used in privacy, and are adequate for personal cleanliness and the disposal of human waste.
- The housing must have adequate heating and/or cooling facilities in proper operating condition.
- The housing must have adequate natural or artificial illumination to permit indoor activities and to support the health and safety of residents. Sufficient electrical sources must be provided to permit the use of essential electrical appliances while assuring safety from fire.
- All food preparation areas must contain suitable space and equipment to store, prepare, and serve food in a sanitary manner.
- The housing and any equipment must be maintained in sanitary condition.
- Fire Safety.
  - Each unit must include at least one battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detector, in proper working condition, on each occupied level of the unit.
  - Smoke detectors must be located, to the extent practicable, in a hallway adjacent to a bedroom.
  - If the unit is occupied by hearing impaired persons, smoke detectors must have an alarm system designed for hearing impaired persons in each bedroom occupied by a hearing-impaired person.
  - The public areas of all housing must be equipped with a sufficient number, but not less than one for each area, of battery-operated or hard-wired smoke detectors. Public areas include, but are not limited to, laundry rooms, community rooms, day care centers, hallways, stairwells, and other common areas.

### **Dissemination of Policy**

The policy will be made available to all employees through the agency's website. The agency will educate and train employees and supervisors regarding the policy and any conduct that could constitute a violation of the policy.