

BED BUG POLICY

Bed bugs are a growing national problem, and as a result, this policy has been created for the Public Housing program. The purpose of this policy is to set forth the roles and responsibilities of all parties, East Providence Housing Authority, hereinafter referred to as EPHA, and residents, 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 work simultaneously toward a common goal of extermination and elimination. Left untreated, bed bugs can spread throughout a residence affecting current and future tenants.

Upon notification from the tenant, EPHA will schedule an initial inspection of the tenant's residence to be performed by the pest control company. The "EPHA & Tenant Roles and Responsibilities" document will be provided to the tenant. This document will be explained to the tenant to ensure understanding and compliance prior to treatment. In addition, EPHA will secure the tenant's signature indicating understanding, and compliance.

When an infestation is identified, and the unit is successfully prepared by the tenant, the EPHA will professionally treat the dwelling unit and perform follow-up to ensure treatment was successful.

Any surrounding units that have been identified as having bed bugs will also be treated. The pest control company may recommend that the surrounding units, with no evidence of bed bugs, be treated as a precaution. Final determination will be made by the housing authority and must be approved by the Executive Director or Facilities Manager. The length, method and extent of the treatment will depend on the severity and complexity of the infestation.

In order to educate tenants and minimize potential for the presence of bed bugs, EPHA has created a "Prevention Tips" document. The EPHA will actively engage tenants in efforts to prevent bed bugs by raising awareness through workshops, new tenant and staff orientation, posting signs, and distributing handouts.

HUD regulations require the tenant's cooperation in order to successfully eliminate the presence of bed bugs. Therefore, it is the tenant's responsibility to notify the EPHA as soon as the presence of bed bugs is suspected. If it is determined by the EPHA that bed bugs are present, the tenant **must** complete all items listed on the EPHA & Tenant Roles and Responsibilities" sheet prior to treatment and as soon as possible. This will help to minimize the severity of bed bug presence and resolve the problem quickly. A tenant may be deemed in violation of the bed bug policy if they fail to fully cooperate and comply with their roles and responsibilities.

Bed Bug Policy Attachments

- **EPHA & Tenant Roles and Responsibilities**
- **Prevention Tips**

East Providence Housing Authority
99 Goldsmith Avenue
East Providence, RI 02864

Bed Bug Management Plan

EPHA & Tenant Roles and Responsibilities

Bed bugs are a problem that can only be solved when both parties, East Providence Housing Authority (EPHA) and tenant, work simultaneously toward common goals. Those goals are detection, extermination, elimination, and prevention. HUD regulations require the tenant's cooperation in order to successfully eliminate the presence of bed bugs. If your unit has been found to have them, the process to eliminate them could take several weeks. If your unit surrounds a unit that is reported to have an infestation, you will also be inspected. Without proper treatment, bed bugs are difficult to contain and have the potential to infest neighboring housing units. In addition, 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. EPHA will **not** be responsible for the reimbursement and/or replacement of any tenant furniture, clothing, household items, and medical expenses.

The following plan outlines the roles and responsibilities of EPHA (landlord) and the tenant in the treatment of bed bugs:

EPHA will

- Schedule inspection of dwelling unit upon receiving report of bed bugs to determine if they are present. Inspection will be performed by qualified third party trained in bed bug detection within 3 days, if possible. If licensed pest control company is not available to perform inspection, EPHA will document the efforts to obtain qualified services.
- Based on the severity of the infestation, it may be necessary to gain entry to the dwelling unit without providing a 48 hour notice.
- Inspect units above, below, and each side of infested unit to determine course of action. In most instances, the surrounding units will also be treated, regardless of whether an infestation has been found. You will be informed of treatment in advance.
- Provide tenant with instructions on how to prepare for the treatment. Schedule treatment date as soon as possible and notify tenant of date. Treatment may begin as soon as 5 business days following inspection (subject to tenant readiness).
- Provide up to twelve (12) large trash bags at no charge to the tenant for the storage of clothing, towels, other linens etc. prior to and during treatment.
- Treat dwelling unit including furniture.
 - If the treatment of furniture is deemed unsuccessful, tenant may be required to dispose of furniture at their expense. All the items being disposed of are to be completely sealed or maintenance may refuse the disposal until items are properly sealed.
- Perform follow-up inspections to ensure treatment was effective.
- Perform additional treatments as necessary.

Tenant

- Tenants MUST report to Housing Authority staff immediately if there are any signs of bed bugs and/or any such pests or infestation. Reporting can be done by visiting the office, or by calling the office at 434-7645. You may speak to your housing specialist, the receptionist, or the facilities manager. Any willful failure on the part of a tenant to report a bed bug infestation may result in adverse action taken against the tenant, up to and including eviction.
- It is recommended that the tenant be onsite at the scheduled time when initial inspection is conducted. While the EPHA has compiled a list of how to prepare, the exterminator may have instructions that differ, depending on the severity of the infestation. However, if the tenant cannot be present, a member of the maintenance staff will remain with the pest control company.
- For treatment to be effective, tenant must perform the tasks listed below prior to the scheduled treatment date. The EPHA is responsible for the cost of extermination of the bed bugs. Residents are responsible for preparing their unit as outlined below, and any costs associated with this preparation. The tenant is encouraged to complete items listed as soon as possible in order to minimize severity of bed bug presence and resolve the problem quickly.
 - Remove all sheets, blankets, mattress covers, pillowcases, etc. from beds, place them in plastic bags. Take off property to laundromat. Place items in the washer in hot water (120+degrees recommended). THROW THE PLASTIC BAGS AWAY. DO NOT RE-USE THEM. Dry in clothes dryer on the highest heat setting for at least 30 minutes. Fold them and place them in clean plastic bags and seal the plastic bags tightly. Do not put them back on the bed until the evening after treatment.
 - Remove everything from bedrooms and hall closets. Closets, dresser drawers, and night stand drawers must be empty. Remove all clothing, boxes etc. from bedroom floors.
 - Wash all clothing, towels, and other linens in hot water (120+degrees recommended) and dry in the 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 after treatment. DO NOT RE-USE PLASTIC BAGS.
 - Vacuum (using disposable vacuum cleaner bags) all furniture, dresser drawers, nightstand drawers, mattress, and box springs. Place disposable vacuum cleaner bag inside plastic garbage bag that is sealed tightly and discard in outdoor trash receptacle immediately.
 - Discard all cardboard hangers, boxes etc.
 - Remove all pictures from walls. Bed bugs have been known to live on the back of a picture frame.
 - The bed bug mattress encasements that will be provided to you by the pest control company are an effective bed bug deterrent, when combined with treatment and **must remain on the mattress for at least one year.** If the mattress or box spring encasement becomes torn or damaged it is the tenant's responsibility to replace.

- If there is a need to dispose of any infested furniture, mattresses, box springs, or clothing, please consult with the maintenance staff in advance. Placing these items in dumpster or other trash receptacles on the site of the property, owned by the EPHA, is not advisable.
 - Tenant **must** remain out of the residence for a minimum of four hours after treatment, (includes all household members and pets). Depending on the time of year, this will vary. Please check the time with the exterminator. TAKE ANY NEEDED MEDICATIONS WITH YOU.
 - If the tenant refuses or is not able to prepare the unit properly, and within a reasonable amount of time, the EPHA will contract to have the unit prepared and bill the tenant for any fees associated with the preparation. It is imperative that the preparation take place in a timely fashion in order to allow the Contractor to treat the unit. Some residents that receive home health care services may be able to have their provider help with the unit preparation. Contact EPHA's Resident Service Coordinator for assistance.
- Furniture that does not respond to the treatment must be disposed of or professionally treated. If tenant chooses to dispose of furniture, EPHA will remove furniture from the unit at tenant's request and at their expense. In addition, all the items being disposed of are to be completely sealed or maintenance will refuse the disposal until items are properly sealed. If tenant chooses to dispose of furniture on their own, management may request it be removed from the premises.

FAILURE TO COMPLY: If treatment is scheduled and the exterminator determines that tenant has not performed the above stated responsibilities, the following will occur:

- 1. Treatment may be cancelled by the exterminator*
- 2. Tenant lease may be terminated at EPHA's discretion*

East Providence Housing Authority
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. When torn, replace immediately.
- Check your own bed for bed bugs from time to time. Catching them early will make bed bug treatment easier if bed bugs do occur.
- Report any evidence of bed bugs immediately.
- 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.
- If you have an infestation, do not give away, clothing or bedding to family or friends. Do not leave these items in common areas. You are in danger of infesting another home.
- When purchasing second hand clothing, place all garments in sealed bag until they can be washed and place in dryer on high heat for 15 to 30 minutes.
- If you purchase used furniture, examine it for bed bugs. The purchase of used furniture, including mattresses, and bed frames is **highly discouraged**.
- 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.
- Stay informed! Attend informational meetings held on sites that offer prevention tips.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER
TO PREVENT INFESTATION!!!

Thank You
MANAGEMENT