

Step-by-Step Move-In Safety & Compliance Guide & Checklist

For New Homeowners & Rental Properties

A Walk-Through, Safety Fix Guide, and Checklist

Prepared by UnClutter & More



How to Use This Guide

This guide is meant to be used **immediately after purchasing a home or before renting a property to tenants.**

Follow it **step by step, section by section.** Each item includes:

- what to check
- why it matters
- how to fix it safely
- a checkbox to mark when completed

Treat this like a **liability walkthrough.** When every box is checked, your property is positioned to:

- meet basic safety expectations
 - reduce injury risk
 - protect you from fines, claims, or lawsuits
-

STEP 1: Life-Safety Devices (Start Here)

These are the **highest-risk items** in any home.

Smoke Alarms △ High Risk

Check:

- Installed on every level of the home
- Installed near sleeping areas
- Units are securely mounted
- Alarm sounds when tested

Why it matters:

Missing or non-working smoke alarms are a top cause of failed inspections and liability claims.

Fix safely:

- Replace batteries
 - Replace units older than 7–10 years
-

Carbon Monoxide (CO) Detectors △ High Risk

Check:

- Installed near bedrooms
- Installed on each level (where required)
- Alarm tests successfully

Why it matters:

CO is odorless and deadly. Missing detectors create serious legal exposure.

Fix safely:

- Install plug-in or hardwired detectors
- Replace expired units

STEP 2: Stairs, Railings & Fall Hazards

Falls are one of the most common home injuries.

Handrails & Guardrails △ High Risk

Check:

- Handrails installed where required
- Rails do not wobble or shift
- Guardrails present on elevated areas

Why it matters:

Loose or missing rails are immediate safety failures.

Fix safely:

- Tighten fasteners into framing or masonry
- Replace damaged rail sections

Stairs & Step Consistency

Check:

- No broken or loose steps
- Step heights are even
- No slippery surfaces

Fix safely:

- Secure loose treads
- Add non-slip strips if needed

STEP 3: Doors, Windows & Emergency Egress

Every occupant must be able to exit safely.

Bedroom Windows (Egress) ⚠ High Risk

Check:

- Windows open fully
- No painted-shut frames
- No blocked exits

Why it matters:

Improper egress is a major inspection and safety issue.

Fix safely:

- Free stuck windows
 - Remove obstructions
-

Exterior Doors & Locks

Check:

- Doors open and close smoothly
- Locks function properly
- Deadbolts engage fully

Fix safely:

- Adjust hinges
 - Lubricate or replace locks
-

STEP 4: Electrical Safety Basics

Electrical issues are common and dangerous.

GFCI Outlets △ High Risk

Check:

- Installed in kitchens, bathrooms, laundry, and exterior areas
- Test and reset properly

Why it matters:

Missing GFCIs increase shock risk and fail inspections.

Fix safely:

- Test outlets
- Replace non-working units

Outlet Covers & Fixtures

Check:

- No missing or cracked covers
- No exposed wiring

Fix safely:

- Replace covers
 - Stop and call a professional if wiring is exposed
-

STEP 5: Common Safety Misses People Forget

These are often overlooked but flagged later.

Trip Hazards

Check:

- Loose flooring or rugs
- Raised thresholds
- Cords across walkways

Fix safely:

- Secure rugs
 - Repair transitions
-

Ventilation & Clearances

Check:

- Vents unobstructed
- Appliances have clearance

Fix safely:

- Remove blockages
 - Rearrange stored items
-

STEP 6: What NOT to DIY

Do **not** attempt the following:

- electrical panel work
- gas connections
- structural modifications
- stair or railing redesigns

Mistakes here create **serious liability**.

STEP 7: Final Safety Review

Before move-in or tenant occupancy:

- All high-risk items addressed
 - No temporary or unstable fixes
 - Home feels safe and accessible
 - Emergency exits are clear
-

Want This Handled for You?

UnClutter & More offers:

- safety walkthroughs
 - small compliance fixes
 - rental and move-in prep services
-

Final Word

This guide is about **responsibility and protection**.

When safety is handled *before* someone moves in, problems don't escalate — they disappear.

Updates & Revisions Notice

This guide may be updated periodically to reflect:

- safety standards and bylaws
 - improved best practices
 - clearer fix methods
-

Thank You

Thank you for choosing **UnClutter & More**.

This guide reflects the same safety-first standards we use on real properties — practical, clear, and built to protect people and property.

— The UnClutter & More Team

