



Farm Labor Housing Compliance Task Force Inspection Information Sheet

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This flyer has been created to provide information to agricultural/ranch property owners and operators about what to expect when consenting to an inspection by San Mateo County's Farm Labor Housing Compliance Task Force ("Task Force"). It provides information about the composition of the inspection team, the scope of the inspection, and property owners' rights in connection with the inspection. For specific questions about the inspection of your property/operation, please work directly with the Task Force representative who contacts you to schedule an inspection. For general questions about the Task Force's inspections, please contact FarmWorkerHousingSupport@smcgov.org or leave a message at (650) 363-4404.

Task Force Team

For routine inspections, the Task Force will consist of approximately 5 representatives from the County's Building & Code Compliance Department and Environmental Health Department. Representatives from the County's Office of Community Affairs may also attend where the need for interpretation or farmworker outreach is identified. Representatives from other County departments or outside agencies may be added to non-routine inspections, subject to advance notice and either appropriate consent or other authorized access (explained below). Each member of the inspection team and their role will be introduced at the start of every inspection.

Structures Inspected

Task Force members will limit their inspections to areas of identified or suspected housing not exclusively occupied by the property owner or operator. These areas include both traditional housing structures—such as single-family homes, multi-unit buildings, manufactured/mobile homes, and recreational vehicles—and other structures that, based on the totality of circumstances, are reasonably suspected of being used as housing. Task Force inspections do not include any residence occupied exclusively by the operator or owner of the property or any other structure or facility not identified or suspected of being used as housing.

Scope of Inspections

The focus of the Task Force is to ensure that all housing complies with essential health and safety standards, such as safe construction; access to potable water, power, basic heating, and plumbing; adequate fire safety features (e.g., emergency egress, smoke, and CO detectors); essential ventilation (e.g., gas appliance ventilation); and appropriate waste disposal. If the tenant-occupied housing is on a water source that has not undergone periodic required testing, the inspection will include a water sample test for coliform bacteria to ensure minimum health and safety standards of the drinking water. All results will be shared with the owner/operator. Absent evidence of other immediate health and safety concerns, Task Force inspections will be limited to compliance with those essential standards and will neither require proof of applicable permits for housing structures inspected nor start the clock on the deadline for obtaining such permits. In instances where

corrections or improvements need to be made in order to achieve minimum health and safety standards, the Task Force will not generally be requiring permits to complete such work but will need to confirm that the corrections/improvements have been properly completed. (Note, however, that modifications to a water or septic system may require a permit. Details in specific instances will be discussed with property owners.)

Private Property Rights

All Task Force inspections will be performed in strict compliance with a property owner's rights under the Fourth Amendment. As most relevant to the work of the Task Force, inspectors may enter onto private property under the Fourth Amendment in two scenarios:

- **Consent.** Task Force members may enter private property to conduct an inspection with appropriate consent that is voluntarily given. A private property owner and/or tenant has the right to refuse, or to revoke, consent to access *all or a portion of* private property under their control. If that occurs, Task Force members *must* respect that refusal/revocation and limit their inspection to only the portion of private property, if any, to which the property owner or tenant consents.
- **Civil Inspection Warrant.** In cases in which appropriate consent has not been provided, or it was withdrawn or limited, Task Force members may enter private property subject to a judicially issued inspection warrant. If an inspection warrant is needed, the Task Force will work with the County Attorney's Office to obtain one.