

Capacity Assessment Key Findings

HOUSING

In the fall of 2022, the Office of Local and Regional Health conducted a Capacity Assessment of local health departments in Massachusetts to evaluate local public health's current ability to provide basic public health services based on their available resources, including staffing levels, funding, and training. The first-ever Massachusetts Local Public Health Performance Standards, which defined basic levels of services and workforce credentials and training, framed the assessment. As part of this assessment, a qualitative review of documentation submitted by municipalities was conducted, focusing on various subject areas to evaluate the implementation of crucial public health services.

The housing documents included: rooming house inspections, condemnation orders, orders to correct, housing inspections, lead determinations, and positive lead determinations.



1

THOROUGH AND SYSTEMATIC INSPECTIONS

Inspectors must be trained to approach inspections systematically, document each step properly, and ensure housing inspections meet legal requirements.

- Stronger orientation programs and mentorship for new inspectors can support this process.



2

CITATION LISTING AND COMPLETENESS

While many inspection reports provided sufficient descriptions and details about what was observed during the inspection, they often lacked clarity, identification of hazards, and proper citation references.

- Identify and explain violations in accordance with the housing code requirements.
- Always include the citation numbers with violations.
- Ensure all documentation is complete.



3

INCONSISTENT FOLLOW-UP AND TIMEFRAMES

Enforcement actions and timeframes were inconsistent and sometimes not in line with the code requirements.

- Timelines should be assigned based on the code.
- Re-inspections should align with the most urgent timeline.
- Always provide evidence of re-inspections to show proper follow-up and enforcement.



4

HOUSING COURT COMPLIANCE

Documents must contain all the correct information including signatures and follow the proper legal procedures if they are to be considered valid in court.

- Ensure all necessary documents include signatures.
- Ensure all documents are signed and kept on file.
- Condemnation orders must be advertised for at least three out of five consecutive days in the paper of record.

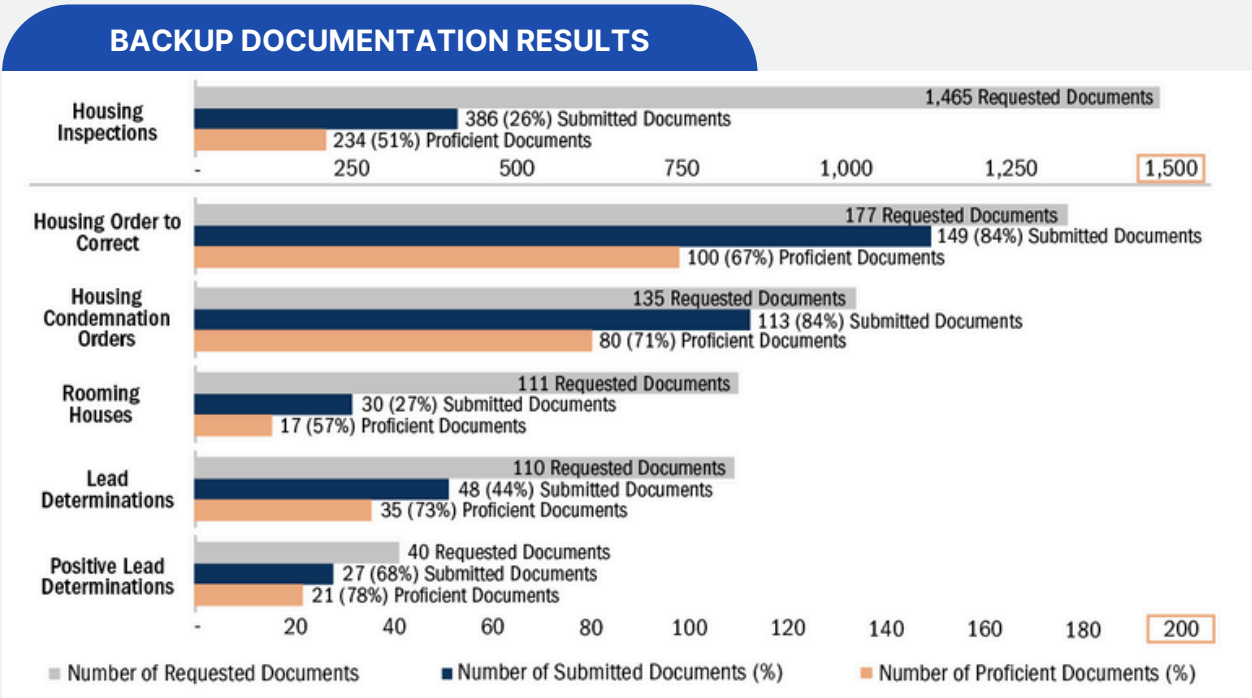
Effective housing documentation requires clarity and thoroughness. The most exemplary inspections were characterized by clear, organized, and concise reporting that strictly adhered to regulations in the housing code. These housing inspections left no room for confusion or ambiguity.



Housing Qualitative Findings

The tables below outline the reasons each type of housing document did not meet the proficiency standard. **The most frequently selected evaluation criteria are bolded in red and ordered by frequency from greatest to least.**

The figure to the right presents the percentage of submitted documents and their proficiency for the Housing category. The most significant issue for Housing overall was the absence or incomplete of an Order to Correct, followed by a missing or insufficient reinspection.



ORDER TO CORRECT DOCUMENTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA
Order to Correct not completed or documented
Conditions deemed to endanger without proper follow-up action
Follow-up action not completed or documented
Missing or insufficient reinspection documentation
Conditions that may put residents and/or abutters at risk not properly addressed
Conditions that may contribute to illness or hazardous living conditions not properly addressed
Inspection Report Form does not comply with regulatory requirements

CONDEMNATION ORDER DOCUMENTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA
Order to Correct not completed or documented
Conditions that may contribute to illness or hazardous living conditions not properly addressed
Violations that may put residents and/or abutters at risk not properly addressed
Conditions deemed to endanger without proper follow-up action
Inspection Report Form required and critical fields not completed that would put residents and/or abutters at risk
Follow-up action not completed or documented

Housing Qualitative Findings

INSPECTIONS 1/2/3 FOR 2018/19/21 DOCUMENTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Order to Correct not completed or documented

Reinspection not completed or documented

Initial inspection not completed or documented

Follow-up action not completed or documented

Inspection report form required and critical fields not completed that would put residents and/or abutters at risk

Conditions deemed to endanger without proper documented follow-up action

Inspection report form does not comply with regulatory requirements

Conditions that may contribute to illness or hazardous living conditions not properly addressed

Violations that may put residents and/or abutters at risk not properly addressed

LEAD DETERMINATION DOCUMENTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Critical fields not completed

Inspection Report Form insufficient or not approved

Reinspection not completed or documented

Follow-up action not completed or documented

Not conducting lead-based inspections where a child under 6 resides

POSITIVE LEAD DETERMINATION DOCUMENTS

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Reinspection not completed or documented

Critical fields not completed