

MFA 2016 Mandatory Design Standards for Multifamily Housing **Effective as of January 1, 2016**

The following Design Standards represent the minimum requirements for New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority (MFA) financed rental housing. MFA values excellence in design because well designed housing meets the needs of tenants, attracts market renters and promotes community acceptance of housing financed by MFA. All projects shall meet or exceed each of these standards, as well as the minimum requirements of all applicable building codes and regulations. In addition, projects shall meet ADA and Fair Housing Requirements. Each Project architect and owner will be required to certify at application that the Project design meets these Design Standards, and at completion will be required to certify that the Project was built in compliance with these Design Standards. The Design Standards have been arranged into three sections: "New Construction," "Rehabilitation," and "Special Projects" and shall be used as applicable for each type of project or each portion of a project.

NEW CONSTRUCTION

A. GENERAL DESIGN:

1. New Construction projects shall conform to the following provisions and requirements as described in the New Construction section of this Standard unless specific site conditions make compliance technically infeasible.
2. Provisions shall be made for ACCESSIBILITY for people with disabilities in conformance with the requirements of Federal and State law including the Fair Housing Act (FHA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). At minimum five percent (5%) of the Units on a Project Site shall meet the provisions of a Type A accessible unit as described in the ANSI A117.1 2003 standard. An additional two percent (2%) of the units shall meet the provisions of a "hearing impaired unit." Depending on the funding sources and other partners' requirements, the project may also be subject to Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards (UFAS) requirements. The Development Team is responsible to know and meet all accessibility requirements for their project.
 - i. An accessible route shall be provided to all accessible units, to all public use spaces, to all common use spaces, and to site amenities (such as mail centers and dumpsters).
 - ii. Playgrounds and exercise rooms shall be made accessible in accordance with ADA requirements.
 - iii. Not less than one of the Type A units provided shall be fitted with a roll in shower which shall be constructed in conformance with the ANSIA117.1-2003 standard.
 - iv. A van accessible parking space shall be provided for each designated Type A accessible unit and for the Community Building at the ratios required by ADA.
3. Provisions shall be made for ADAPTABILITY for people with disabilities in conformance with the requirements of Federal and State law including the Fair Housing Act (FHA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). All units located on an accessible path shall meet the provisions of either a Type A or Type B accessible unit as described in the ANSI A117.1 2003 standard. An accessible route shall be provided to all ground floor units (unless noted through exception as found within the FHA and ANSI standards

based on site configuration – SEE Fair Housing Act Design Manual and ANSI A117.1-2003 for additional information).

4. Each project shall be designed, constructed, and inspected to meet the provisions of an MFA approved green building standard. From the onset, the project team will select an appropriate green building standard, shall complete a preliminary check list describing the intended measures to be followed, shall demonstrate that the project will meet the minimum certifying levels approved by MFA, and shall complete the design and construction of the project to meet this level of expectation and certification. See “MFA Green Building Supplement” for additional information. In achieving this certification, MFA places additional emphasis on specific areas of interest and requires that the design and construction exceed the mandatory requirements within the following categories:
 - i. New construction units shall achieve a HERS score better than 85.
 - ii. New construction units shall utilize plumbing fixtures with flow rates and flush rates that are less than those required by Code.
 - iii. If bus and/or commuter rail service is available within the municipality, the project shall be located within 1 mile walk distance of a service stop.

B. SITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT:

1. Sites shall be designed, constructed, monitored and maintained in accordance with the Federal Clean Water Act. See EPA’s “*Managing Your Environmental Responsibilities: A Planning Guide for Construction and Development*” for additional information and requirements. <http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npdes/stormwater/upload/myerguide.pdf>
2. Sites shall be constructed to drain away from buildings. Storm water recharge of groundwater is a goal. Ponding areas shall be made attractive but safe for residents.
3. Parking shall be provided at the minimum numbers as defined by local Zoning Ordinance, or absent any zoning ordinance at the minimum rate of 1 space per unit for each one bedroom or smaller and the rate of 1.5 spaces per unit for larger units. Additional parking shall be provided at the Community Building for public and visitor use.
4. Parking for bicycles shall be provided at the ratio of 1 space per unit for family properties and 0.5 spaces per unit in elderly properties. Bicycle parking should be provided in secure areas outside of the unit area and in locations that do not compromise building safety or exiting. Bicycle parking at exterior locations shall be placed in highly visible locations and adjacent to the units the spaces serve. Bicycle parking may be congregate. Multiple spaces may be accomplished on a single rack. Bicycle parking racks should be fixed and permanent in nature.
5. Common use site areas shall include refuse collection, mail distribution, laundry, recreation, and congregation. All such areas shall be connected with an accessible route.
 - i. Refuse collection areas shall be convenient to the units, shall be screened, and shall offer room for recycling activities if such service is available in that municipality.
 - ii. Mail distribution areas shall be well lit and secure but shall remain open to the tenants at all times.

- iii. Laundry facilities shall be provided for tenant use at all properties with more than 20 units on the site.
 - 1. Laundry facilities shall be secure and well-lit from dusk until dawn.
 - 2. Washers and Dryers shall be provided at the following ratios:
 - a. One each washer and dryer for every twelve units where hook ups are not provided in each individual unit.
 - b. One each washer and dryer for every twenty units where hook ups are provided in each individual unit.
 - c. If washers and dryers are provided in each individual unit, additional community machines are not required.
 - 3. An accessible clothes folding table or counter shall be provided in each laundry facility.
 - iv. Site recreational areas shall be provided for each target tenant demographic housed at the community.
 - 1. For predominantly adult and elderly communities, site recreational facilities shall be provided on an accessible route, and shall encourage physical activity and community interaction.
 - 2. For family communities, site recreational facilities shall include accessible play areas, shall be provided for different age groups, shall encourage physical activity, and shall be safe and secure. Activities for different age groups may be combined within a common play area as appropriate.
 - a. All play areas shall be located away from high automobile traffic and shall be situated for maximum visibility from the dwelling units.
 - b. A play area for children under 5 shall be provided within direct visibility of common spaces.
 - c. A play area for children 5 – 12 shall be provided.
 - d. A play area for children over 12 shall be provided.
 - e. Visible warning signs describing playground rules and warning that children play at their own risk shall be provided at each play area.
 - f. An accessible, weather resistant, permanently mounted bench shall be provided at each play area.
6. Landscaping shall be required at all properties:
- i. A complete landscape plan which maximizes existing natural features or otherwise enhances open space is required.
 - ii. Native, semi-native, or drought tolerant plants shall be used.
 - iii. Low water use irrigation systems shall be used.
7. Interior Community Spaces and Business Offices shall be provided at each property.
- i. All special needs and elderly developments shall have a community room for tenant and public use.
 - ii. All developments consisting of twenty or more residential dwelling units shall have a site office of at least 200 square feet and a maintenance room of not less than 100 square feet.

- iii. Accessible public restrooms for both men and women shall be provided at or near the office space and shall be accessible to the community room.

C. BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION:

1. Exterior Building Design:

- i. Buildings shall be designed to meet the local zoning requirements for that project site, including requirements for unit densities, building heights, building setbacks, massing, colors, and materials.
- ii. Definitions: The following specific terms as used in this document shall be defined as following:
 - 1. Building Façade: The “Building Façade” shall be defined to be: “Any elevation of a building facing a public way or space.” A building Façade shall be inclusive of all building elements compiled to create a visual impression. This is much more inclusive than just the building skin.
 - 2. Building Shape: The “Building Shape” shall be defined to be: “The primary rectilinear volume of the building structure.”
 - 3. Building Shape Variations: “Building Shape Variations” shall be defined to be: “Any deviation in plane from the Building Shape.”

- iii. Unless other more stringent local zoning requirements apply, the following minimum design requirements shall be met:

- 1. Building Facades shall be multi-faced.
 - a. In no case shall a Building Shape be confined to a straight rectangle. Building Shape Variations shall be required at a ratio of not less than the number bedrooms situated on the ground floor plane.
- 2. Building Facades shall utilize not less than three different building materials.
 - a. Each Building Façade shall contain not less than three different building materials.
 - b. Changes in building materials may also satisfy the requirements for shape changes if the materials are not in the same plane.
 - c. Exterior building materials exposed to the elements shall be low maintenance.
- 3. Building Facades shall be multi-colored.
 - a. Each Building Façade shall include not less than two distinct colors.
 - b. Colors may be from the same hue family, but shall be distinct from each other.
- 4. Building Facades shall be complementary to the form and massing of existing buildings throughout the community.
- 5. Building Facades shall be unique to the location and shall be of attractive design.
- 6. Buildings shall be individually marked with visible, contrasting identifying signage to minimize the response time of emergency personnel. Building

identifying signs shall be illuminated so as to be clearly visible from dusk until dawn.

D. UNIT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION:

1. All residential dwelling units shall meet the following minimum unit size requirements. Unheated areas such as patios, decks, porches, stoops, or exterior accessed storage rooms are not to be included in the area calculations.
 - i. Efficiency 425 gross heated square feet
 - ii. 1 Bedroom 575 gross heated square feet
 - iii. 2 Bedroom 750 gross heated square feet
 - iv. 3 Bedroom 1,000 gross heated square feet
 - v. 4 Bedroom 1,200 gross heated square feet
2. All units shall meet the following minimum Bedroom areas and dimensions requirements:
 - i. The primary bedroom in each unit shall be not less than 120 square feet.
 - ii. Secondary bedrooms shall not be less than 100 square feet.
 - iii. No bedroom shall have a dimension less than 9 linear feet.
 - iv. Bedroom areas shall not include closets, hallways, or adjoining rooms, but shall be the area immediately surrounding the intended bed location.
3. All units shall meet the following minimum storage requirements:
 - i. An entry or coat closet shall be provided. It shall be of large enough dimension to house coats and a vacuum cleaner.
 - ii. A pantry closet of dimension large enough to store packaged dry goods shall be provided. (A tall utility cabinet may be substituted for a constructed closet).
 - iii. A linen closet of dimension large enough to store towels and bed linens shall be provided.
 - iv. A clothes closet in each bedroom shall be provided.
 - v. A mechanical closet (as appropriate for the system to be utilized) shall be provided.
 - vi. A laundry room or utility closet (if included in the unit design with the intent to provide washer and dryer hook ups) shall be provided.
 - vii. A bulk storage closet of floor dimensions not less than 36"x36" minimum shall be provided. The bulk storage closet may be located outside of the unit – either by secured exterior access or located within a separate secured enclosed space. If this is the case, tenants shall have free access to the storage closet at all times.
 - viii. Each of the above noted storage closets shall be individual of each other and shall not be jointly used or dual purposed.
4. Living areas within different unit types shall increase when the number of bedrooms reaches and exceeds three.
 - i. Living areas (defined as the living room, dining room and kitchen), shall increase by a minimum 10% additional floor area for each additional bedroom.
 - ii. The smallest 3 Bedroom unit shall have a living area that is 10% larger than the living area in the largest 2 Bedroom unit type provided.

- iii. The smallest 4 Bedroom unit shall have a living area that is 10% larger than the living area of the largest 3 Bedroom unit type provided.
5. 3 and 4 Bedroom units shall be provided with not less than 1.75 baths.
6. Single lever deadbolts and eye viewers are required on all entry doors to residential units.
7. Interior finishes shall be easily cleanable and durable.
8. Carpet shall not be installed in high moisture areas including: entryways, bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms/closets. Carpet shall be tacked down, not glued in place.
9. Units shall be individually marked with visible contrasting identifying signage that shall be illuminated so that it is clearly visible from dusk until dawn, as well as daylight hours.
10. Plumbing lines shall not be located on an exterior wall. A double wall construction is allowed such that a full depth of building insulation is provided behind any water lines.
11. All hot water lines shall be insulated and sealed in additional rigid pipe insulation to the insulation values required by ASHRAE standards.
12. Kitchens shall be equipped with range hoods that vent directly to the exterior of the building.
13. Bathrooms shall be equipped with exhaust vents that vent directly to the exterior of the building.
14. All laundry rooms/closets shall be provided with a dryer vent that vents directly to the exterior.
15. All HVAC ducts shall be enclosed within the heated envelope of the building. All ducts and vents shall be air sealed.
16. Heating and cooling systems shall be sized in accordance with ACCA Manual J and Manual D requirements or in accordance with ASHRAE standards.
17. All rooms and spaces shall be equipped with permanent, hardwired, energy efficient light fixtures.
18. Kitchen and laundry equipment and appliances shall be Energy Star rated. (Cooking appliances are exempt from this requirement).
19. Sites shall be developed and units constructed so as to include wiring and infrastructure needed to allow for access to internet, telephone, and cable/satellite television.

REHABILITATION

A. GENERAL DESIGN:

1. Rehabilitation projects shall conform to the following provisions and requirements as described in the Rehabilitation section of this Standard unless specific building and/or site conditions make compliance technically infeasible.
2. Provisions shall be made for ACCESSIBILITY for people with disabilities in conformance with the requirements of Federal and State law including the Fair Housing Act (FHA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). At minimum five percent (5%) of the Units on a Project Site shall meet the provisions of a Type A accessible unit as described in the ANSI A117.1 2003 standard. An additional two percent (2%) of the units shall meet the provisions of a "hearing impaired unit." Depending on the funding sources and other partner requirements, the project may also be subject to Uniform Federal Accessibility

Standards UFAS requirements. The Development Team is responsible to know and meet all accessibility requirements for their project.

- i. An accessible route shall be provided to all accessible units, to all public use spaces, to all common use spaces, and to site amenities (such as mail centers and dumpsters).
 - ii. Playgrounds and exercise rooms shall be made accessible in accordance with ADA requirements.
 - iii. Not less than one of the Type A units provide shall be fitted with a roll in shower which shall be constructed in conformance with the ANSIA117.1-2003 standard.
 - iv. An accessible parking space shall be provided for each designated Type A accessible unit and for the Community Building at the ratios required by ADA. At least one “van accessible” parking space shall be provided near the Business Office.
2. As technically feasible and to the degree that structural walls or foundation steps do not have to be moved, provisions shall be made for ADAPTABILITY for people with disabilities in conformance with the requirements of Federal and State law including the Fair Housing Act (FHA) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). A target minimum fifty percent (50%) of the Units on a Project Site should meet the provisions of either a Type A or Type B accessible unit as described in the ANSI A117.1 2003 standard. An accessible route should be provided to all ground floor units (unless otherwise excepted by the FHA and ANSI standards based on site configuration – SEE Fair Housing Act Design Manual and ANSI A117.1-2003 for additional information).
3. Each project shall be designed, constructed, and inspected to meet the provisions of an MFA approved green building standard. From the onset, the project team will select an appropriate green building standard, shall complete a preliminary check list describing the intended measures to be followed, shall demonstrate that the project will meet the minimum certifying levels approved by MFA, and shall complete the design and construction of the project to meet this level of expectation and certification. See “MFA Green Building Supplement” for additional information. In achieving this certification, MFA places additional emphasis on specific areas of interest and requires that the design and construction exceed the mandatory requirements within the following categories:
 - i. Rehabilitation units shall achieve a post-construction HERS score better than 85 or demonstrate a 25% minimum performance improvement over the pre-construction HERS survey.
 - ii. Plumbing fixtures to be replaced as part of the rehabilitation scope shall be replaced with fixtures utilizing flow rates and flush rates that are less than those required by Code.

B. SITE DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT:

1. Sites shall be improved, constructed, and monitored in accordance with the Federal Clean Water Act.

2. Sites shall be constructed to drain away from buildings. Storm water recharge of groundwater is a goal. Ponding areas shall be made attractive but safe for residents.
3. Parking should be provided at the minimum numbers as defined by local Zoning Ordinance.
4. Parking for bicycles shall be provided at the ratio of 0.5 spaces per unit for family properties and 0.25 spaces per unit in elderly properties. Bicycle parking should be provided in secure areas outside of the unit area and in locations that do not compromise building safety or exiting. Bicycle parking at exterior locations shall be placed in highly visible locations and adjacent to the units the spaces serve. Bicycle parking may be congregated. Multiple spaces may be accomplished on a single rack. Bicycle parking racks should be fixed and permanent in nature.
5. Common use site areas shall include refuse collection, mail distribution, laundry, recreation, and congregation. All such areas shall be connected with an accessible route.
 - i. Refuse collection areas shall be convenient to the units, shall be screened, and shall offer room for recycling if such service is available in that municipality.
 - ii. Mail distribution areas shall be well lit and secure but shall remain open to the tenants at all times.
 - iii. Laundry facilities shall be provided for tenant use at all properties with more than 20 units on the site.
 1. Laundry facilities shall be secure and well-lit from dusk until dawn.
 2. Washers and Dryers shall be provided at the following ratios:
 - a. One each washer and dryer for every twelve units where hook ups are not provided in each individual unit.
 - b. One each washer and dryer for every twenty units where hook ups are provided in each individual unit.
 - c. If washers and dryers are provided in each individual unit, additional community machines are not required.
 3. An accessible clothes folding table or counter shall be provided in each laundry facility.
 - iv. Site recreational areas shall be provided for each target tenant demographic housed at the community.
 1. For predominantly adult and elderly communities, site recreational facilities shall be provided on an accessible route, shall encourage physical activity, and shall encourage community interaction.
 2. For family communities, site recreational facilities shall include accessible play areas, shall be provided for different age groups, shall encourage physical activity, and shall be safe and secure. Activities for different age groups may be combined within a common play area as appropriate.
 - a. All play areas shall be located away from high automobile traffic and shall be situated for maximum visibility from the dwelling units.

- b. A play area for children under 5 shall be provided within direct visibility of common spaces.
 - c. A play area for children 5 – 12 shall be provided.
 - d. A play area for children over 12 shall be provided.
 - e. Visible warning signs describing playground rules and warning that children play at their own risk shall be provided at each play area.
 - f. An accessible, weather resistant, permanently mounted bench shall be provided at each play area.
6. Landscaping shall be required at all properties:
- i. A complete landscape plan which maximizes existing natural features or otherwise enhances open space is required.
 - ii. Native, semi-native, or drought tolerant plants shall be used.
 - iii. Low water use irrigation systems shall be used.
7. Interior Community Spaces and Business Offices shall be provided at each property.
- i. All special needs and elderly developments shall be a community room for tenant and public use.
 - ii. All developments consisting of twenty or more residential dwelling units shall have a site office of at least 200 square feet and a maintenance room of not less than 100 square feet.
 - iii. Accessible public restrooms for both men and women shall be provided at or near the office space and shall be accessible to the community room.

C. BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION:

1. Exterior Building Design:
- i. Unless other more stringent local zoning requirements apply, the following minimum design requirements shall be met::
 - 1. Building Facades shall utilize not less than three different building materials.
 - a. Each Building Façade shall contain not less than three different building materials.
 - b. Exterior building materials exposed to the elements shall be low maintenance.
 - 2. Building Facades shall be multi-colored.
 - a. Each Building Façade shall include not less than two distinct colors.
 - b. Colors may be from the same hue family, but shall be distinct from each other.
 - 3. Buildings shall be individually marked with visible, contrasting identifying signage to minimize the response time of emergency personnel. Building identifying signs shall be illuminated so as to be clearly visible from dusk until dawn.
 - ii. Developers are required to provide a preliminary façade sketch and narrative for a typical building describing the design intent and the intended design

measures to be employed in order to satisfy the provisions of this section. If the design is deemed not to meet these provisions, design alteration suggestions may be offered. It is, however, the burden of the developer and their team to demonstrate acceptable compliance.

D. UNIT DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION:

1. Single lever deadbolts and eye viewers are required on all entry doors to residential units.
2. Interior finishes shall be easily cleanable and durable.
3. Carpet shall not be installed in high moisture areas including: entryways, bathrooms, kitchens, and laundry rooms/closets. Carpet shall be tacked down, not glued in place.
4. All hot water lines exposed as a result of the construction shall be insulated and sealed in additional rigid pipe insulation to the insulation values required by ASHRAE standards.
5. Kitchens shall be equipped with range hoods that vent directly to the exterior of the building.
6. Bathrooms shall be equipped with exhaust vents that vent directly to the exterior of the building.
7. All laundry rooms/closets shall be provided with a dryer vent that vents directly to the exterior.
8. Units shall be individually marked with visible contrasting identifying signage that shall be illuminated so that it is clearly visible from dusk until dawn, as well as daylight hours.
9. All HVAC ducts shall be enclosed within the heated envelope of the building. All ducts and vents shall be air sealed.
10. Heating and cooling systems shall be sized in accordance with ACCA Manual J and Manual D requirements or in accordance with ASHRAE standards.
11. All rooms and spaces shall be equipped with permanent, hardwired, energy efficient light fixtures.
12. Kitchen and laundry equipment and appliances shall be Energy Star rated. (Cooking appliances are exempt from this requirement).

SPECIAL PROJECTS

A. SINGLE ROOM OCCUPANCY (SRO) DEVELOPMENTS:

1. Tenant Rooms (units) shall be 140 square feet minimum gross heated area with a maximum size of 500 square foot gross heated area.
2. Each unit shall contain at least one full size single bed, a lockable storage compartment or chest of drawers, and a vertical clothes closet measuring at minimum 36 inches wide.
3. Each building containing residential dwelling units shall provide bathroom facilities.
 - i. A bathroom facility shall be provided for every sixteen units or fraction thereof in that building.

- ii. Each bathroom facility shall provide bathroom fixtures at a ratio of the number of units it serves.
 1. One sink, one shower with curtain or door, and one toilet with a door shall be provided for every four units.
 4. Each building containing residential dwelling units shall include a food preparation area unless provided within all units within that building.
 - i. The food preparation area shall be adequately sized for the number of units it services.
 5. A community center, community living area, or meeting room shall be provided on the property.
 6. Laundry facilities shall be provided as required by the Mandatory Design Standards.

B. ADAPTIVE REUSE PROJECTS:

1. Adaptive reuse projects shall be subject to the full provisions of the Mandatory Design Standards for New Construction unless it is demonstrated to MFA's satisfaction that specific elements or requirements are technically infeasible to accomplish.