

MIGRANT FARM HOUSING

Information About Migrant Farm Housing

Between 1 and 3 million migrant farm workers leave their homes to plant, cultivate, harvest, and pack fruits, vegetables, and nuts. Hand labor is necessary for the production of the blemish-free fruits and vegetables that consumers demand.

Approximately 47,000 migrant farm workers and their family members come to New York State each year. The majority of workers in New York are of Mexican origin. Others come from Jamaica, Haiti, Guatemala, Honduras, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and other states within the United States.

Three hundred and eighty labor camps are approved to provide housing for 7,314 workers in NY State. The Clinton County Health Department performs inspections on migrant farm workers' housing units in Clinton County, to ensure that they are providing a safe and sanitary environment for the workers, per the health code.

Applying for a Permit to Operate

An application for a permit to operate a migrant farm camp that provides housing, must be submitted to the permit-issuing official at the Clinton County Health Department at least 30 days before. Below are some forms you can download to get started.

Responsibilities of the Operator

- Maintain structurally sound housing and prevent infestation by insects or rodents.
- Provide stoves, refrigerators and facilities for cooking and dining. The cooking, refrigeration equipment, shelves, dishwashing sink, table and chairs must be maintained in a proper operating condition and in good repair.
- Provide and maintain smoke detectors and fire extinguishers in every dwelling unit.
- Provide an adequate quantity of safe water to drink.
- Provide and maintain adequate toilets, showers and handwash facilities. Hot and cold water must be supplied to the sinks and showers.
- Provide laundry trays, wash tubs, sinks or washing machines with hot and cold water for washing clothes, and provide clothes lines or dryers for drying clothes.
- Provide an adequate number of containers, with covers, for storing garbage and refuse. The containers must be kept in good repair and clean.
- Provide adequate lighting fixtures and electrical circuits, and maintain electrical service and wiring in good repair and in a safe condition.
- Properly store flammable or volatile liquids and agricultural chemicals. Storage must not be in or adjacent to housing areas.
- Maintain access to an adequate communication system for occupants to call for help in the event of a medical or safety emergency and make available a first aid kit.
- Provide and maintain heating equipment that can maintain comfortable temperatures for habitable rooms, including bathrooms, shower rooms and washrooms.

Responsibilities of the Occupants

- Keep the living area, including cooking, shower, and toilet areas clean. Cook stoves and the areas around them must be cleaned regularly so grease does not build up and cause a fire hazard.
- Use the facilities and equipment provided in a safe and proper manner.
- Do not remove batteries or disconnect wires from smoke detectors or place plastic, tape or otherwise cover smoke detectors to make them inoperable.
- Do not use electrical adapters to increase the number of appliances or equipment that can be plugged into an electrical outlet.
- Do not remove or rip holes in screens, nor do not leave open the windows or doors, to prevent access to flies and other pests.
- Put garbage and trash in proper containers and keep the covers on the containers at all times.
- Do not burn garbage or throw garbage on the ground.
- Use only the heating or cooking appliances that have been approved to use in the facility.
- Do not use electric frying pans, portable burners or similar appliances to cook in your individual rooms.
- Portable space heaters must be approved for use.
- Do not allow guests to stay overnight without permission from the operator. Overnight occupancy cannot exceed the permitted capacity.

Please inform the facility operator of any housing problems. Conditions, such as no water, no heat, blocked sink drains or toilets, should be reported.

Contact Us

To receive more information, call or visit us at:

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Environmental Unit
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