Article VI Repeal and Replace: Public Comment

Article VI is the regulation that grants the Allegheny County Health Department (ACHD) Housing and Community Environment Program the authority to inspect and enforce minimum property standards and public health requirements for dwellings and premises in Allegheny County. The Article defines the requirements for how properties must be maintained inside and outside in order to keep residents and communities safe.

ACHD is proposing a major revision to Article VI and the Board of Health wants to hear from you! Below is a summary of key proposed changes and instructions on how to share your thoughts with the Board.

Why ACHD is proposing to repeal and replace Article VI:

The proposed revisions to Article VI would:

- Align Allegheny County housing standards with those found in other jurisdictions.
- Promote better understanding and readability for landlords and tenants.
- Improve safety standards to reduce and prevent injuries.
- Clarify the roles that both tenants and landlords have in keeping dwellings safe and healthy.

Overview of Notable Proposed Changes:

§ 604 Definitions: Language modernized and terms added to clarify requirements. p. 5
Revisions include definitions for:
- Class 1 – 4 and Class U Violations
- Dwelling or Dwelling Unit Unfit for Human Habitation
- Lead assessment terminology, including Abatement, Friction and Impact Surfaces, and Interim Controls
- Owner

§ 607 Penalty Notice: Updated to clarify that notices are only given when a penalty is issued rather than for any violation of the Article. p. 11

§ 612 Requirements for Rooming House Permits: Exceptions for rooming houses that are also food establishments have been removed, requiring operators to file separate plans and permitting fees to the Food Safety and Housing and Community Environment programs. p. 13

§ 615 Review of Plans and Fees for Rooming Houses (previously § 614): Adds requirement of plan submissions including window schedules showing dimension added. p. 14

§ 615 Violations, Notices and Hearings on Dwellings Unfit for Human Habitation (removed): Portions of this section have been moved to other sections of the Article. Robust definitions of the Classes have been added to the Definitions section for clarity. p. 15

§ 624 Openings: Adds requirement that deadbolts are installed for all entryways and doors that open to the outside. Adds requirements that windows that are openable must be secured to prevent sudden window drops and windows under 24 inches from the floor be equipped with fall prevention devices. p. 20

§ 626 Grading and Drainage (new section): Adds requirement that property be graded and drained properly to prevent erosion, landslides, and pooling water resulting in pests. p. 20
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>§ 627</td>
<td><strong>Accessory Structures</strong> <em>(new section)</em>: Adds requirement that owners and operators maintain the premises, including fences and other enclosures, in addition to dwellings.</td>
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| § 630   | **Electric Fixtures and Outlets**: Adds requirement that every bathroom has at least one duplex outlet. Clarifies requirements for the installation outlets with ground fault circuit interrupters to include:  
  - Every bathroom  
  - All outlets that are accessible and within 6 feet of any sink in any room (including basement or cellar)  
  - All outlets in the exterior that are readily accessible to occupants |
| § 633   | **Water Heating Facilities** *(previously § 631)*: Adds requirement that gas-burning water heaters cannot be kept within closable rooms unless adequate combustion air is provided. |
| § 637   | **Toilets, Lavatory Basins and Bathtubs and Showers in Rooming Houses and for Light Housekeeping Units** *(previously § 635)*: Revised to allow for a minimum of one toilet and on lavatory basin for every 10 persons, raised from 6 persons. Revised to allow for a minimum of one bathtub or shower for every 8 persons, raised from 6 persons. |
| § 638   | **Occupant Responsibility** *(previously § 636)*: Clarifies tenant responsibilities by placing program policy into regulation. |
| § 643   | **Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Detectors** *(previously § 641)*: Adds requirement of Carbon Monoxide Detectors in all dwellings that have fuel burning appliances, fireplaces, or attached garages. |
| § 648   | **Sleeping Room Area** *(previously § 646)*: Reduces the minimum floor area square footage for one occupant in their sleeping room to 70 square feet from 100 square feet. In rooms with more than one occupant, reduces the minimum square footage for the first occupant to at least 50 square feet from 100 square feet. |
| § 651   | **Lead Hazards** *(previously § 649)*: Clarifies requirements for addressing lead hazards. Defines lead hazards in alignment with HUD guidelines. |
| § 655   | **Facilities Required** *(previously § 653)*: Adds requirement that owners provide sufficient refuse containers to store occupant trash between scheduled collection times. |
| § 656   | **Responsibility for Proper Storage and Disposal** *(previously § 654)*: Adds requirement that large appliances such as refrigerators shall not be discarded, abandoned, or stored without first removing the doors. |

**The Full Article VI Revision Can Be Viewed Here:**
https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department/Resources/About/Board-of-Health/Public-Meeting-Schedule.aspx

**How to Read the Article VI Revision:**
- **Plain text**: Language that has not changed from the original Article VI.
- **Strikethrough text**: Language from the original Article VI proposed to be removed.
- **Bold and underline text**: Language that is proposed to be added to Article VI. This includes revised language as well as new content.
Share Your Thoughts by Submitting a Written Comment:
Written comments will be accepted Wednesday, May 10, 2023, through 11:59 PM on Monday, July 10, 2023. Comments may be submitted by email to PublicHealthComment@AlleghenyCounty.us or by mail to ACHD Administrative Offices:

Attn: Article VI Comments (Housing and Community Environment)
Allegheny County Health Department
542 Fourth Ave.
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

The Board of Health will also hold a public hearing on Thursday, July 6, 2023, at 5:00pm, at One Smithfield Street, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, to take testimony on the proposed repeal and replace of Article VI.

- Those who wish to present testimony must register via the Public Hearing Participation form or call ACHD Administrative Offices to be added to the registered speakers list no less than 24 hours in advance of the hearing.
  - The Public Hearing Participation form can be found here: https://www.alleghenycounty.us/Health-Department/Public-Hearing-Participation-Form.aspx
  - The ACHD Administrative Offices can be contacted at 412-578-7660.
- Testimony is limited to 3 minutes.

Questions? Contact the ACHD Administrative Offices at 412-578-7660.