TITLE: HANDRAIL
VERSION: V1.3
DATE PUBLISHED: 7/31/20

DEFINITION: A rail fixed to posts or a wall for people to hold on to for support.

PURPOSE: A rail designed to be grasped by the hand to provide stability or support. Handrails are commonly used while ascending or descending stairways and escalators in order to prevent injurious falls.

NAME VARIANTS: Bannister; Railing

COMMON MATERIALS: Metal; Wood

COMMON COMPONENTS: Rail; Baluster; Brackets; Anchor

LOCATION: ☒ Unit Stairs, hallways, ramps
        ☒ Inside Stairs, hallways, ramps, elevators
        ☒ Outside Stairs, ramps, elevators

MORE INFORMATION: None

DEFICIENCY 1: Handrail missing where required
LOCATION: ☒ Unit ☒ Inside ☒ Outside

DEFICIENCY 2: Handrail is not secure
LOCATION: ☒ Unit ☒ Inside ☒ Outside

DEFICIENCY 3: Handrail is improperly installed
LOCATION: ☒ Unit ☒ Inside ☒ Outside
Deficiency I — Unit: Handrail missing where required

Deficiency Criteria: Where 4 or more risers are present, a handrail is missing (i.e., evidence of prior installation, but now not present or is incomplete).

Health and Safety Determination: Standard
This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

Correction Timeframe: Within 30 days
HCV — Correction Timeframe: Within 30 days

Rationale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If a handrail is missing, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>Usability and Operability of Fixtures</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Because of this condition, the resident is unable to use certain fixtures, features, or appliances, which are reasonably assumed to be part of their rent.</td>
<td>If handrail is missing, then resident is unable to use a feature that is expected to be provided and maintained as part of their rent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Routine Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect that this deficiency would be identified through routine daily observations and facilities management would prioritize work orders to fix this deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is missing, then it is likely to be observed during daily maintenance activities and this defect’s presence may indicate that self-generated work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inspection Process:

Observation:  
- Look for all areas with stairs or ramps, or along the walls in hallways where handrails may be present.
- Verify handrail present on at least one side of each continuous run of treads.

Request for Help: None

Action:  
- Ramp: Measure the length of the ramp.
- Ramp: Measure rise of the ramp.
- Stairs: Count the number of steps.

More Information:  
- Stairs: A handrail is required if 4 or more risers are present.
- Ramp: When a ramp has a rise greater than 6 inches or a horizontal projection greater than 72 inches, then handrails must be present on both sides.

Tools or Equipment:  
- Required: Distance measuring device
- Useful: None
Deficiency I — Inside: **Handrail missing where required**

**Deficiency Criteria:** Where 4 or more risers are present, a handrail is missing (i.e., evidence of prior installation, but now not present or is incomplete).

**Health and Safety Determination:** Standard

This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

**Correction Timeframe:** Within 30 days

**Correction Timeframe: HCV**

Within 30 days

**Rationale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If a handrail is missing, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>Usability and Operability of Fixtures</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Because of this condition, the resident is unable to use certain fixtures, features, or appliances, which are reasonably assumed to be part of their rent.</td>
<td>If handrail is missing, then resident is unable to use a feature that is expected to be provided and maintained as part of their rent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Routine Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect that this deficiency would be identified through routine daily observations and facilities management would prioritize work orders to fix this deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is missing, then it is likely to be observed during daily maintenance activities and this defect’s presence may indicate that self-generated work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inspection Process:**

**Observation:**
- Look for all areas with stairs or ramps, or along the walls in hallways where handrails may be present.
- Verify handrail present on at least one side of each continuous run of treads.

**Request for Help:** None

**Action:**
- Ramp: Measure the length of the ramp.
- Ramp: Measure rise of the ramp.
- Stairs: Count the number of steps.

**More Information:**
- Stairs: A handrail is required if 4 or more risers are present.
- Ramp: When a ramp has a rise greater than 6 inches or a horizontal projection greater than 72 inches, then handrails must be present on both sides.

**Tools or Equipment:**

**Required:**
- Distance measuring device

**Useful:**
- None
DEFICIENCY 1 — OUTSIDE: **Handrail missing where required**

DEFICIENCY CRITERIA: Where 4 or more risers are present, a handrail is missing (i.e., evidence of prior installation, but now not present or is incomplete).

HEALTH AND SAFETY DETERMINATION: Standard

This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

CORRECTION TIMEFRAME: Within 30 days

Rationale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If a handrail is missing, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td>Usability and Operability of Fixtures</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Because of this condition, the resident is unable to use certain fixtures, features, or appliances, which are reasonably assumed to be part of their rent.</td>
<td>If handrail is missing, then resident is unable to use a feature that is expected to be provided and maintained as part of their rent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Routine Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect that this deficiency would be identified through routine daily observations and facilities management would prioritize work orders to fix this deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is missing, then it is likely to be observed during daily maintenance activities and this defect’s presence may indicate that self-generated work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INSPECTION PROCESS:

**Observation:**
- Look for all areas with stairs or ramps, or along the walls in hallways where handrails may be present.
- Verify handrail present on at least one side of each continuous run of treads.

**Request for Help:** None

**Action:**
- Ramp: Measure the length of the ramp.
- Ramp: Measure rise of the ramp.
- Stairs: Count the number of steps.

**More Information:**
- Stairs: A handrail is required if 4 or more risers are present.
- Ramp: When a ramp has a rise greater than 6 inches or a horizontal projection greater than 72 inches, then handrails must be present on both sides.

TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT:

**Required:** Distance measuring device

**Useful:** None
Deficiency 2 — Unit: Handrail is not secure

Deficiency Criteria: There is movement in the anchors of the handrail.

Health and Safety Determination: Standard

Correction Timeframe: Within 30 days

HCV — Correction Timeframe: Within 30 days

Rationale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Corrective</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect a tenant to report this deficiency, and for facilities management to prioritize a work order response to fix that deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then resident will likely report this defect and its presence may indicate that complaint-based work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Routine</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect that this deficiency would be identified through routine daily observations and facilities management would prioritize work orders to fix this deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then it is likely to be observed during daily maintenance activities and this defect’s presence may indicate that self-generated work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Inspection Process:

Observation: - Look for movement of the handrail when tested.

Request for Help: - None

Action: - Grab the handrail and rapidly push and pull the with moderate force.
- Perform this action at both ends and the middle of the handrail.
- If there is no movement, disregard this deficiency.
- If there is movement, continue.
- Ensure handrails are firmly attached with no movement at anchor points.

More Information: - Handrail and top rail of the stair rail system must be able to withstand, without failure, at least 200 pounds of weight applied within 2 inches of the top edge in any downward or outward direction, at any point along the top edge.

Tools or Equipment:

Required: - None

Useful: - None
**Deficiency 2 — Inside:**  
Handrail is not secure

**Deficiency Criteria:** There is movement in the anchors of the handrail.

**Health and Safety Determination:** Standard  
This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

**Correction Timeframe:** Within 30 days  
**HCV — Correction Timeframe:** Within 30 days

**Rationale:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Corrective Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect a tenant to report this deficiency, and for facilities management to prioritize a work order response to fix that deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then resident will likely report this defect and its presence may indicate that complaint-based work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Routine Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect that this deficiency would be identified through routine daily observations and facilities management would prioritize work orders to fix this deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then it is likely to be observed during daily maintenance activities and this defect's presence may indicate that self-generated work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Inspection Process:**

**Observation:**  
- Look for movement of the handrail when tested.

**Request for Help:**  
- None

**Action:**  
- Grab the handrail and rapidly push and pull the with moderate force.  
- Perform this action at both ends and the middle of the handrail.  
- If there is no movement, disregard this deficiency.  
- If there is movement, continue.  
- Ensure handrails are firmly attached with no movement at anchor points.

**More Information:**  
- Handrail and top rail of the stair rail system must be able to withstand, without failure, at least 200 pounds of weight applied within 2 inches of the top edge in any downward or outward direction, at any point along the top edge.

**Tools or Equipment:**

**Required:**  
- None

**Useful:**  
- None
DEFICIENCY 2 — OUTSIDE: **Handrail is not secure**

**DEFICIENCY CRITERIA:** There is movement in the anchors of the handrail.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY DETERMINATION:** Standard  This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

**CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:** Within 30 days  
HCV — CORRECTION TIMEFRAME: Within 30 days

**RATIONAL:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td>Corrective Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect a tenant to report this deficiency, and for facilities management to prioritize a work order response to fix that deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then resident will likely report this defect and its presence may indicate that complaint-based work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td>Routine Maintenance</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>It is reasonable to expect that this deficiency would be identified through routine daily observations and facilities management would prioritize work orders to fix this deficiency.</td>
<td>If handrail is not secure, then it is likely to be observed during daily maintenance activities and this defect’s presence may indicate that self-generated work orders are not being addressed.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INSPECTION PROCESS:**

**Observation:**  - Look for movement of the handrail when tested.

**Request for Help:**  - None

**Action:**  - Grab the handrail and rapidly push and pull the with moderate force.  
  - Perform this action at both ends and the middle of the handrail.  
  - If there is no movement, disregard this deficiency.  
  - If there is movement, continue.  
  - Ensure handrails are firmly attached with no movement at anchor points.

**More Information:**  - Handrail and top rail of the stair rail system must be able to withstand, without failure, at least 200 pounds of weight applied within 2 inches of the top edge in any downward or outward direction, at any point along the top edge.

**Tools or Equipment:**

**Required:**  - None

**Useful:**  - None
DEFICIENCY 3 — UNIT:  **HANDRAIL IS IMPROPERLY INSTALLED**

DEFICIENCY CRITERIA:  Handrail is not between 30 inches and 42 inches in height.

OR

Handrail is less than 1¼ inches or greater than 2¼ inches.

OR

Handrail is not continuous from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

HEALTH AND SAFETY DETERMINATION:  Standard  This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:  Within 30 days

HCV — CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:  Within 30 days

RATIONALE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If handrail is improperly installed, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INSPECTION PROCESS:

**Observation:**  - Look to ensure that handrail is continuous from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

**Request for Help:**  - None

**Action:**  - Measure the height of the handrail.
  - Measure the width of the handrail.

More Information:  - None

TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT:

**Required:**  - Distance measuring device

**Useful:**  - None
DEFICIENCY 3 — INSIDE: **HANDRAIL IS IMPROPERLY INSTALLED**

**DEFICIENCY CRITERIA:**

Handrail is not between 30 inches and 42 inches in height.

OR

Handrail is less than 1¼ inches or greater than 2¼ inches.

OR

Handrail is not continuous from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY DETERMINATION:**

Standard

This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

**CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:**

Within 30 days

**HCV — CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:**

Within 30 days

**RATIONALE:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If handrail is improperly installed, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INSPECTION PROCESS:**

- **Observation:**
  - Look to ensure that handrail is continuous from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser

- **Request for Help:**
  - None

- **Action:**
  - Measure the height of the handrail.
  - Measure the width of the handrail.

- **More Information:**
  - None

**TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT:**

- **Required:**
  - Distance measuring device

- **Useful:**
  - None
DEFICIENCY 3 — OUTSIDE:  **Handrail is improperly installed**

DEFICIENCY CRITERIA:  
- Handrail is not between 30 inches and 42 inches in height.  
- OR  
- Handrail is less than 1¼ inches or greater than 2¼ inches.  
- OR  
- Handrail is not continuous from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser.

HEALTH AND SAFETY DETERMINATION:  
- **Standard**  
  
  This is a standard health and safety issue. A repair, correction, or act of abatement for this deficiency should occur within 30 days.

CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:  
- Within 30 days

HCV — CORRECTION TIMEFRAME:  
- Within 30 days

RATIONALE:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R2</td>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>Resident could be injured because of this condition.</td>
<td>If handrail is improperly installed, then there is an increased probability of falls that may lead to injury.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INSPECTION PROCESS:

- **Observation:**  
  - Look to ensure that handrail is continuous from directly above the top riser to directly above the lowest riser

- **Request for Help:**  
  - None

- **Action:**  
  - Measure the height of the handrail.  
  - Measure the width of the handrail.

- **More Information:**  
  - None

TOOLS OR EQUIPMENT:

- **Required:**  
  - Distance measuring device

- **Useful:**  
  - None
# SUMMARY OF CHANGES

**TITLE:** HANDRAIL  
**VERSION:** V1.3  
**DATE PUBLISHED:** 7/31/20

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIELD</th>
<th>CHANGE</th>
<th>VERSION</th>
<th>DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall Formatting</td>
<td>Complete rework of document format and layout</td>
<td>V1.3</td>
<td>2020-07-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition</td>
<td>Revised definition</td>
<td>V1.3</td>
<td>2020-07-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose</td>
<td>Field added</td>
<td>V1.3</td>
<td>2020-07-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Revised inspectable locations</td>
<td>V1.3</td>
<td>2020-07-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More Information</td>
<td>Field added</td>
<td>V1.3</td>
<td>2020-07-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency 1</td>
<td>Separated by inspectable locations — Unit, Inside, and Outside</td>
<td>V1.3</td>
<td>2020-07-31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Revised title; added inspectable locations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency Criteria</td>
<td>Revised deficiency criteria</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety Determination</td>
<td>Revised to “Standard” determination; added standardized description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correction Timeframe</td>
<td>Field added; response input as “Within 30 days”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCV — Correction Timeframe</td>
<td>Field added; response input as “Within 30 days”</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Revised rationale categories, types, and explanations; added standardized codes and descriptions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection Process</td>
<td>Revised observation, request for help, action, and more information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools or Equipment</td>
<td>Field added to deficiency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Deficiency 2           | Separated by inspectable locations — Unit, Inside, and Outside         | V1.3    | 2020-07-31     |
| Title                  | Revised title; added inspectable locations                             |         |                |
| Deficiency Criteria    | Revised deficiency criteria                                            |         |                |
| Health and Safety Determination | Added standardized description                                      |         |                |
| Correction Timeframe   | Field added; response input as “Within 30 days”                        |         |                |
| HCV — Correction Timeframe | Field added; response input as “Within 30 days”            |         |                |
| Rationale              | Revised rationale categories, types, and explanations; added standardized codes and descriptions |         |                |
## Deficiency 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Added title; added inspectable locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deficiency Criteria</td>
<td>Added deficiency criteria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health and Safety Determination</td>
<td>Added “Standard” determination; added standardized description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Correction Timeframe</td>
<td>Field added; response input as “Within 30 days”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HCV — Correction Timeframe</td>
<td>Field added; response input as “Within 30 days”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rationale</td>
<td>Added rationale categories, types, and explanations; added standardized codes and descriptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inspection Process</td>
<td>Added observation, request for help, action, and more information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tools or Equipment</td>
<td>Field added to deficiency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Rationales

- Updated following in-house review and public comment

### Health and Safety Determinations

- Updated following in-house review and public comment

### Most Common Materials

- Updated

### Abilities or Knowledge Needed

- Updated

### How to Locate

- Updated

### Deficiency 1

- Updated

### Deficiency 2

- Updated

---

*U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT*