

The City of New York – Local Law No. 1

Local Law 1 of 2004 (“Local Law 1”) is a comprehensive law concerning the prevention of childhood lead poisoning through the remediation of lead paint hazards in housing, which became effective on August 2, 2004. This Bill replaced Local Law 1 of 1982 and Local Law 38 of 1999 – both of which provided inadequate protection to children and was ultimately struck down by New York’s high court.

The Council declared that the city government must focus on primary prevention as the essential tool to combat childhood lead poisoning and to achieve the goal of preventing children from suffering the adverse health and other effects of exposure to lead-based paint. The pursuit of primary prevention has been recommended by the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and promoted by leading experts in the field as a critical course of action to protect the health of children. Therefore, the Council declared that resources must be directed to primary prevention, including identifying children who are most at risk.

The Council recognized that it cannot legislate a single maintenance standard for all dwellings to eliminate this hazard. Instead, the council by enacting this article makes it the responsibility of every owner of a multiple dwelling to investigate dwelling units for lead-based paint hazards and to address such hazards on a case-by-case basis as the conditions may warrant, taking such actions as are necessary to prevent a child from becoming lead poisoned.

When a child is identified with environmental intervention blood lead levels, the city is obligated to investigate potential sources of the lead poisoning, incurring the expense of an environmental investigation and often also incurring the expense of medical treatment and remedial education, if necessary. Additionally, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene reported for the year 2001 that only 20 percent of children in New York City were tested both at ages one and two for disease of lead poisoning, even though the testing of all children at ages one and two is mandatory under state law.

The Council wanted improved screening among these children since they are at greatest risk for lead poisoning. Finding it is reasonable and necessary to increase the rate of blood-lead testing, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene is required to report to the Council on progress toward increasing screening rates and reducing the incidence rates of children newly identified with elevated blood lead levels.

Target Housing. The law covers all pre-1960 buildings with three or more residential units. The law also places certain responsibilities on owners in post-1960 to pre-1978 buildings with three or more residential units where the owner knows there is lead-based paint. The provisions of Local Law 1 do not apply to owner-occupied units in a cooperative or condominium. The law does however apply to cooperative or condominium units occupied by a tenant or subtenant.

Definitions.

Chewable Surface – a protruding interior window sill in a dwelling unit in a multiple dwelling where a child under age six resides and which is readily accessible to such child. “Chewable surface” shall also mean any other type of interior edge or protrusion in a dwelling unit in a multiple dwelling, such as a rail or stair, where there is evidence that such other edge or protrusion has been chewed or where an occupant has notified the owner that a child of applicable age who resides in that multiple dwelling has mouthed or chewed such edge or protrusion.

Deteriorated Subsurface – an unstable or unsound painted subsurface, an indication of which can be observed through a visual inspection, including rotted or decayed wood, or wood or plaster that has been subject to moisture or disturbance.

Friction Surface – any painted surface that touches or is in contact with another surface, such that the two surfaces are capable of relative motion and abrade, scrape, or bind when in relative motion. Friction surface shall include window frames and jambs, doors, and hinges.

Impact Surface – any interior painted surface that shows evidence, such as marking, denting, or chipping, that is subject to damage by repeated sudden force, such as certain parts of door frames, moldings, or baseboards.

Remediation or Remediate – the reduction or elimination of a lead-based paint hazard through the wet scraping and repainting, removal, encapsulation, enclosure, or replacement of lead-based paint, or other method approved by the commissioner of health and mental hygiene.

Turnover – the occupancy of a dwelling unit subsequent to the termination of a tenancy and the vacating by a prior tenant of such a dwelling unit.

Owner Responsibility to Remediate.

Owners must prevent the reasonably foreseeable occurrence of lead hazards and remediate them, and the underlying defects that may cause lead hazards, using safe work practices.

Owner's Responsibility to Notify Occupants and to Investigate.

- Owners of pre-1960 multiple dwellings, and owners of post-1960 to pre-1978 buildings where the owner knows that there is lead-based paint, have the responsibility to investigate dwelling units where children under age six reside, and common areas, to find peeling paint, chewable surfaces, deteriorated subsurfaces, and friction and impact surfaces. The investigation must be conducted annually and more often if the owner knows of a condition that may cause a lead hazard, or the occupant complains about such a condition.
- Occupants must inform the owner about the presence of a child and provide access.
- Leases must contain a notice setting forth the owner's responsibilities, and owners must provide a pamphlet informing occupants about lead paint hazards.
- Upon lease-up, lease renewal, agreement to lease, or commencement of occupancy, the owner must provide a notice to the occupant inquiring if a child under age six will reside in the unit.
 - If the occupant states that there is no child and the occupant subsequently, during that one-year period, fails to inform the owner that a child has come to live in the unit, the presumption of lead paint does not apply in any personal injury action brought for lead exposure.
 - This notice must be provided annually to each dwelling unit no later than January 16th. Occupants must respond by February 15th. If the owner does not receive a response, and does not otherwise actually know if a child resides in the unit, he must physically inspect to ascertain if a child lives there, between February 16th and March 1st. If, in that period, he is unable to access the unit, the owner must notify the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) that he was unable to determine if a child lives in the unit. The same limitation on liability, where occupant has responded that no child lives in the unit, also applies here.
- Owners must inform the occupant of the results of the investigation and provide copies of any reports received. Copies must be retained for 10 years.

- Failure to comply is a misdemeanor punishable by a \$500 fine and/or six months in prison. Civil penalty is not more than \$1,500 per violation.
- Department of Housing Preservation and Development (DHPD) is authorized to perform sample audits to determine compliance.

Presumption.

- Paint is presumed to contain lead in any pre-1960 multiple dwelling where a child under age six resides, and in common areas. This presumption may be rebutted by the owner submitting a sworn written statement supported by lead-based paint testing or sampling results to the DHPD.
- Testing performed to rebut the presumption may only be done by a certified inspector or risk assessor. The final determination as to whether adequate proof was submitted to rebut the presumption is made by the DHPD.
- Owners may apply for an exemption from the presumption for the entire dwelling or for a dwelling unit in one of two ways:
 1. An inspection for lead-based paint has determined that there is no lead-based paint present.
 2. Substantial alterations have been made resulting in the removal or permanent covering of all lead-based paint in that dwelling.

Violation in a Dwelling Unit.

Peeling lead paint or lead paint on deteriorated subsurface in a multiple dwelling unit with a child under age six is a class C violation.

Audit and Inspection by Department Following Commissioner's Order to Abate.

- When DOHMH issues a Commissioner's Order to Abate for a lead-poisoned child in a multiple-dwelling unit, DHPD must, within 15 days, notify the owner that he must submit to DHPD all records required to be maintained under the law within 45 days. DHPD will then determine if there may be lead hazards in other units with children under age six and will attempt to inspect all such units within 10 days of such determination.
- If the owner does not provide the records, DHPD must inspect child-occupied units in 45 days to determine if there are any lead violations.
- The actions required of DHPD are not applicable if DHPD has inspected the building within the 12 months preceding the issuance of the Commissioner's Order to Abate.
- Owner noncompliance is a class C violation and carries a \$1,000 penalty.

Violation in a Dwelling Unit upon Turnover.

- These requirements apply to all pre-1960 dwelling units and to pre-1960 private dwelling units that are not owner-occupied. Upon turnover in such units, the owner must:
 1. Remediate all lead-based paint hazards and any underlying defects;
 2. Make all bare floors, window sills, and window wells in the dwelling unit smooth and cleanable;
 3. Provide for the removal or permanent covering of all lead-based paint on all friction surfaces on all doors and door frames; and
 4. Provide for the removal or permanent covering of all lead-based paint on all friction surfaces on all windows, or provide for the installation of replacement window channels or slides on all lead-based painted friction surfaces on all windows.

- Noncompliance is a class C violation.

Inspections by the Department of Housing Preservation and Development (DHPD).

- When making line of sight inspections in a pre-1960 multiple-dwelling unit, DHPD must ascertain the presence of a child under age six, including asking the occupant for an acknowledgement whether such a child resides in the unit. If a child lives there, DHPD must perform a room-by-room inspection and record whether the paint or other similar surface-coating material in each room is peeling or intact.
 - Where peeling paint is found, DHPD must also inspect for an underlying defect and indicate on the inspection report the location of the peeling paint, the condition of the subsurface, and the location of any underlying defect.
 - The inspector specifically need not move furniture unless there is visible evidence that causes the inspector to believe that there is peeling paint behind the furniture.
 - Where the inspector determines that there is a violation, the notice of violation must be served within 10 days.
- For lead complaints describing peeling paint or a deteriorated subsurface or underlying defect in the dwelling unit, DHPD must inspect pre-1960 child-occupied units within 10 days.
 - If DHPD cannot gain access to the dwelling, it must reattempt the inspection within five days.
 - If still unable to gain access to that dwelling unit during this additional time period, DHPD must provide written notice to the occupant that no further attempts will be made unless a new complaint is submitted.
- For lead complaints, DHPD inspectors must use XRF machines to determine whether lead paint is present. If, for reasons “beyond the control” of DHPD, an XRF cannot be used, then DHPD may rely on the presumption to issue a violation.
- For line of sight inspections, if DHPD inspectors do not XRF test peeling paint on the initial inspection, they must return within 10 days thereafter to XRF inspect. Upon determination that lead hazards exist, the notice of violation must be issued in 10 additional days. DHPD must leave the lead pamphlet at all premises that it inspects.
- DHPD must develop a work practices pamphlet to be delivered with the notice of violation. Failure to include the pamphlet or to comply with time periods does not render any notice of violation void and does not provide an owner with a defense against liability.

Work Practices.

- DHPD must promulgate rules establishing the following lead-safe work practices:
 1. For work done to comply with a notice of violation or an order to correct:
 - a. Work practices must be no less stringent than those required by DOHMH when it issues a violation for a lead-poisoned child.
 - b. Owner will provide temporary relocation of the occupants if necessary.
 - c. All work must be performed by an EPA-certified firm.
 - d. Lead-contaminated dust clearance testing must be performed at the completion of work.
 - e. All lead-contaminated dust clearance results shall be filed with DHPD and a copy provided to the occupant of the dwelling unit.
 2. For any non-violation work done:

- a. Work that will disturb lead-based paint or paint of unknown lead content in a dwelling unit or the common area where a child under six years resides;
 - b. Work where the owner has actual knowledge of the presence of lead-based paint; or
 - c. Work that will disturb more than one hundred square feet of lead-based paint or paint of unknown lead content in a room in a multiple dwelling, or will involve the removal of two or more windows with lead-based paint or paint of unknown lead content must comply with the following:
 - i. Lead-contaminated dust clearance testing must be performed at the completion of work, and a copy of the results provided to the occupant of the dwelling unit.
 - ii. The work must be done by a person who has successfully completed a course on lead-safe work practices by an entity authorized to give such a course.
 - iii. Owner will provide temporary relocation of the occupants if necessary.
3. For any non-violation work done in such multiple-dwelling unit where the work will disturb more than 100 square feet (question as to whether this applies to private dwellings – the statute is unclear) of lead-based paint or paint of unknown lead content, or involves the removal of two or more windows with such paint, work practices must be no less protective than those in the Health Code and require dust testing.
- a. All work must be performed by an EPA-certified firm.
 - b. Owner will provide temporary relocation of the occupants if necessary.
 - c. At least 10 days prior to the commencement of such work, owners must file a notice of commencement with DOHMH, and DOHMH is authorized to perform sample audits to determine if workers are certified.
4. Work practices do not apply to work that disturbs less than two square feet of peeling paint per room, or 10 percent of the surface area of a component.
5. Where an owner is performing work on tenant turnover.
- a. Lead-contaminated dust clearance testing must be performed at the completion of work, and a copy of the results must be provided to the occupant of the dwelling unit.
- Lead-contaminated dust clearance testing may be performed only by a third party who is independent of both the owner and anyone who is performing the work. Dust testers must be trained in an approved program.
 - All lead-contaminated dust clearance tests submitted to a laboratory for analysis must include a sworn certification that such test was performed in compliance with all applicable rules and regulations.
 - For work performed to correct violations, all lead-contaminated dust clearance results must be submitted to DHPD, and a copy must be provided to the occupant of the dwelling unit.

Reporting.

- DHPD is responsible for providing a report every fiscal year on its implementation of the law. At the very least, it must contain an analysis of the program, a detailed statement of revenue and expenditures, and statistical section designed to provide a detailed explanation of DHPD's enforcement including:
 - The number of complaints for peeling paint in pre-1960 dwelling units where a child under age six resides;
 - The number of inspections made and violations issued by DHPD;
 - The number of violations issued that were certified as corrected by the owner;

- The number of jobs performed; and
- A statistical profile with geographic indexing, such as by community district, council district, and/or zip code, of multiple dwellings where violations are placed, indicating the age of the building and other factors relevant to the “prevalence of lead based paint hazards.”
- DOHMH must prepare an annual report on progress towards increasing lead screening rates and reducing new cases of lead poisoning, to be used by DHPD in implementing the law.

Transmittal of Violations to the DOHMH.

DHPD must send a notice that includes DOHMH’s telephone number to any unit where it issues a lead violation. DHPD must also refer to DOHMH the address of all units for which violations were issued, along with the name and number of the complainant, if any. DOHMH must then refer to medical providers any person who requests such assistance.

Request from DOHMH to DHPD to Execute an Order.

- DOHMH must investigate any reported blood lead level of a child under 18 years of age that is in excess of 15 µg/dL.
- DOHMH must also notify DHPD of each unit where it has issued a Commissioner’s Order to Abate (COTA). If the owner fails to comply with the COTA, DOHMH must certify the unit to DHPD within 16 days of the report of the elevated blood lead level.
- DHPD must correct the violations within 18 days of such certification.

Waiver.

- No owner can seek to have an occupant waive any provision of the lead law; the agreement is considered void. Any owner who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of up to \$500 or imprisonment for up to six months or both.
- Validates agreements made between coop tenant shareholders and condo owners and coop and condo boards regarding allocation of responsibility for compliance with the lead law.
- The lead law does not apply to multiple dwelling units where title is held by a coop or condo and the unit is occupied by the shareholder of record or his or her family.

Exemption for Emergency Conditions.

The law specifically exempts from coverage work immediately necessary to safeguard against imminent danger to life, health, or safety.

Record Keeping Requirements.

Owners of multiple dwellings or dwellings that perform work pursuant to the new lead law must retain all records relating to such work for 10 years from the completion of the work. The records are to be made available to DHPD and must be transferred to the owner’s successor in title.

Department of Housing Preservation and Development Enforcement.

- Owners have 21 days to correct a lead violation in accordance with specified work practices. Owners may request a 14-day postponement, and then an additional 14-day postponement in circumstances where

paint has been stabilized. DHPD may promulgate rules for longer postponements in situations where an owner is making substantial capital improvements that will reduce lead paint in the multiple-dwelling or dwelling unit. DHPD must provide written reasons for its postponement determinations to both owner and occupant.

- Certifications must be submitted within five days of the correction date, and include a dust test result. DHPD must mail a copy to the complainant within 12 days of receipt.
- DHPD must reinspect all violations within 14 days after the date set for correction. If not corrected, DHPD must do the work within 45 days of such reinspection.
- DHPD may not remove any violations from its records unless it has conducted a final inspection verifying remediation, and has copies of relevant dust tests. DHPD must mail a copy of the final inspection report and status to the occupant and owner.
- The penalty for false certification is \$1,000 to \$3,000 and a possible misdemeanor charge.
- The penalty for failure to correct a lead violation is \$250 per day. Owners may assert various defenses to mitigate fines.
- Failure to comply with the time periods by DHPD does not void any violations or provide a basis for defense by the owner.

Department of Health and Mental Hygiene Provisions.

- Department screening, diagnosis and treatment.
 - DOHMH must refer to medical providers any child who needs lead screening or other services, upon request.
 - DOHMH must develop a lead pamphlet to be used by DHPD on inspections and made available to the public.
- Lead-based paint, dry scraping, and sanding prohibited.
 - The law prohibits dry scraping and sanding of lead paint or paint of unknown content in any dwelling, day care center, or school. DOHMH is authorized to promulgate rules regarding this.
- Inspection by DOHMH of unsafe work practices.
 - DOHMH must promulgate rules requiring the agency to respond to complaints of unsafe lead paint work practices.
- Lead poisoning prevention in children.
 - DOHMH must develop a brochure advising medical providers of the law on screening and testing children for lead. It must be distributed annually to such providers.
 - DOHMH must develop a pamphlet regarding lead poisoning prevention that must, at a minimum, be distributed with each birth certificate given to a parent of a child. The pamphlet must also be available to the public.

The purpose of Local Law 1 is to administer and enforce New York City's lead poisoning prevention programs better by coordinating the actions of DHPD and DOHMH. While it is intended that the Department of Housing Preservation and Development remain the agency responsible for the implementation and enforcement of this article, it is also intended that the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene shall have a significant role in the promulgation and interpretation of rules and in the development of necessary procedures pursuant to this article.

Additional information, including flyer and required postings, can be found on the city's website at http://www.nyc.gov/html/hpd/html/homeowners/lead_paint.shtml.