

# **PAWNEE CITY HOUSING AUTHORITY**

## **BEDBUG POLICY**

The Pawnee City Housing Authority recognizes the potential problems that can arise out of bedbug infestations in public housing. Accordingly, the Pawnee City Housing Authority adopts this policy in an effort to minimize bedbug infestations in public housing and other owned affordable housing.

### **HOUSING AUTHORITY'S RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### **A. Management**

1. The Pawnee City Housing Authority shall provide training to appropriate staff members regarding the identification, prevention, and eradication of bedbugs.
2. The Pawnee City Housing Authority shall make efforts to educate new and existing tenants on methods that may be utilized in order to prevent and detect bedbugs. Such efforts may include written handouts distributed to all tenants and public workshops for tenants to attend.
3. The Pawnee City Housing Authority will contract with a qualified pest control company so they can be called on an "as needed" basis if internal staff are inadequate to deal with a bedbug infestation.
4. The Pawnee City Housing Authority shall keep written records of reports and incidents of bedbug infestation. Said records shall identify the dates, times and places of such reports or incidents.

#### **B. Inspections**

1. If a tenant reports the existence of bedbugs in his or her unit, the Pawnee City Housing Authority shall make contact with the tenant, provide the tenant with information about control and prevention of bedbugs and discuss measures the tenant may be able to take in the unit before an inspection is performed.
2. Following a report of bedbugs, the Pawnee City Housing Authority or a qualified third party trained in bedbug detection shall inspect the dwelling unit to determine if bedbugs are present. It is critical that inspections be conducted by trained staff or third-party professionals. Low level infestations may escape visual detection. For this reason, multiple detection tools, such as monitors containing attractants

and canine detection may be utilized. The inspections shall occur as soon as possible after the tenant's report.

3. The inspection shall cover the unit reporting the infestation.
4. If the initial inspection confirms the presence of bedbugs, the Pawnee City Housing Authority will contact a licensed pest control company to treat the infestation. The length, method and extent of the treatment will depend on the severity and complexity of the infestation, and the level of cooperation of the tenants. The tenant may expect treatment to begin as soon as possible depending on the form of treatment and/or the availability of the contractor. Tenants shall be aware treatment may take several weeks and possibly several applications.
5. If an infestation is suspected but cannot be verified, the Pawnee City Housing Authority will re-inspect the unit(s) periodically over the next several months.
6. If licensed pest control companies are unattainable within five calendar days, the Pawnee City Housing Authority shall retain documentation of the efforts to obtain qualified services.

### **C. Additional Considerations**

1. The Pawnee City Housing Authority will offer tenants a service of inspection and/or non-chemical treatment of household items upon tenant move-in and inspection and/or non-chemical treatment of used furniture if staff time and property budgets allow. The inspection shall be conducted during normal Pawnee City Housing Authority business hours. Inspection shall be conducted prior to items being placed in the unit. Tenants may voluntarily use such services, but the Pawnee City Housing Authority will not require tenants to do so. When offered, these services or products will be provided at the Pawnee City Housing Authority's expense. Any items found to contain evidence of bedbugs will be denied access to the unit.
2. The Pawnee City Housing Authority will not charge tenants to cover the cost of bedbug treatment; such costs shall be covered by the Pawnee City Housing Authority. The only exception to this rule is if material supplied by the Pawnee City Housing Authority to the tenant to combat bedbugs or the possibility of bedbugs is lost or damaged due to an action by a tenant or his or her guest.

## **TENANT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Under the terms of the Pawnee City Housing Authority's standard lease agreement, tenants are required to "report any problem with infestation." Accordingly, tenants are strongly encouraged to report any suspected problems with bedbug infestation immediately. Tenants are the first line of defense against bedbugs. Further, any willful failure on the part of a tenant to report a bedbug infestation may result in adverse action taken against the tenant, up to and including eviction. A tenant reporting bedbugs may expect expeditious response and attention by the Pawnee City Housing Authority, but should be advised that inspection and, if necessary, treatment of bedbugs may take time to schedule.
2. Since clutter is a friend of bedbugs, tenants will keep clutter in their homes to an absolute minimum. Tenants shall be required to reduce clutter as advised by the Pawnee City Housing Authority as part of the tenants cooperation with treatment efforts.
3. Tenants are required to cooperate with the treatment efforts by allowing for heat treatment of clothing and furniture and refraining from placing infested furniture or other items in common areas such as hallways. Tenants will not be reimbursed the cost of any additional expense to the household, such as the purchase of new furniture, clothing or cleaning services, preparation of the unit and/or its contents for treatment or alternate living arrangements while unit is being treated.
4. Tenants can easily unintentionally bring bedbugs onto the property when returning from a trip, visiting other homes or bringing property into their homes. Therefore, tenants will check their luggage and clothes whenever they return home from taking a trip, examine any secondhand items before bringing them into the unit and may be advised to examine their person and vehicles.