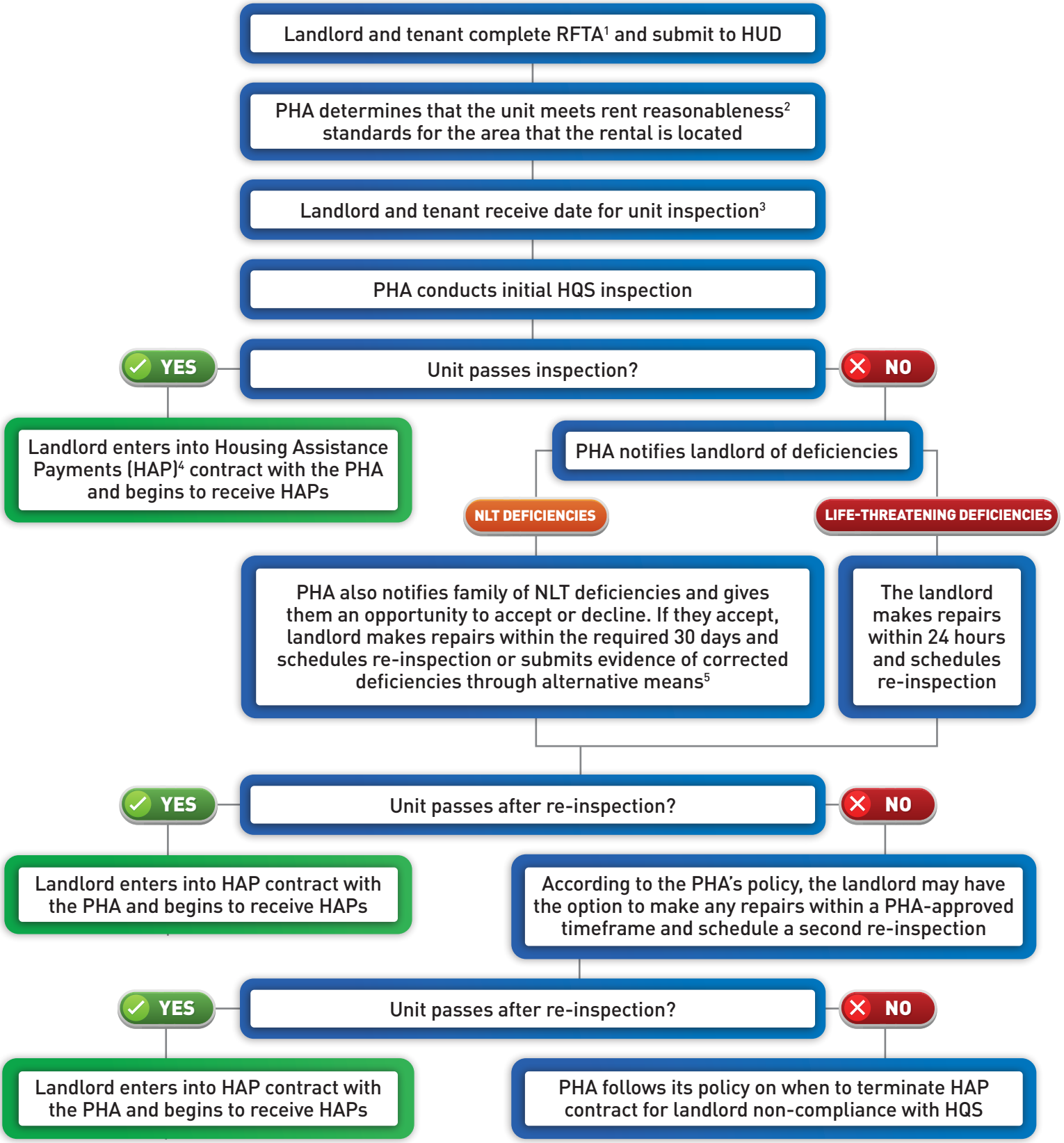
Housing Quality Standards (HQS) Initial Inspection Flowchart

Initial Inspections

When the family finds a unit that they wish to occupy and reaches an agreement with the landlord over the lease terms, the PHA must inspect the dwelling and determine that the unit meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS). Landlords may want to review HUD's list of Frequently Asked Questions about HQS. Landlords may also want to contact their PHA(s), as they may be able to find useful information such as common HQS non-life-threatening (NLT) and life-threatening deficiencies.



Endnotes

[1] Request for Tenancy Approval (RFTA): Before approving the assisted tenancy and executing the Housing Assistance Payments (HAP) contract, the PHA must ensure that the following program requirements have been met:

- The unit is eligible;
- The unit has been inspected by the PHA and meets Housing Quality Standards (HQS);
- The lease includes the tenancy addendum;
- The rent charged by owner is reasonable; and
- For families receiving HCV program assistance for the first time, and where the gross rent of the unit exceeds the applicable payment standard for the family, the PHA must ensure that the family share does not exceed 40 percent of adjusted monthly income. This cap is referred to as the maximum family share (24 CFR 982.508).

In addition, the PHA must not approve:

- If the PHA has been informed (by HUD or otherwise) that the owner is debarred, suspended, or subject to a limited denial of participation under 2 CFR part 2424.
- If the owner is the parent, child, grandparent, grandchild, sister, or brother of any member of the family, unless the PHA determines that approving the unit would provide reasonable accommodation for a family member who is a person with disabilities. This restriction against PHA approval of a unit only applies at the time a family initially receives tenant-based assistance for occupancy of a particular unit, but does not apply to PHA approval of a new tenancy with continued tenant-based assistance in the same unit.
- Other reasons as defined in 24 CFR 982.306.

[2] Rent Reasonableness: HUD regulation 24 CFR 982.507 requires that PHAs perform a rent reasonableness determination before executing a HAP contract and before any increase in rent. The PHA must determine that the proposed rent is reasonable compared to similar units in the marketplace and not higher than those paid by unassisted tenants on the premises.

[3] Per 24 CFR 982.305(b)(2), PHAs with 1,250 or fewer budgeted housing choice voucher units must send notice of the inspection to the family and owner within 15 calendar days after the family and owner submit the RFTA. The 15-day clock is suspended during any period when the unit is not available for inspection. PHAs with more than 1,250 budgeted housing choice voucher units must make the notice to family and owner within a reasonable time after the family and owner submit the RFTA.

[4] Housing Assistance Payment (HAP): is the monthly assistance payment by a PHA, which is defined in 24 CFR 982.4 to include: (1) A payment to the owner for rent to the owner under the family's lease; and (2) An additional payment to the family if the total assistance payment exceeds the rent to owner.

The HAP contract is the housing assistance payments contract between the owner and the PHA.

[5] The PHA may adopt policies that allow landlords to demonstrate corrected deficiencies through alternative means such as by sending photographic evidence of the correction to the PHA. More information is available in PIH Notice 2013-17.