Housing rehabilitation codes overview

Housing rehabilitation codes (or rehab codes) are building codes designed to reduce the costs of renovating and rehabilitating existing buildings, thereby facilitating the continued availability and habitability of older rental housing and owner-occupied homes.

Under traditional building codes, property owners seeking approval for minor renovations may be required to make comprehensive changes to bring an older home or apartment building into full compliance with current standards for new buildings. The scope of work required to bring the older buildings up to code can be extensive and costly enough to derail all planned improvements, causing existing buildings to fall farther into disrepair. Rehab codes align code requirements with the scale of the proposed project, prioritizing those improvements strictly needed to improve safety while making the rehabilitation of existing buildings more feasible. This flexibility facilitates the preservation of older affordable homes that might otherwise be demolished.