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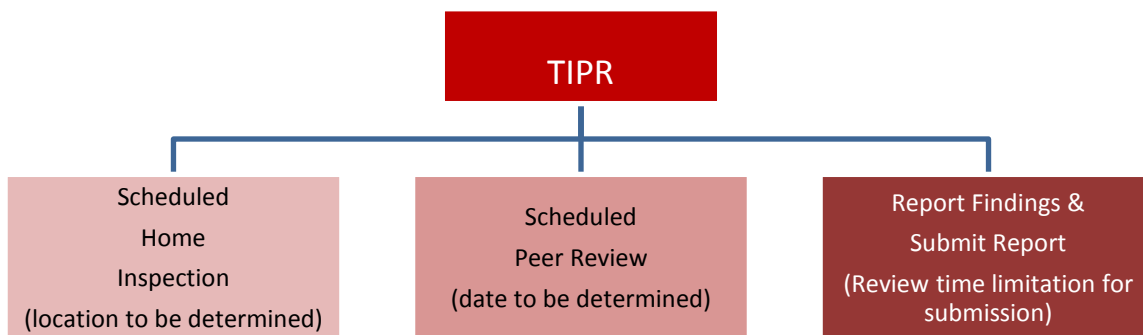
TIPR (Test Inspection/Peer Review)

This document provides the critical structure to administer the NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review. This program was developed and intended to be coordinated with the “background review” of Candidates participating to become a NHICC NHI.

What is a NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review?

The NHICC Test Inspections with Peer Review is a time tested proven “assessments” tool that formally evaluates the home inspection and report writing skills of home inspectors in a “test house” scenario. Test Inspections with Peer Review provides the home inspection sector with a realistic and powerful assessment tool that can benchmark performance and also assist in improving overall quality. Its purpose is to test and improve the inspection procedure and the home inspector’s communication skills.

Undergoing the process of a Test Inspection with Peer Review can provide home inspectors with a level of accountability and professionalism that sets this inspector apart from a large portion of the “others” in the home inspection business. A Test Inspections with Peer Reviews is performed as the last performance during the “Candidate” stage of the NHICC National Certification Process. It may be used to alleviate the potential for future “risks”, which often result in a claim against the home inspector. This can be accomplished by assessment of the Candidate’s practical skill sets in the performance of a home inspection, along with a review of their inspection knowledge and communication skill.



What are the expectations?

Experienced and well-seasoned practitioners are normally able to identify potential problem areas against the Standard of Practice. The NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review process replicates not just an onsite home inspection, but also the common concerns and expectations demanded by home inspection clients.

Who Performs the Test Inspection with Peer Review?

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NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review Examiners are seasoned and tested home inspectors trained and responsible to evaluate the “Candidates” in a number of predefined specific skill areas. As such it is critical that all “Candidates” must be evaluated under a set and predefined terms of review, in this case by a set of guidelines. The guidelines serve as an authoritative document offering the requisite levels of performance for competence.

These guidelines outline a recommended course of action. Unlike standards that carry the weight of a rule, guidelines describe measures to help examiners as well as participants to consistently meet the requirements of a standard.

How does a TIPR demonstrate competency?

This practical home inspection skills-based exam assesses a home inspectors expertise and knowledge, validating competency on the home inspection process. This includes the three distinct categories in the review process:

- (1) Actual onsite home inspection,*
- (2) Review of the home inspectors verbal communication skills and general technical knowledge,*
- (3) Report writing skills for a minimum of 80% or better accuracy score.*

In the case of a selection procedure for measuring knowledge, the knowledge being measured is operationally defined as *“that body of learned information which is used in regular day-to-day home inspection practice and is a necessary prerequisite for observable aspects of work skills essential to the occupation”*.

What is the Success and Sustainability of Test Inspection with Peer Review Process?

NHICC Test Inspections with Peer Reviews are conducted in manner that meets the procedure set out by guidelines. These guidelines refer to the standards and specifications that shall be adopted when conducting a NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review.

The NHICC certification process is recognized as a national standard for those “Candidates” undergoing a background review to become accepted as “reasonably” proficient in meeting the National Occupation Standard for home inspectors in Canada. To date there have been over 600 TIPR’s conducted by the NHICC.

Who are the Examiners for the NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review?

The success and sustainability of the NHICC Test Inspection with Peer Review program relies heavily on the involvement and participation of those home inspection members that have expressed their interest in becoming an examiner. First and foremost all examiners have successfully completed their Test Inspection with Peer Review. Selected examiners are trained in all of the key areas of the Test Inspection with Peer Review process. This includes and is not limited to the understanding of the role of the examiner, the history and process of the Test Inspection with Peer Review, understanding the use and function of all of the evaluation forms. They are also provided an opportunity to gain experience of conducting a Test Inspection with Peer Review through job shadowing the Chief Examiner or an approved examiner representative.

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As noted earlier an Examiner must successfully complete a Test Inspection with Peer Review. In addition, examiners must meet and maintain the requirements outlined in the specific obligations, description and characteristics required to be an examiner. Additionally examiners must have a minimum of 5 (five) years of experience in conducting home inspections.

What is the Purpose of the Guidelines?

These procedural guidelines set out in this document provide the essential requirements for all participants involved in the Test Inspection with Peer Review inspection and evaluation sessions.

Based on the list of “Candidates” established from the Registrar, the Chief Examiner along with the Chair of the NAB (National Admissions Board) will recommend the organizing of a Test Inspection with Peer Review session in a province or region where the numbers of “Candidates” are deemed eligible and there is “reasonable” support to conduct such an event. Examiners in that region will be contacted.

The bottom line: This process and the requisite procedures must be clearly established and set as the standard for each and every Test Inspection with Peer Review. This process must be consistently applied in order to preserve integrity, fairness and equality throughout its function.

Which Standard of Practice must be met?

Standards – YES. The ASHI (American Society of Home Inspectors) Standards of Practice (SOP) are used as the benchmark for evaluating the requirements of the home inspection and inspection report. The participant may use another recognized standard of practice; however, they must meet at least the minimum standard of ASHI SOP.

The purpose of the Standard of Practice is to establish a minimum and uniform standard for home inspectors who subscribe to this Standard of Practice. Home Inspections performed to this Standard of Practice are intended to provide the client with objective information regarding the condition of the systems and components of the home as inspected at the time of the home inspection. Redundancy in the description of the requirements, limitations, and exclusions regarding the scope of the home inspection is provided for emphasis only.

Are there Rules or Guidelines for Conducting a TIPR?

YES. The principle guidelines for “Test Inspection with Peer Review Process” was developed by committee and worked on by the author of this document. To date approximately 600 Test inspections with Peer Review “Candidates” have undergone this testing process.

The document provides the terms of reference, the process, the examination criteria, a feedback to the participant component and recommendations for the time requirements for participants and the Examiners. The document also identifies the details for a test house, the role and requirements to become an Examiner.

The names and requisite details of all Candidates that require “testing” review will be forwarded to the Chief Examiner as the main point of contact to expedite the scheduling of the Test Inspection with Peer Review.

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PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES - TEST INSPECTION WITH PEER REVIEW

Examiners - Organizing a Test Inspection with Peer Review

1. Examiners will be contacted by the Chief Examiner to conduct a Test Inspection with Peer Review when deemed one could be conducted in an area. This information will be communicated to the Deputy Examiner where such a position is in place.
2. Examiners shall contact the "Candidates" based on the list of eligible "Candidates" maintained by the Chief Examiner – Note: Ideally there must be 5 – 7 Candidates for fiscal viability of conducting the test session. In cases where there are less 5 the "Candidates" will be encouraged as an option to attend the next closest venue, where deemed practical.
3. Examiners are paid a set fee per "Candidate" processed.
4. Examiners shall be responsible for a "test" home for conducting the test inspection.
5. Examiners shall find an appropriate location to conduct the peer review of Candidates.
6. Examiners shall set "reasonable" time lines for Candidates to conduct the Test Inspection.
7. Examiners shall set "reasonable" time lines for Candidates to conduct the Peer Review.
8. Examiners shall set up and/or assist in scheduling Test Inspection with Peer Reviews.
9. Examiners shall confirm the final schedule and details to the session Candidates.
10. Examiners shall notify the Chief Examiner the names of the Candidates that are participating in the Test Inspection with Peer Review and also the names of those Candidates that have withdrawn, and the reason if it is available.
11. Examiners and/or the onsite "house-sitter" shall assure that all Candidates have completed the "Disclaimer and Waiver of Liability Form" prior to conducting the onsite inspection and oversee the conduct of the Candidates during the onsite home inspection.

Examiners - Conducting the Test Inspection

1. Examiners shall conduct an inspection and review of the test house prior to the testing of the Candidate.
2. Examiners shall identify and establish a list of the "must find" conditions based on the Standard of Practice.
3. Examiners shall set any specific conditions (if applicable) for the inspection of the house, such as limitations to roof or crawlspace access, or that for safety purposes – the electrical service cover panel was removed for convenience for all Candidates, areas not accessible, etc.
4. Examiners shall allow a time limit of up to approximately 2 to 2 ½ hours for Candidates to inspect the house.
5. Examiners shall provide a "house-sitter" during the specified inspection period for the Candidates Test Inspection. A few of the key responsibilities of the house-sitter is assure that Candidates sign the waiver of liability prior to inspection, and that Candidates remain silent and do not discuss the inspection during their time at the test house.
6. Examiners shall assign responsibility for lockup and reset of the test house back to its original Pre-Test Inspection condition.

Examiners - Conducting the Peer Review

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NOTE: There shall be a minimum requirement of (2) two Examiners present to conduct a peer review – there may be more, but the fee compensation allocated in the Budget Guidelines shall be redistributed and shall not exceed that amount unless receiving prior approval by the Chief Examiner.

There may be only (1) one Examiner present to conduct the peer review in the circumstance where a Candidate or Examiner claims a conflict of interest, and/or where it is mutually agreed upon that the Peer Review can be conducted with such a condition.

1. Examiners shall allow a maximum of approximately 45 minutes for the Candidates inspection report and question-answer period.
2. Examiners shall allow approximately 15 minutes for private discussion between the peer review examination period at the end of each Candidate Peer Review to discuss and formulate their report on the Candidate.
3. Examiners shall conduct Peer Review of the Candidates at the preset time following the onsite home inspection – Note Examiners must take into account some additional time for travel and preparation of the Candidates report prior to the Peer Review.
4. Examiners shall collect all required Test Inspection with Peer Review documentation from the Candidate including the “Disclaimer and Waiver of Liability Form” and completed inspection report if available at the time of the Peer Review. Alternatively the Candidates have 24 hours maximum to submit their finished report to the Chief Examiner.
5. Examiners shall briefly outline the process and procedures to the Candidate with respect to the Peer Review procedure.
6. Examiners shall through oral examination - have the Candidate report the “significant defects and near end of life components/systems and health and safety” issues; in addition the Examiner shall obtain and forward a copy of the Candidates completed “Candidates Summary Inspection Report”.
7. Examiners shall through examination - evaluate the Candidates general inspection knowledge and communication skills, based on the communication during the Peer review.
8. Examiners may confer and come to mutual agreement on the preliminary scoring of the Candidate – on the issues of must find items – these score sheets must be sent to the Chief Examiner (forming part of the Candidates records).
9. Examiners shall not indicate in any manner to the Candidate the outcomes (such as pass or fail) or standing of the inspection and peer review conducted.

Examiners - Closing the Session

1. Examiners are required to use the report evaluation check sheets (Form Compliance Report Checklist) to determine, if additional information is provided reporting any condition that may have been unreported during the peer review session. These items should be noted and included as counting towards credit on the final inspection report.
2. Examiners shall expedite the delivery of all pertinent evaluation and examination documents to the Chief Examiner. The Chief Examiner will maintain all examination documents.
3. The Chief Examiner shall be responsible to provide the final review and evaluate the home inspection reports and the Examiners evaluation forms.

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4. The Chief Examiner shall provide periodic reports (monthly where practical and at least every 2 months) to the NHICC National Certification Council indicating the results of the Test Inspections with Peer Reviews.
5. Results and confidential information and proprietary reports must be kept confidential.

TIPR Appeal

If a Candidate believes that the results of the TIPR are not valid; the Candidate may file an appeal with the TIPR Chief Examiner, and where required with payment of a fee to the National Registrar.

1. *An appeal must be in writing.*
2. *The Candidate's signature must be on the letter of appeal.*
3. *The Candidate must mail or email it - (with signature).*
4. *The Candidate must provide complete documentation clearly identifying the reasonable grounds to substantiate the appeal.*

An appeal is defined as a written petition requesting a review and a re-evaluation of a specific Test Inspection with Peer Review (TIPR). An appeal must be made with 15 business days after completing a scheduled TIPR exam or receipt of the score on the TIPR.

An appeal fee is sent to the National Certification Program National Registrar.

The appeal must be sent to the Chief Examiner. The Chief Examiner will primarily evaluate the grounds for an appeal and where necessary implement the process to address those verifiable issues documented.

An appeal fee may be waived where the Chief Examiner believes the grounds for the appeal may be upheld based on a score that is between 70% and short of the 80% minimum pass requirement. Appeals must be made within 5 business days after completing the onsite TIPR or within 5 days after receiving a score on the TIPR.

Generally appeal challenges include but are not limited to:

1. *Technical accuracy of the exam items (questions)*
2. *Significance of questions or conditions to the Standards of Practice*
3. *Significance of condition to a geographical region*
4. *Determination or transfer of the score – for example: based on error or miscalculation*

Note: That part of the rationale of having two Examiners conducts the TIPR is to assure that they both agree with the findings reported in the test review process.

Rescheduling a TIPR

If a Candidate has a scheduled date and time for the TIPR, and there is a need to reschedule the TIPR, the Candidate must contact the Chief Examiner by email to the NHICC at least 2 weeks prior to the TIPR. Any cancellations after this date is subject a fee of \$300.00, assessed for rescheduling a TIPR without due notice.

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