

Construction Grants

MDA's Migrant Labor Housing Program is currently administering a migrant labor housing construction grant program on behalf of the U.S. Department of Labor. Grants are available on a 50/50 match basis. The maximum grant available is \$15,000 for construction expenditures in excess of \$30,000.

Allowable expenditures include living unit construction costs; utility connections; well and septic permits, and well and septic installations. Qualifying expenditures on up to two housing units may be used as applicant matching funds. These living units may be located on up to two housing sites.

To be eligible for a grant, the housing must be: constructed in accordance with winter occupancy standards; licensed for occupancy for three years following completion; provided at low or no cost to migrant farm workers; and available for at least 50 percent of the growing season. Grant cycles run from July through June.



Compliance Assistance

Migrant housing staff are available to help individuals establish and improve housing capacity. For instance:

- Plan reviews help ensure compliance prior to construction.
- Inspectors identify proven solutions to housing problems.
- Complaints are investigated or referred to proper resources.



Migrant Labor Housing Inspection & Licensing



Information on Applications, Inspections, Compliance Assistance, and Grants

For more information, please contact:

Michigan Department of Agriculture
Environmental Stewardship Division
P.O. Box 30017
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: 517-241-1174



Migrant Labor Housing Program

Each year, an estimated 90,000 migrant workers and their families come to Michigan to work in agriculture. These individuals plant, tend, harvest, and process 38 different crops with a production value in excess of \$2.1 billion per year. Migrant workers come to Michigan because of the diversity of work available and the state's national reputation for good housing.

Housing provided for five or more migrant workers engaged in agricultural activities must be inspected and licensed by the Michigan Department of Agriculture (MDA) prior to occupancy. Individuals operating migrant labor housing without a license are subject to fines of up to \$1,000 per day.

On average, MDA conducts more than 1,000 inspections at 850 housing locations. Currently, there are 4,000 licensed living units for approximately 22,000 migrant farm workers and their families.

Inspection and licensing requirements focus on:

- structurally sound construction,
- safe water supplies,
- occupancy and crowding,
- bathing and sanitation facilities,
- electrical and mechanical services,
- fire prevention, and
- proper waste disposal.

The program provides a means of protecting the health, safety, and welfare of migrant laborers and their families. Quality housing helps attract migrant workers needed by the Michigan agriculture industry, and clean living conditions help protect worker health and prevent the spread of communicable diseases.

Application, Inspection, and Licensure

If you are providing housing for five or more migrant workers employed in agriculture:

1. Contact MDA or go to www.michigan.gov/mda to obtain an application for migrant housing. Complete the application and send it to MDA. There are no license, application, or inspection fees. However, the application must be received 30 days prior to occupying the housing.
2. MDA will send you a copy of license requirements and a checklist to help you prepare for an initial inspection. Make whatever changes or repairs are needed to bring the housing into compliance, then contact the inspector listed in your application package to schedule an appointment.
3. An MDA inspector will meet you at the housing location to review housing conditions and compliance with state requirements. Your inspector will

work with you to itemize and prioritize corrections needed for full compliance. A licensing recommendation will then be sent to MDA's Lansing office for processing.

4. Licenses are mailed to the applicant/owner of the housing facility. They are printed on weather-resistant paper and must be posted at the licensed housing site. Other state and federal agencies look for an MDA license when taking enforcement actions, so post the license in a clear and conspicuous location.
5. As time allows, your inspector may stop by while the housing is being used to ensure the limits on the allowable number of occupants are being observed and the housing remains in substantial compliance with the state rules.
6. In the fall, you will be sent a license renewal application and information on any programmatic changes that may impact your operation.

