



Quality Standard Guidelines

CLASSIFICATION:

To qualify for membership in the Superior Small Lodging Association properties must meet the following criteria:

- Properties must have no more than 75 rooms (Accommodations) for rental.
- They must hold a valid hotel, motel, inn or bed & breakfast license.
- Where applicable, properties must pay county tax as well as other state and county sales taxes.
- New properties must have a Certificate of Occupancy before they can be inspected.
- All properties must be inspected annually.
- Properties must be primarily vacation or business travel oriented with private guest accommodations. We do not accept semi-residential establishments that do not provide leisure or business travel environment and services.
- Every room in a certified property is required to meet all SSL guidelines.
- Condos may only be accepted into the program if they are in a building that, in its entirety, has 75 or less units with no yearly residential units maintained in the building. They must be run by a management company and one cleaning company must be used for all condos with appropriate licenses in place and paying state and local bed tax.
- Owners of multiple properties which are operated from one central office or booking agency and are presented and advertised under one web site must all be members of SSLA in good standing to be admitted into the program and maintain membership.

SSLA participation is an earned privilege and members must demonstrate an on-going commitment and adhere to the requirements of the program, including the yearly inspection and payment of any applicable fees and dues.

INSPECTIONS:

A property review inspection, conducted by an independent inspection company, determines whether a property is eligible for membership in the SSLA program. This inspection guarantees that guests will enjoy a clean, safe and well managed small lodging establishment, offering friendly ambiance and personal service.



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- All properties must be inspected annually to maintain SSL membership.
- Inspections will be unannounced and could occur randomly and periodically.
- All properties must be available for inspection without advance notice.
- The Executive Director must be informed on an annual basis should the property not have an on-site office.
- Contact information must be posted so both the inspector and/or a guest can reach management easily.
- On arrival, the inspector will identify him/herself and ask to see vacancy listings.
- The inspector will randomly choose those accommodations to be inspected based on availability and will not be led to specific rooms by the manager or owner.
- Based on room availability, and discretion of the inspector, he/she may also ask to see accommodations that have yet to return to inventory: unclean, closed due to maintenance, renovation or presently occupied (with occupant's permission only).
- In the event high occupancy at a property at the time of the inspector's arrival precludes seeing the requisite number of unoccupied/made-up rooms, then it will be necessary for the inspector to see occupied rooms or rooms that are currently listed as "out of order".
- In the case of occupied rooms, the inspector must be accompanied by a representative of the management during the time that the inspector is in the room and have the permission of the guest. It would be prudent of the management to also accompany the inspector in any review of occupied rooms.
- It is understood that the inspection of occupied rooms only occurs as an exception to the rule.
- The inspector may ask to see at least 30% of the accommodations, from standard to deluxe and in different areas and floors of your complex.
- An inspector should see every unit in a new property to ensure the correct number of units.
- If the inspector is denied access to any accommodation during accommodation during the walk-through, the inspection may be terminated. In that case, the inspection fee may be forfeited and eligibility denied.



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- The inspection is an excellent opportunity to gain valuable feedback. It is therefore recommended, although not required, that the property owner, manager or representative accompany the inspector during the evaluation as the inspector will point out areas (if any) that may need additional attention, repair or enhancement from a guest perspective.
- The inspector will carry out the inspection during this initial visit and will neither wait for off-premises personnel to join the tour nor return at a more convenient time.
- If, for any reason, the inspector finds no access to the property on arrival for his/her unannounced inspection the inspector will make every effort to return at a later date or time.
- The inspection can last from 30 minutes to 2 hours depending on property size and conditions.
- At the conclusion of the inspection, the inspector will provide the owner, manager or representative a verbal summary of the inspection but no score will be given.
- The passing grade for the SSL program is 82% and properties are encouraged to continually upgrade and exceed the standards of the program. A combined housekeeping score of 85% must be maintained for the privilege of being in the SSL program.

The inspectors are industry professionals who travel throughout the country and should be extended every courtesy one would bestow upon a guest.

COMPLAINTS

Guest complaints are to be given serious consideration. After three (3) written complaints received by the Statewide organization your local chapter of SSL, Convention and Visitors Bureau, Chamber of Commerce and/or Better Business Bureau, the property can be re-inspected with the expense of the re-inspection to be paid for by the property. All complaints must be dealt with in a business-like manner and must be well documented.

SSL's procedures on handling guest complaints safeguard the Association's reputation and standards on quality and service. The following are internal procedures and timelines for replying to complaints received by letter or email and dealing with difficult cases.



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Scenario 1: If the SSL office is the primary recipient of a guest complaint then the SSL Executive Director responds to the complaining guest by letter or email.

- All relevant correspondence is forwarded to the property that is the subject of the complaint.
- The innkeeper is requested to respond in writing to the guest and copy the SSL office within a 15-day period. If the guest's complaint is left unanswered by the property owner/manager longer than 15 days their SSL membership may be terminated forthwith. Extensions may be granted given any extenuating circumstances.
- To the extent possible, confidentiality concerning the complaint and the information must be maintained at all stages.
- Entities that may be copied on correspondence, when appropriate, would include the respective DMO, a representative of the Property Review Program (PRP), the SSL Board Chair and the destination chapter president be copied on any correspondence.
- If the complaint deals with issues covered under SSL's guidelines, correspondence will be forwarded to the PRP representative for his/her comments. In the case of a complaint of this nature, the SSL Executive Director will conduct appropriate activity, which could mean an unannounced inspection within 30 – 60 days. The DMO is copied on all relevant correspondence. The correspondence will remain on file for three (3) years.
- If, after the preliminary review of any complaint or suggestion, the complaint is found to be justified, SSL may request assistance from the DMO, if any. SSL may also request assistance from PRP in determining the need for immediate re-inspection and additional corrective action.
- The 15-day response time may be shortened for complaints channeled through the DMO.
- Destination Chapter Presidents or Co-Chairs must be made aware of the gravity of a complaint against a member property at least 30 days prior to membership termination.

Scenario 2: In the typical case, the complaint goes to the local DMO/Chamber, etc. and may be forwarded to the SSL office. This starts the process outlined under Scenario #1. SSL would require that all DMOs, as standard procedure, forward complaints on an SSL property to the SSL Executive Director.



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- The local destination group will handle SSL member complaints regarding inspection. Input from the National office will be provided only if necessary.
- Re-inspections cannot be requested to improve property scores.

A. REGISTRATION/OPERATIONS/PUBLIC SPACES **TOTAL POINTS: 30**

- **Lobby/Registration - Conditions and Appearance** **POINTS: 5**
 - Facilities must be well maintained and provide a pleasant atmosphere.
 - Layout and décor should be inviting, comfortable and consistent with the overall ambiance of the property.
 - Storage of supplies and clutter should be kept out of guests' view.
 - Adequate guest sitting area is recommended but not mandatory.

- **Front Desk Operations** **POINTS: 5**

Hospitality and service to guests are of the utmost importance. Management and all personnel must operate in an ethical and professional manner at all times and must make a conscientious effort to provide courteous, polite and friendly service to all guests.

- Establishments must clearly identify an onsite registration area and office hours must be posted at entry.
- Regardless of office hours, provisions should be made for the receipt of emergency guest telephone calls at all times.
- An emergency management/owner phone number must be posted at entry, with either night doorbell or phone provided, if operation is not open and attended 24 hrs.

- **Brochures/Rates/Policies and Destination Material** **POINTS: 5**

Area destination material is an important component to any property. Brochure racks, area guides, maps or in-room directories are recommended. SSL directories to help your guests continue their trip should be available in the office or lobby.

- Brochures must accurately depict the property and facilities to avoid any confusion and offer full disclosure of all policies and regulations regarding the property.
- All establishments must have printed rate sheets for distribution and be available for guests and inquiries. Full disclosure of rates must be published.



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- Reservation policies must be reasonable and meet industry standards. They must be adhered to on a consistent basis.
- All policies for reservations, cancellations and refunds must be fully disclosed to guests in writing prior to arrival.
- Confirmed reservations with deposit must be honored as required by law.
- Rates are to be posted in each room/unit if required by law, and must be posted on the website.

- **Maid Service**

POINTS: 5

To avoid any confusion regarding individual property services, full disclosure (in writing) of housekeeping policy must be made on property literature, such as policies/rate sheet, internet and during inquiries with future guests, to avoid any surprises prior to guest arrival/stay.

- Maid service is not the same as towel service and the two should be clearly identified.
- If no service is provided it must be clearly stated on all literature and on the website.
- If cleaning fees are imposed they must be in writing and on all literature and on the website.

- **Security and Guest Services**

POINTS: 5

Establishments should make all reasonable attempts to protect guests against damage and theft 24 hours per day. On site owner/management must be available 24 hours per day in person or by telephone. If rooms are not equipped with telephones, then a common area phone is required so guests without mobile phones can make emergency phone calls. Emergency numbers and instructions must be provided and easily visible.

- Hours that management is available to answer questions and meet guests' needs daily must be posted.

B. Guest Accommodations

TOTAL POINTS: 70

- **Housekeeping**

POINTS: 15

Each establishment must reflect a high degree of cleanliness. A combined housekeeping of 85% must be maintained for the privilege of being in the SSL program. Housekeeping is not considered a variable factor.



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- Regardless of the excellence of other facilities, membership in the SSL program will not be granted unless cleanliness is maintained in all aspects.
- Excessive staining to carpeting and bed linen, although covered in separate categories, will also negatively affect your housekeeping score.

- **Guest Room Security**

Guest room security must be assured.

- **Door- Primary Lock:** The door for each room/unit must be equipped with a primary lock.
- **Door- Secondary Lock:** Each room/unit door to a common hall or to the property's exterior must have a secondary security device in addition to the primary lock. This secondary lock must prevent the ability to open the door from the outside by the room key or normal master key when the guest locks the door from the inside. A 1-inch through-the-door deadbolt lock is required as a secondary security device. (Certain historical properties may be exempt).
- **Master Key Systems** must be limited to one emergency master key, privacy lock system reserved for use by management only. Under no circumstances should service personnel or housekeepers have access to the emergency master key.
- **Connecting Room Doors:** Doors that connect rooms must have locks that prevent opening from the opposite side. A 1-inch through-the-door deadbolt is required.
- **Windows:** Each room/unit window must work freely and be free of defects. Any window designed to open must be equipped with screens and be wear free. Security guards for jalousie-styled windows are recommended.
- **Sliding Doors:** Must have locks that prevent opening from the outside. A secondary security device is required on all sliding doors. This should be placed high enough to act as a childproof lock.
- **One-Way Door Viewfinder:** A one-way peephole or viewing device providing a 180-degree view is required for all solid room/unit exterior doors if an accessible window is more than one foot away from the door jam. (Certain historical properties may be exempt).

- **Privacy/Window Coverings**

POINTS: 5

To assure privacy and prevent glare, each guest room/unit should have adequate window coverings. Blackout/total sunblock of window openings is desirable (no points will be deducted for lack of this type of covering).

- Bathroom windows must be sufficiently opaque or have adequate blinds, shades or drapes to provide complete privacy from the outside.



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- **Décor/Interior Wall Conditions/Sound-Proofing**

POINTS: 5

The décor of each room/unit should be attractive and in keeping with current industry standards. Wall trim, doors and ceilings should be clean and well maintained. Each room/unit should be sufficiently soundproofed and private, preventing outside noises and sounds from adjoining rooms and public areas from disturbing guests.

- **Furnishings/Floor Space**

POINTS: 5

The furnishings of each room/unit must meet current industry standards as listed below, be well maintained and of good quality.

- **Beds:** Beds must be well constructed, comfortable and in superior condition.
- **Nightstands:** Each room/unit must have at least one nightstand located next to each bed. One nightstand between two beds is sufficient.
- **Bureau/Dresser/Credenza:** Each room/unit must provide ample facilities for accommodating guest clothing and personal belongings.
- **Writing Surface:** Each room/unit should be equipped with a sufficient writing surface as a permanent part of the room equipment.
- **Chairs:** Each room/unit must be equipped with at least one comfortable chair. Where applicable, chairs should be positioned for convenient television viewing and conversation. Hide-a-bed sofa's, duo-beds, etc. are acceptable as a substitute for chairs.
- **Mirror/Art Work:** Each room/unit must be equipped with a mirror and should also be enhanced with art work.
- **Luggage Rack:** Each room/unit must contain a luggage rack, credenza or equivalent bench space.

- **Lamps/Room Lighting**

POINTS: 5

The following areas require direct illumination. (Rated at least 1000 lumens or the equivalent as in fluorescent bulbs is required).

- Above or next to each bed
- Next to chair
- Above or next to the writing surface

The same lamp may provide illumination for more than one location. The combination of the fixture, shade design, placement and bulb wattage should be carefully considered in order to provide adequate lighting in each room as well as at each of the above locations.

- 1000 lumens or the equivalent, as in fluorescent bulbs are mandatory for all reading areas.
- Shades must be free of stains or soil and not show excessive wear.



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- Lamp switches must easily be accessible and free from any hazard.
- A functional light switch or lamp is required at the entrance door to each guest room and separate room within a suite.

• **Telephones**

POINTS: 5

If in-room phone systems are used by the property they must have

- Incoming and out-going service
- Touch-tone phones with direct dial
- Local phone directories and dialing instructions are required to be in each room/unit
- Phone rates must be posted by phone.

To accommodate security at all levels, as well as emergency situations:

- The property's emergency number must be posted in each room/unit. This number must be answered after hours when office is closed.
- A landline phone should be prominently displayed at the office with instructions to dial the appropriate number for after hour emergencies. This phone must be mounted outside the office in an appropriate phone box and should be programmed to call the emergency number when the receiver is lifted to prevent usage for anything other than an emergency.
- Wifi/Internet or Data Ports are required.

• **Televisions/Alarm Clock Radios**

POINTS: 5

Color television set with a cable or satellite TV and remote control are required.

- Convenient TV viewing from chairs should be provided.
- An alarm clock or equivalent wake-up service is required.

• **Air Conditioning/Heat**

POINTS: 5

- Each room/unit must be equipped with air conditioning and heat.
- Individual controls are desirable.
- Control panels should be easily accessible.

• **Bed Linens/Bedspreads**

POINTS: 5

- Bed linens and bedspreads must be provided
- Each bed requires:
 - Two (2) sheets – a top sheet and a bottom sheet
 - One (1) mattress pad
 - Plump pillow(s), pillow cases(s) and zippered pillow protectors are required.



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- One (1) blanket.
- Appropriate bedspread is a quilted or other quality spread. Mesh backing should be avoided.
- All items must be clean and in good condition. Staining will also negatively affect the housekeeping score.

- **Closets/Hangers**

POINTS: 5

Each room/unit must be equipped with hanging facilities to accommodate clothing for a minimum of two (2) persons.

- A minimum of eight hangers per room is required.
- Facilities should permit clothing to hang without touching walls.
- Hangers should be wood, plastic or other quality hanger.
- Wire hangers are unacceptable.
- Adequate closet space must be provided for guest clothing if there is a locked closet that does not allow a guest to place for them to hang their belongings.
- No personal items of hotelier/innkeeper are acceptable.

C. BATHROOMS

TOTAL POINTS: 45

Bathrooms need not be elaborately decorated but those that have stained or damaged bath walls, floors or fixtures that look unclean (even though they may be cleaned regularly) are not acceptable.

- Bathrooms must be of ample size and the arrangements of the facilities should be such that there is sufficient and comfortable space to bathe, dress and undress without inconvenience
- Ideally, all bathroom facilities (with the exception of the sink/vanity) should be in a space separate from the sleeping or living area. Certain exceptions are made for whirlpools, Jacuzzis or spas.
- When the bathroom door is closed, general construction of this area should be such that normal sounds, light, odor or moisture cannot enter the sleeping or living areas.
- All guest rooms/units should include private bathrooms. Certain historical properties are exempt, but no more than two (2) rooms (four (4) persons) may share a bathroom.
- Properties with shared bathroom facilities must state so in brochure literature.
- Robes must be provided in all rooms that share or have an outside bath.

- **Housekeeping**

POINTS: 10



Quality Standard Guidelines

Each establishment must reflect a high degree of cleanliness. A combined housekeeping score of 85% must be maintained for the privilege of being included in the SSL program.

- Housekeeping is not considered a variable factor
 - Regardless of the excellence of other facilities membership in the SSL program will not be granted unless cleanliness is maintained in all aspects.
 - Excessive grout or caulking mildew will negatively reflect on your housekeeping score.
 - Bathroom cleanliness is unquestionable. Stained or damaged bath walls, floors or fixtures that look unclean (even though they may be cleaned regularly) are unacceptable.
 - Bathrooms should contain as many non-porous, easily cleaned surfaces as possible to ensure high sanitary standards.
 - Older faucets must be in good repair.
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- **Tub/Shower Conditions** **POINTS: 5**
 - The tub and/or shower should be of standard size and free of excessive surface wear.
 - Updated faucets are recommended.
 - Curtain rods and hooks or tub enclosure should be up to industry standards.
 - Sufficient amounts of hot water must be provided at all times.
 - Non-skid surface or bath mat and/or bar must be provided.
 - Excessive grout or caulking mildew or discoloration will also negatively impact your housekeeping score.
 - Excessive rust is unacceptable.
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- **Water Closet/Seat** **POINTS: 5**
 - Should be of high quality with proper water flow
 - Excessive wear to toilet seat is unacceptable.
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- **Sink/Vanity Area** **POINTS: 5**
 - The sink/vanity area should be of high quality; surfaces must be free of stains and excessive wear.
 - Updated faucets are recommended.
 - Adequate shelf and counter space must be provided.
 - Above-sink mirror must be provided.
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- **Floor Covering** **POINTS: 5**
 - Tile, linoleum or other surfaces must be clean and well maintained.



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- Carpeting is not permitted in guestroom baths.

- **Electrical Outlets** **POINTS: 5**
 - Should be convenient and require GFI and around all sink areas.
- **Lighting/Light Fixtures** **POINTS: 5**
 - Direct lighting is required at sink/mirror.
 - Lighting must sufficiently illuminate the bathroom
 - Lighting fixtures must be clean and well maintained.
- **Ventilation/Exhaust** **POINTS: 5**
 - Guestrooms/Baths must be free of objectionable odors due to poor sanitation, mildew or heavy deodorizers.

D. BATHROOM SUPPLIES

TOTAL POINTS: 20

Required items in all bath or guest rooms include:

- **Towels:** **POINTS: 5**
 - Rooms are to be made up for double occupancy
 - A quality cloth bath mat and at least two (2) bath towels, two (2) hand towels and two (2) wash/face cloths are required.
 - Size of towels required:
 - Bath: 24" X 48" minimum
 - Hand: 24" X 18" minimum
 - Wash/Face: 12' X 12" minimum
 - Towel racks and cloth hooks should be available and convenient to all appropriate fixtures.

- **Facial Tissue/Toilet Paper** **POINTS: 5**

Toilet Tissue and facial tissue should be conveniently located on dispenser and a backup roll must be provided.

- **Soap** **POINTS: 5**

- A 1.5 ounce wrapped bath bar is required at the tub/shower
- A ¾ ounce wrapped hand/face bar is required at the sink/vanity.
- Liquid soap is acceptable at both locations.

- **Drinking Glasses/Wastebasket/Liner** **POINTS: 5**



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- Drinking glasses/Sealed plastic cups must be provided in each bathroom.
- A wastebasket with a plastic liner must be provided in bathroom.
- Grocery or shopping bags may not be used as liners.

E. KITCHENS

TOTAL POINTS: 30

Only rated when part of the guest accommodation.

The equipment in each room/unit must meet current industry standards as listed below, be well maintained and of good quality.

- **Housekeeping**

POINTS: 10

Each establishment must reflect a high degree of cleanliness.

- Housekeeping is not considered a variable factor.
- Regardless of the excellence of the other facilities, membership in the SSL program will not be granted unless cleanliness is maintained in all aspects.
- High sanitary standards must be assured.

- **Condition of Equipment**

POINTS: 5

- Appliances must be well maintained and in good operating condition.
- Cabinets and counters should be attractive throughout.
- Sinks and faucets should be clean and well maintained.
- Range surfaces must be clean and well maintained.

- **Adequacy, Mix, Quality and Presentation of Supplies**

POINTS: 5

- Kitchens must be supplied with the following amenities:
 - China, dishware, plates, bowls and coffee cups.
 - Glassware
 - Silverware
 - Pots and pans
 - Coffee pot and toaster
- Supplies must be clean and well maintained.
- Presentation should be neat and orderly.
- There should be adequate supplies for maximum occupancy.

- **Surface Treatment:**

POINTS: 5

Floors, walls, trim, ceiling and windows should all be clean and well maintained.

- **Lighting/Light Fixtures:**

POINTS: 5



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- Cooking surfaces must be well lit.
- Light fixtures must be clean and well maintained.

F. PROPERTY EXTERIOR

TOTAL POINTS: 45

Each property must maintain an attractive exterior appearance and curb appeal must be conducive to its surrounding conditions.

- **Conditions/Cleanliness of Exteriors/Repairs and Maintenance: POINTS: 10**
 - Each establishment must maintain an attractive exterior appearance.
 - Program standards require properties to be well maintained at all times.
 - Exterior structures must be clean and well maintained.
 - Property maintenance must be executed on a high level and the structure must be clean and well maintained.
- **Landscaping/Grounds: POINTS: 10**
 - Landscaping and grounds should be attractive, well maintained and contribute to the overall ambiance.
 - Curb appeal should be inviting.
 - All walkways should be clean and well maintained.
- **Parking Facilities: POINTS: 5**
 - Driveways should reasonably accommodate guest automobiles.
 - Parking surface conditions must be clean and well maintained.
 - Alternative, off-site parking may be provided and must be disclosed to guests prior to arrival in writing and on web site.
- **Exterior Lights: POINTS: 5**
 - All guest room entrances, hallways/corridors, lobby entrances, parking areas, signage and walkways must be well lit.
 - Sufficient lighting at guest room doorways, stairways/steps and office entry is required.
 - Laws of the county and/or city must be adhered to and explained to guest upon arrival. This will not impact your score.
- **Signage: POINTS: 5**



Quality Standard Guidelines

- Properties that choose to participate in the SSL program must not post room rates on street signage, on site reader boards or any other exterior site area. Posting of rates detracts from the quality image SSL properties represent.
- Property must have visually attractive signage.
- All guest room doors must be clearly marked with room numbers or names and office clearly indicated.
- All exits should be indicated.
- Directional signage should be offered as necessary.

- **Conditions of Outdoor Sitting Areas and Public Spaces POINTS: 5**
 - Sitting areas and other guest facilities should be well maintained and provide a pleasant atmosphere.
 - All tables, chairs, lounges, mats, umbrellas and decks should be clean and well maintained.
 - Walkways and alleys must be clear. They are not an area for storage.

- **Swimming Pool/Spa – Rated when available POINTS: 5**
 - Swimming pool/spa must be maintained at all times in accordance with city, county and state ordinances.
 - Proper signage and safety equipment must be in accordance with city, county and state ordinances.
 - Pool surface and surrounding decks should be clean and well maintained.

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