**Structure and Zoning**
Assessment of access to entrances and exits; function of plumbing, electrical, HVAC (any aspect of heating, ventilation or air conditioning) systems and appliances; and structural integrity

**Animals and Pests**
Assessment of animal care and control; compliance with local animal regulations; assessment for evidence of infestations of pests (rodents, insects or other vermin)

**Household Functions**
Assessment of safety, functionality and accessibility of rooms for intended purposes

**Health and Safety**
Assessment of sanitation levels in household; household management of medications for prescribed (Rx) and/or over-the-counter (OTC) drugs

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
Recommendations for PPE (face masks, gloves, eye shields or clothing that protect wearer from environmental health and safety hazards); additional supplies as appropriate to observational level

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**LEVEL I GREEN LOW**
Household environment is considered standard. No special knowledge in working with the chronically disorganized is necessary.

**LEVEL II BLUE GUARDED**
Household environment requires professional organizers or related professionals who have additional knowledge and understanding of chronic disorganization.

**LEVEL III YELLOW ELEVATED**
Pivot point between a cluttered household environment and a potential hoarding environment. Those working with Level III household environments should have significant training in chronic disorganization and will require a community network of resources, especially mental health professionals.

**LEVEL IV ORANGE HIGH**
Household environment requires a coordinated collaborative team of service providers in addition to professional organizers and family: mental health professionals, social workers, financial counselors, pest and animal control officers, crime scene cleaners, licensed contractors and handypersons.

**LEVEL V RED SEVERE**
Professional organizers should not work alone in a Level V environment. Requires a collaborative team, potentially including family, mental health professionals, social workers, building manager, zoning, fire, and/or safety agents. Formal written agreements among the parties should be in place before proceeding.

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**SCOPE OF SCALE**
This document is to be used as an assessment/guideline tool only, specifically for use in the assessment of a home’s interior, except where the outside structure affects the overall safety of the interior. Does not include sheds, unattached garages or outbuildings. It is not to be used for diagnostic purposes or for any psychological evaluation of a person or persons. ICD is not responsible for any work performed by a professional organizer or other related professional using ICD’s C–HS™ or C–HS™ Quick Reference Guide.

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure and Zoning</th>
<th>Animals and Pests</th>
<th>Household Functions</th>
<th>Health and Safety</th>
<th>Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>LEVEL I</strong></td>
<td>Normal animal control (behavior/sanitation); approved number of animals; no evidence of rodents or insects</td>
<td>No excessive clutter; all rooms properly used; appliances functional; good housekeeping and maintenance</td>
<td>Safe, sanitary; no odors; medication control OK</td>
<td>OPTIONAL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 major exit blocked; 1 major appliance or HVAC device not working for longer than one season; some plumbing or electrical systems not fully functional; fire or CO detectors non-existent or non-functional</td>
<td>Evidence of inappropriate animal control; visible or odorous pet waste; visible pet fur/hair/feathers; light to medium evidence of common household pests/insects</td>
<td>Clutter beginning to obstruct living areas; slight congestion of exits, entrances, hallways and stairs; at least one room not being used for intended purpose; several appliances not functional; inappropriate usage of electric appliances and extension cords; substandard housekeeping and maintenance</td>
<td>Diminished appropriate sanitation; odors from dirty dishes, food prep, laundry, toilets; mildew present; medication control questionable</td>
<td>LIGHT PPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside clutter of items normally stored indoors; HVAC devices not working for longer than one season; fire or CO detectors non-existent or non-functional; one part of home has light structural damage (occurring within past six mos.)</td>
<td>Animal population exceeds local regulations; inappropriate animal control; inadequate sanitation; audible evidence of pests; medium level of spiders; light insect infestation such as bed bugs, lice, fleas, roaches, ants, silverfish, spiders, etc.</td>
<td>Clutter obstructing functions of key living areas; building up around exits, entrances, hallways and stairs; at least one room not being used for intended purpose; several appliances not functional; inappropriate usage of electric appliances and extension cords; substandard housekeeping and maintenance; hazardous substances in small quantities</td>
<td>Limited evidence of maintaining sanitation (heavily soiled food prep areas, dirty dishes, mildew); odors obvious and irritating; garbage cans not in use or overflowing; dirt, dust and debris; dirty laundry throughout house; Rx and OTC medications hazardous control (re children, pets, mentally impaired)</td>
<td>MEDIUM PPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excessive outdoor clutter of items normally stored indoors; HVAC devices not working for longer than one year; CO detectors non-existent or non-functional; structural damage to home lasting longer than six months; water damaged floors, damaged walls and foundations, broken windows, doors or plumbing; odor or evidence of sewer backup</td>
<td>Animal population exceeds local ordinances; poor animal sanitation; destructive behavior; excessive spiders and webs; bats, squirrels, rodents in attic or basement (audible and visible); medium insect infestation</td>
<td>Diminished use and accessibility to key living areas; several rooms cluttered to extent they cannot be used for intended purposes; clutter inhibits access to doorways, hallways and stairs; inappropriate storage of hazardous/combustible materials; appliances used inappropriately; improper use of electric space heaters, fans or extension cords</td>
<td>Rotting food, organic contamination; expired, leaking cans or bottles, buckled sides and tops; dishes and utensils unusable; no linens on beds; sleeping on mattress; chair or floor; infestation of bedding and/or furniture; medications Rx and OTC medications easily accessible to anybody</td>
<td>FULL PPE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extreme indoor/outdoor clutter; foliage overgrowth; abandoned machinery; ventilation inadequate or nonexistent; HVAC systems not working; water damaged floors, walls and foundation; broken windows, doors or plumbing; unreliable electrical, water and/or septic systems; odor or sewer backup; irreparable damage to exterior and interior structure</td>
<td>Animals at risk and dangerous to people due to behavior, health and numbers; pervasive spiders, cockroaches, mice, rats, squirrels, raccoons, bats, snakes, etc.; heavy infestation of insects such as bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc.</td>
<td>Key living spaces not usable; all rooms not used for intended purposes; entrances, hallways and stairs blocked; toilets, sinks and tubs not functioning; hazardous conditions obscured by clutter; appliances unusable; hazardous and primitive use of kerosene, lanterns, candles, fireplace/woodstove as primary source of heat and/or light</td>
<td>Human urine and excrement present; rotting food; organic contamination; cans or jars expired, leaking or buckled; dishes and utensils buried or nonexistent; beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation; pervasive mold and/or mildew; moisture or standing water; Rx and OTC medications easily accessible to anybody; presence of expired Rx</td>
<td>FULL PPE REQUIRED</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**CLUTTER–HOARDING SCALE™ (C–HS™)**

**QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE**

**Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**

- **LIGHT PPE**
  - Medical or work gloves; caps (baseball or poly bouffant); first aid kit; insect repellent; hand sanitizer

- **MEDIUM PPE**
  - Face masks or N95 respirator masks; eye protection; gloves; disposable coveralls; poly caps; work shoes/boots; first aid kit; hand sanitizer; insect repellent; headlamp or flashlight

- **FULL PPE**
  - Face masks or N95 respirator masks; safety goggles, medical or industrial grade latex or nitrile gloves; heavy duty work gloves; disposable coveralls; caps, work shoes/boots; first aid kit; hand sanitizer; insect repellent; headlamp or flashlight; respirator

**Q&A**

**Q1**: Which level of clutter-hoarding scale is characterized by minimal structural damage and is the least severe in terms of health and safety risks?

**A1**: **LEVEL I**

**Q2**: What is included in the **FULL PPE** recommended for enterprising human urine and excrement present, rotting food, organic contamination, cans or jars expired, leaking or buckled, dishes and utensils buried or nonexistent, beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation, pervasive mold and/or mildew, moisture or standing water, Rx and OTC medications easily accessible to anybody, presence of expired Rx?

**A2**: The FULL PPE includes the following items: N95 respirator mask or mask with organic filter(s); safety goggles; medical or industrial grade latex or nitrile gloves; heavy duty work gloves; disposable coveralls; poly caps, work shoes/boots; first aid kit hand sanitizer; insect repellent; headlamp or flashlight.

**Q3**: What are the key animals and pests associated with **LEVEL III** and **LEVEL IV** clutter-hoarding scale?

**A3**: For **LEVEL III**, the key animals and pests include animals at risk and dangerous to people due to behavior, health and numbers; pervasive spiders, cockroaches, mice, rats, squirrels, raccoons, bats, snakes, etc.; heavy infestation of insects such as bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc. For **LEVEL IV**, the key animals and pests include animals at risk and dangerous to people due to behavior, health and numbers; pervasive spiders, cockroaches, mice, rats, squirrels, raccoons, bats, snakes, etc.; heavy infestation of insects such as bed bugs, lice, fleas, cockroaches, ants, silverfish, etc.

**Q4**: What are the key household functions not working properly associated with **LEVEL III** and **LEVEL IV** clutter-hoarding scale?

**A4**: For **LEVEL III**, the key household functions not working properly include key living spaces not usable; all rooms not used for intended purposes; entrances, hallways and stairs blocked; toilets, sinks and tubs not functioning; hazardous conditions obscured by clutter; appliances unusable; hazardous and primitive use of kerosene, lanterns, candles, fireplace/woodstove as primary source of heat and/or light. For **LEVEL IV**, the key household functions not working properly include key living spaces not usable; all rooms not used for intended purposes; entrances, hallways and stairs blocked; toilets, sinks and tubs not functioning; hazardous conditions obscured by clutter; appliances unusable; hazardous and primitive use of kerosene, lanterns, candles, fireplace/woodstove as primary source of heat and/or light.

**Q5**: What are the key health and safety concerns associated with **LEVEL III** and **LEVEL IV** clutter-hoarding scale?

**A5**: For **LEVEL III**, the key health and safety concerns include minimal evidence of maintaining sanitation (heavily soiled food prep areas, dirty dishes, mildew); odors obvious and irritating; garbage cans not in use or overflowing; dirt, dust and debris; dirty laundry throughout house; Rx and OTC medications hazardous control (re children, pets, mentally impaired). For **LEVEL IV**, the key health and safety concerns include human urine and excrement present; rotting food; organic contamination; cans or jars expired, leaking or buckled; dishes and utensils buried or nonexistent; beds inaccessible or unusable due to clutter or infestation; pervasive mold and/or mildew; moisture or standing water; Rx and OTC medications easily accessible to anybody; presence of expired Rx.