

HVAC pre-cover inspection checklist

A hvac pre-cover inspection is the hold point before concealed work disappears behind the next layer. This checklist is built for that walk: verify, photograph, then release the cover, not the other way around. Work is commonly verified against SMACNA guidance, IMC. Confirm the edition your authority having jurisdiction has adopted.

Who runs it: The GC's superintendent with the HVAC foreman, releasing ceiling areas for grid or drywall. When: After the rough-in passes, the day before ceiling grid is set or drywall is scheduled on each area.

Above-ceiling ductwork

- ☐ Seal class verified before the ceiling closes
Sample joints checked by hand for tackiness or continuity of mastic, matching the specified seal class. 2 photos required
- ☐ Flex duct runs straight, supported and not kinked
Inner core fully extended, no sags below the support line, radius bends within the manufacturer's limit. 2 photos required
- ☐ Duct supports carry the full weight without sag
Hanger straps not cutting into insulation, spacing consistent across the run. 1 photo required
- ☐ Flex duct connections clamped and sealed at both ends
Inner core fastened with a draw band or listed clamp at the collar and the diffuser, outer jacket pulled over and sealed. 2 photos required
- ☐ Diffuser drops and boots located to the reflected ceiling plan
Drop and boot positions line up with the diffuser locations on the reflected ceiling plan, so no tile is cut around them. 1 photo required

Dampers and access

- ☐ Volume and fire/smoke dampers set and accessible
Damper position confirmed against the design intent, access panel or door reachable once the ceiling is in. 2 photos required
- ☐ Access doors installed at every damper, coil and turning vane
Door sized for hand or arm access, latch functional, no ceiling tile blocking the opening. 1 photo required
- ☐ Fire damper sleeves and retaining angles complete on both sides
Sleeve and retaining angles installed on each face of the rated wall, duct joined to the sleeve per the damper manufacturer's instructions. 2 photos required
- ☐ Motorized dampers and VAV actuators wired and stroked
Where the controls drawings show them, actuators terminated by the controls contractor and driven open and closed from the controller before tile goes in. No photo required

Piping and controls above the ceiling

- ☐ Condensate lines water-tested before the ceiling closes
Water poured at the pan drains freely to the termination, no drips at fittings or joints above the future ceiling. 1 photo required
- ☐ Duct-mounted sensors and detectors installed or sleeved
Static, temperature and duct smoke detector locations in place, with wiring pulled to them before the lid goes on. 1 photo required

Coordination before closure

- ☐ **No conflicts with lighting, sprinkler or structural elements**
Duct and pipe routing does not crowd sprinkler heads, light fixtures or structural bracing. 1 photo required
 - ☐ **Insulation on supply ductwork and refrigerant lines complete**
Vapor barrier intact, no exposed metal duct that will sweat once the system runs. 2 photos required
 - ☐ **Open HVAC items listed by room before the area is released**
Anything still open above that ceiling (duct seal, flex, damper position, condensate test) written up by room, so ceiling crews skip the held rooms. No photo required