

Jefferson County Code Enforcement Procedures:

Jefferson County follows a structured enforcement process to ensure compliance with County ordinances and to protect public health, safety, and property values. When a potential code violation is reported or discovered, the Code Enforcement Officer will first conduct an inspection of the property. If a violation is identified, the County will issue a Courtesy Notice, which serves as an initial warning, informing the property owner of the specific violation(s) and providing an opportunity to correct the issue voluntarily. This notice typically includes a detailed description of the violation, references to the specific Jefferson County Code provisions that have been violated, and a reasonable timeframe for compliance (typically 10 to 30 days). If the violation is corrected within this period, no further action is taken, and the case is closed without penalties.

If the property owner fails to comply within the timeframe outlined in the Courtesy Notice, the County will issue a formal Notice of Violation (NOV). The NOV serves as an official recorded enforcement action and provides a clear directive for corrective measures. The NOV will specify the Jefferson County Code section(s) violated, outline the required corrective actions, and provide a final compliance deadline, typically 45 days from the date of issuance. The property owner may contact the Code Enforcement Officer to discuss compliance options or request an extension. Additionally, the property owner has the right to appeal the NOV within 28 days by submitting a written appeal with a detailed explanation of why they believe the violation notice is incorrect. If an appeal is filed, the case will be reviewed, and a hearing may be scheduled to determine whether the violation stands.

If the violation remains unresolved after the NOV deadline, the County may proceed with escalated enforcement actions. These may include the imposition of fines, the recordation of the violation with the County Recorder's Office, and the issuance of a Stop Work Order if unpermitted construction or land use changes are involved. A Stop Work Order prohibits any further activity on the property until the violation is corrected and required permits are obtained. The County may also initiate a formal abatement process, wherein the County contracts to remedy the violation at the property owner's expense. If the costs of abatement are not paid, a lien may be placed on the property. In extreme cases where violations pose a significant threat to public safety or health, Jefferson County may pursue civil or criminal enforcement, including court-ordered compliance, injunctions, and misdemeanor charges.

Potential Penalties for Code Violations:

Failure to comply with Jefferson County Code enforcement actions can result in substantial penalties. Under Jefferson County Code Section 1-14-13 (Penalties), violators may be subject to civil fines of up to \$1,000 per day per violation, with a total maximum penalty of \$10,000 per violation. Additionally, if the violation remains unresolved, the County may record the Notice of Violation with the County Recorder's Office, creating a public record that may affect future property transactions, loans, and title searches.

For violations that involve unpermitted construction, grading, or land use changes, the County may issue a Stop Work Order, prohibiting any further work until the issue is corrected. Any continued work in violation of a Stop Work Order may result in additional penalties, legal action, or the revocation of permits. In cases where the violation poses a serious public health or safety risk, the County may pursue court-ordered abatement, which could result in the forced removal of non-compliant structures, hazardous materials, or unauthorized land uses. The costs associated with this process, including

contractor fees, administrative expenses, and legal costs, will be billed to the property owner. If unpaid, these costs may be assessed as a lien against the property.

In extreme cases, criminal enforcement may be pursued for repeated or egregious violations. Under Jefferson County Code, violations classified as misdemeanors can result in fines of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to six months, or both. Additionally, the County reserves the right to suspend or revoke business licenses, permits, or development approvals for properties that remain in persistent violation of County ordinances.

Next Steps & Potential Enforcement Actions:

Jefferson County aims to work collaboratively with property owners to resolve violations voluntarily. However, if corrective action is not taken within the specified timeframe, additional enforcement actions may be pursued, including:

- Issuance of a Formal Notice of Violation
- Imposition of Code Violation Fees
- Referral for legal action or stop-work orders as applicable under Jefferson County Code Section 1-14-7 (Enforcement Procedure)

Failure to comply may result in additional penalties or legal proceedings. If you need further clarification, please contact the Jefferson County Code Enforcement Office as soon as possible.