



CODE ENFORCEMENT COMPLAINT PROCESS



CODE ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT & SYSTEM ENTRY

An official complaint is filed with Lake County staff via online, email, phone call, or walk-in.

The alleged violation, along with the complainants name and address, is recorded in the data system and assigned to the appropriate CEO for investigation.

2. COMPLAINT INSPECTION

The CEO visits the site or area and conducts an initial inspection. During this time, the CEO photographs the alleged violation.

If the officer is unable to observe the alleged violation, the complaint is closed.

3. SERVICE OF NOTICE

If a violation is observed, a Notice of Violation (NOV) is given with a reasonable time frame to correct it.

Service of Notice may be perfected by personal service, first class mail or certified (when applicable), or posting.

4. VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE

The county emphasizes voluntary compliance within the provided time frame and resolving alleged violations through education.

Without voluntary compliance, the violation moves to formal code enforcement procedures.

FORMAL CODE ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURE

A. NOTICE OF HEARING

A Notice of Hearing is a formal charging instrument requesting a hearing before the Special Magistrate.

The code enforcement director shall schedule a hearing in front of the special master and provide written Notice to the alleged violator of a scheduled hearing.

B. SPECIAL MAGISTRATE

The Special Magistrate shall have jurisdiction to hear and decide cases involving an

alleged violation or breach of any provision, term and/or condition of the Lake County Code, any development approval authorized by the Land Development Regulations, including but not limited to restrictions, notes, or other requirements contained within approved site plans or plats, developer agreements, ordinances or any resolution duly enacted by the board of county commissioners.

The special master shall have all powers granted by statute, ordinance, or by law. The

standard by which all cases shall be decided shall be by a preponderance of the evidence. If a violation is unfounded, the case can be dismissed.

C. ORDERS

Every order of enforcement or order of fine entered by the special master shall be in writing and shall include findings of fact and conclusions of law. Reasonable time shall be included in the Order, and the Respondent (Violator) is responsible for contacting Code Enforcement to verify compliance with the Order.

D. LIEN

A fine in the form of a lien (certified order) may be assessed against the land* on which the violation exists if the property has not complied by the end of the reasonable time provided by the Special Masters Order of Enforcement. No lien created shall continue for a period longer than twenty (20) years after the certified copy of an order imposing a fine has been recorded.

*Liens may also be assessed against any other real or personal property owned by the violator.

COMMONLY USED CODE ENFORCEMENT TERMINOLOGY

CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (CEO): Any designated employee/agent of the County whose duty is to enforce codes and ordinances enacted by Lake County.

NOTICE OF VIOLATION: The informal Notice issued for violations.

NOTICE OF HEARING: Formal charging instrument requesting a hearing before the Special Magistrate.

SPECIAL MAGISTRATE: Appointed by the Lake County Commission to hold hearings and issue orders affording the proper relief (fines) for county codes and ordinances violations.

NOTES & RESOURCES

This is a general guideline for the code enforcement process, and each situation may have unique circumstances. Please ask your code enforcement officer for clarification if you have any questions about the process.

All Florida municipalities adhere to Florida Statutes Chapter 162; visit www.leg.state.fl.us for more information.

The Lake County Code of Ordinances is available online at http://library.municode.com/fl/Lake_county.

HAVE A COMPLAINT?

Call us at 352-742-3950
or email: codeinfo@lakecountyfl.gov

For more information about Code Enforcement, visit www.lakecountyfl.gov, keywords: Code Enforcement