



Community Development Department
CLIENT ASSISTANCE MEMO

Code Compliance

Case investigation:

- **Property research:** The Code Compliance Officer researches ownership, existing permits, existing code compliance cases, zoning, and licenses related to the property.
- **Outreach to the property owner:** An initial notice is sent to the property owner informing them of the complaint. The notice includes directions to contact the city within five days to schedule a site inspection or discuss a compliance plan.
- **A site visit** (either onsite with consent of the property owner or from public property/city right of way) is conducted.

Investigation results:

- **Complaint unfounded:** If a complaint is deemed unfounded following our research and site visit, we will note that a violation was unfounded and close the inquiry.
- **Violation confirmed:** If a violation is confirmed, a notice of violation is sent to the property owner. The notice of violation includes a description of the violation(s), the code(s) that was violated, the actions needed to resolve the violation(s), and compliance steps if the violation(s) is not corrected. The notice packet also includes information on appeals and supplemental documents if necessary related to the violation.

Compliance plan

- If additional time is needed to correct a violation, the property owner can enter a compliance plan and the compliance process is put on hold as long as objectives are met. The type of violation and the extent of the issue are factored into deadlines included in the compliance plan.
- The city may advise the property owner that they can resolve their code violation by applying for and receiving the necessary permits.

Non-Compliance:

If the property owner does not correct the violation, the city can:

- Issue fines (civil penalties or civil infractions)
- Record a certificate of non-compliance on the property's title, which could affect a future sale or refinancing.
- Pursue abatement (property cleanup) if applicable to the violation.
- In rare cases, issue criminal misdemeanor charges

Client Assistance Memos are not intended to replace the Gig Harbor Municipal Code. Should you have any questions regarding this information please call the Planner of the Day.