

HOUSING CODE

**TITLE 27**  
**HOUSING CODE\***

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\* For general building requirements, see Title 3, Buildings.

**Chapter 27.04**

**TITLE, PURPOSES AND SCOPE**

**Sections:**

- 27.04.010 Title.
- 27.04.020 Declaration of findings and purpose.
- 27.04.030 Scope.

**27.04.010 Title.** This title shall be known and may be cited as the "housing code" and is referred to herein as "this code." (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.04.020 Declaration of findings and purpose.** There exist, within the city of Seattle, dwellings and other buildings or portions thereof, occupied or designed for human habitation together with appurtenant structures and premises, which are unfit for human habitation, substandard, deteriorating, in danger of causing or contributing to the creation of slums or otherwise blighted areas, and inimical to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants thereof and of the public.

Such conditions are the result of, among other circumstances: inadequate original construction; dilapidation; failure to repair; lack of proper sanitary facilities and maintenance; structural or other defects; overcrowding; defects increasing the hazards of fire, accidents, or other calamities; uncleanness; inadequate heating, lighting and ventilation; lack of knowledge of the general public of their rights, duties and obligations with respect to the occupancy, maintenance and repair of such buildings and inadequate remedies for the enforcement of such rights, duties and obligations; or any combination of such circumstances.

Such conditions and circumstances are dangerous and a menace to the health, safety, morals or welfare of the occupants of such buildings and of the public, and accordingly it is the purpose of this code to establish minimum standards and effective means for enforcement thereof for the preservation, protection, and promotion of the public health, safety, morals and general welfare. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.04.030 Scope.** This code shall apply to all buildings or any portion thereof which are used, designed or intended to be used, for human habitation, together with appurtenant structures and premises, now in existence or hereafter constructed; provided that all devices or safeguards required by the Building Code Title 3 in a building or structure when erected, altered, or repaired, shall be maintained in accordance with the Building Code. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

## Chapter 27.08 ADMINISTRATION

### Sections:

- 27.08.010 Enforcement.
- 27.08.020 Citizens housing board.
- 27.08.030 Right of entry.
- 27.08.040 Housing and abatement revolving fund.

**27.08.010 Enforcement.** The superintendent of buildings is designated as the officer to exercise the powers assigned by this code in relation to buildings unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto as specified in RCW 35.80.020, and he is further authorized and directed to enforce the provisions of this code with the advice and assistance of the citizens housing board; provided, that the chief of police shall be responsible for the enforcement of Sections 27.40.010 and 27.40.020 of this code and he shall have equal responsibility with the superintendent of buildings for the enforcement of Section 27.28.010(c) of this code. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 100641 § 1; January 24, 1972).

**27.08.020 Citizens housing board.** (a) **CREATION; MEMBERSHIP.** There is created the citizens housing board of the city of Seattle which board shall consist of eleven members knowledgeable in the field of housing, each to be appointed by the mayor subject to approval by the city council from among the various geographical areas of the city for a term of three years ending December 31st of the third year of said term subject to removal by the mayor with the approval of the city council; provided, that the present members of the housing advisory board established by Ordinance 89201 are appointed members of the citizens housing board herein established to serve for the remainder of the terms to which they were originally appointed; and provided further that upon making the first appointments to said board, the length of terms of members shall be staggered so that no more than four members' terms expire in the same year. In addition to said eleven appointive members, the chairman of the public safety committee of the city council, the director of community development, the superintendent of buildings, the director of public health, and the fire chief, or their designated representatives shall serve as ex-officio nonvoting members of said board.

(b) **MEETINGS.** Meetings of the board shall be held at the call of the chairman and at such other times as the board shall determine. All regular meetings of the board shall be open to the public and notice of such meetings shall be given to the public in accordance with the rules and regulations of the board.

(c) **QUORUM; VOTING; RECORDS.** The presence of five appointed members shall constitute a quorum and the majority vote of those appointed members present shall constitute a decision of the board; provided that

for the purpose of hearing appeals three appointed members shall constitute a quorum. The board shall keep minutes of its proceedings, showing the action of the board on each question and such minutes shall be immediately filed in the office of the board and shall be a public record.

(d) **POWERS.** The board is designated as the appeals commission to hear and decide appeals from orders of the superintendent of buildings in the exercise of powers assigned by this code in relation to buildings unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto and in accordance with, and as specified in RCW 35.80.020, and in addition thereto shall have the following functions, powers and duties:

1. Advise and assist the superintendent of buildings in the enforcement of this code and in the development and maintenance of a comprehensive program for securing compliance therewith;

2. On or about the first day of April of each year, make an annual report to the mayor of its activities during the preceding year and containing such evaluation and recommendations for change in this code and other laws affecting the subject matter of this code as said board may deem necessary or desirable;

3. Initiate and participate in programs, and work with groups, organizations and associations to make available to the public information with respect to the rights, duties, and obligations of owners, lessees and occupants of buildings within the scope of this code;

4. Hear and review complaints involving alleged violations, inadequacies, or faults of this code and make recommendations to the superintendent of buildings and/or the mayor with respect thereto;

5. Elect a chairman and such other officers as it may deem necessary and adopt rules and regulations for its own government not inconsistent with the provisions of this title or any other ordinance of the city. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.08.030 Right of entry.** Upon presentation of proper credentials, the superintendent of buildings or his duly authorized representative may, with the consent of the occupant, or with the consent of the owner of an unoccupied building, or pursuant to a lawfully issued warrant, enter at reasonable times, any building or other structure in the city to perform any duty imposed upon him by this code.

It shall be the duty of the superintendent of buildings to promulgate and modify from time to time and to file with the city comptroller administrative standards for the frequency and conduct of building inspection, which shall be based on such factors as the nature of the use, the condition of the building, the number of occupants, information indicating the existence of a substandard or unfit building or other structure or a failure

to comply with the responsibilities of owners and tenants, and other similar considerations relevant to the inspection of buildings for the purposes of this code. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.08.040 Housing and abatement revolving fund.** There is created in the city treasury a special fund designated the "housing and abatement revolving fund" from which fund shall be paid costs and expenses incurred by the city in connection with the repair, alteration, improvement, vacation and closure, removal, or demolition of any building or other structure unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto, or in connection with the demoltion and/or removal of buildings and other structures which may be by ordinance declared to be public nuisances and ordered abated by demolition and/or removal, and into which fund shall be paid:

(1) Such sums as may be recovered by the city for costs of repair, alteration, improvement, vacation and closure, removal or demolition in accordance with Chapter 27.32 of this code;

(2) Such sums as may be recovered by the city as reimbursement for costs and expenses of abatement of buildings and structures declared by ordinance to be public nuisances;

(3) The unencumbered balance remaining, as of the effective date of the ordinance codified herein, in the abatement revolving fund created by Ordinance 90578, which fund is hereby abolished;

(4) Such other sums as may by ordinance be appropriated to or designated as revenue of, such fund; and

(5) Such other sums as may by gift, bequest or grant be deposited in such fund;  
and the city comptroller is authorized to draw and the city treasurer to pay the necessary warrants and make the necessary transfers. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**Chapter 27.12**

**DEFINITIONS**

**Sections:**

- 27.12.010 Definitions generally.
- 27.12.020 Apartment.
- 27.12.030 Apartment house.
- 27.12.040 Approved.
- 27.12.050 Basement.
- 27.12.060 Building.
- 27.12.070 Building, existing.

**27.12.010 HOUSING CODE**

- 27.12.080 Ceiling height.
- 27.12.090 Cellar.
- 27.12.100 Court.
- 27.12.110 Dormitory.
- 27.12.120 Dwelling.
- 27.12.130 Dwelling unit.
- 27.12.140 Exit.
- 27.12.150 Family.
- 27.12.160 Floor area.
- 27.12.170 Garbage.
- 27.12.180 Garbage can.
- 27.12.190 Guest.
- 27.12.200 Guest room.
- 27.12.210 Habitable room.
- 27.12.220 Hotel.
- 27.12.230 Housekeeping room.
- 27.12.240 Housing unit.
- 27.12.250 Infestation.
- 27.12.260 Kitchen.
- 27.12.270 Lease.
- 27.12.280 Lodging house.
- 27.12.290 Occupant.
- 27.12.300 Owner.
- 27.12.310 Person.
- 27.12.320 Plumbing.
- 27.12.330 Required window.
- 27.12.340 Rubbish.
- 27.12.350 Substandard building.
- 27.12.360 Supplied.
- 27.12.370 Tenant.
- 27.12.380 Unfit for human habitation or other use.
- 27.12.390 Used.
- 27.12.400 Vent shaft.
- 27.12.410 Window.
- 27.12.420 Yard.

**27.12.010 Definitions generally.** For the purpose of this code, certain terms, phrases, words, and their derivations shall be construed as specified in this chapter. Words used in the singular include the plural, and words used in the plural include the singular. Words used in the masculine gender include the feminine, and words used in the feminine gender include the masculine.

Whenever the words "apartment house," "building," "dormitory," "dwelling," "dwelling unit," "guest room," "habitable room," "hotel," "housekeeping room," "lodging house," "housing unit," or "structure" are

used in this code, such words shall be construed as if followed by the words "or any portion thereof." (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.020 Apartment.** For definition of "apartment," see "dwelling unit," Section 27.12.130. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.030 Apartment house.** "Apartment house" means any building, or portion thereof, containing three or more dwelling units. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.040 Approved.** "Approved" means approved by the superintendent of buildings, or by the director of public health, or by the superintendent of water, or by the fire chief as the result of investigations or tests conducted by such officer, or approved by the superintendent of buildings by reason of accepted principles or tests by national authorities, or technical or scientific organizations. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.050 Basement.** "Basement" means that portion of a building between floor and ceiling, which is partly below or partly above grade, but so located that, measured at exterior walls, the average vertical distance from grade to the floor is less than the average vertical distance from grade to ceiling. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.060 Building.** "Building" means any structure or portion thereof which is used, or designed or intended to be used for human habitation, including structures appurtenant thereto. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.070 Building, existing.** "Existing building" means a building erected prior to the adoption of this code or one for which a valid building permit has been issued. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.080 Ceiling height.** "Ceiling height" means the shortest vertical distance between a floor, platform, balcony, mezzanine, stair tread or landing, or any similar building component and a ceiling. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.090 Cellar.** "Cellar" means that portion of a building between floor and ceiling which is wholly or partly below grade and so located that, measured at exterior walls, the average vertical distance from grade to the floor is equal to or greater than the average vertical distance from grade to ceiling. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.100 Court.** "Court" means the open area used as a source of light or ventilation for a required window which area is outside the exterior

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wall of a building and on the same lot therewith. An inner court is any court entirely enclosed within the exterior walls of a building and an adjacent property line. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.110 Dormitory.** "Dormitory" means a room containing three or more beds and used or intended to be used for sleeping purposes in other than a dwelling unit. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.120 Dwelling.** "Dwelling" means any building containing not more than two dwelling units. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.130 Dwelling unit.** "Dwelling unit" means one or more habitable rooms occupied, or intended, or designed to be occupied by one family and containing space for living, sleeping, preparation of food, and eating, and containing toilet and bathing facilities. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.140 Exit.** "Exit" means a continuous and unobstructed means of making departure from any place in a building to a street or alley including intervening doorways, corridors, ramps, stairways, smokeproof enclosures, horizontal exits, exit courts, yards, or any other permitted means. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.150 Family.** "Family" means one or more individuals living, cooking and eating together in a single dwelling unit, but not including a group of more than eight persons unrelated by blood or marriage. In the case of rectory, parsonage or convent, twelve persons are considered as a family. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.160 Floor area.** "Floor area" means the net floor area within the enclosing walls of a room in which the ceiling height is not less than five feet, excluding built-in equipment which extend from floor to ceiling such as wardrobes, cabinets, kitchen units, or fixtures. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.170 Garbage.** "Garbage" means all discarded putrescible waste matter, including small dead animals weighing not over fifteen pounds, but not including sewage or human or animal excrement. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.180 Garbage can.** "Garbage can" means a round watertight sheet metal raised bottom container not exceeding thirty-two gallons in capacity, weighing not over twenty-six pounds when empty and without cover fitted with two sturdy handles, one on each side, and a tight cover equip-

ped with a handle, except in the case of "sunken cans." The term shall also apply to containers of other material of similar size and weight when approved by the city engineer. A "sunken can" is any garbage can which is in a sunken covered receptacle specifically designed to contain one or more garbage cans the tops of which are approximately at ground level. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.190 Guest.** "Guest" means any person hiring a room or rooms for living or sleeping purposes. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.200 Guest room.** "Guest room" means any room or rooms used or intended to be used by a guest for living or sleeping purposes. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.210 Habitable room.** "Habitable room" means any room occupied, used, or designed or intended to be used for sleeping, living or cooking purposes, excluding such enclosed places as closets, pantries, bath or toilet rooms, service rooms, connecting corridors, laundries, unfinished attics, foyers, storage spaces, cellars, furnace or boiler or other utility rooms, and other similar spaces. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.220 Hotel.** "Hotel" means a building in which is conducted the business of lodging the public and which contains six or more guest rooms. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.230 Housekeeping room.** "Housekeeping room" means an existing housing unit of one room, which may include a kitchen niche or alcove, used for sleeping and cooking. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.240 Housing unit.** "Housing unit" means any dwelling unit, efficiency living unit, housekeeping room or guest room. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.250 Infestation.** "Infestation" means the presence within or around a building of insects, rodents, or other pests in such numbers or with such frequency as may be substantially detrimental to the health, safety or welfare of the occupants thereof. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.260 Kitchen.** "Kitchen" means a space or room designed to be used for the preparation of food. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

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**27.12.270 Lease.** "Lease" means an agreement, whether oral or written, relating to the use and occupancy of a building. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.280 Lodging house.** "Lodging house" means a rooming or boarding house where rooms are furnished, with or without meals, for a specified price. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.290 Occupant.** "Occupant" means a person, over one year of age, occupying or having possession of a building or any portion thereof for purposes of habitation. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.300 Owner.** "Owner" means any person who, alone or jointly or severally with others, has title or interest in any building, or portion thereof with or without accompanying actual possession thereof, and including any person who as agent, or executor, administrator, trustee, or guardian of an estate has charge, care, or control of any building or portion thereof. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.310 Person.** "Person" means any individual, firm, corporation, association or partnership. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.320 Plumbing.** "Plumbing" means any potable water distribution piping, and any drainage piping within or below any building, including rainwater leaders and all fixtures, traps, vents and devices appurtenant to such water distribution or drainage piping and including potable water treating or using equipment, domestic hot water heaters, and any lawn sprinkling system. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.330 Required window.** "Required window" means a window whose area is necessary to achieve the minimum required area of the opening for light and ventilation in a room. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.340 Rubbish.** "Rubbish" means all discarded nonputrescible waste matter. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.350 Substandard building.** "Substandard building" means any building which fails to comply with the minimum standards set forth in Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24 and 27.28 of this code. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.360 Supplied.** "Supplied" means paid for, furnished by, provided by, or under the control of the owner of a building. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970)

**27.12.370 Tenant.** "Tenant" means a person occupying or holding possession of a building or any portion thereof for purposes of habitation pursuant to a lease. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.380 Unfit for human habitation or other use.** See Section 27.32.010. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.390 Used.** "Used" means used or designed or intended to be used. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.400 Vent Shaft.** "Vent shaft" means an open, unobstructed vertical passage or duct used to ventilate a water closet, bath, toilet, or utility or other service room. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.410 Window.** "Window" means a glazed opening, including glazed doors, which open upon a yard, court, or recess from a court. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.12.420 Yard.** "Yard" means an open unoccupied space other than a court, unobstructed from the ground to the sky except as otherwise specifically provided by the building code (Title 3), on the lot on which a building is situated. (Ord. 99112 § 27.12.010 (part); July 31, 1970).

## Chapter 27.16

### SPACE AND OCCUPANCY STANDARDS

#### Sections:

- 27.16.010 Yards and courts.
- 27.16.020 Room dimensions.
- 27.16.030 Light and ventilation.
- 27.16.040 Sanitation.

**27.16.010 Yards and courts.** This section shall apply only to yards and courts having required windows opening therein. Every required window shall face on a yard, court, street or alley, not less than three feet in width and unobstructed to the sky. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.16.020 Room dimensions.** (a) **CEILING HEIGHTS.** Habitable rooms shall have a ceiling height of not less than seven feet in at least fifty percent of the room and no portion of any room having a ceiling height of less than five feet shall be considered as contributing to the minimum areas required by subsection (b) of this section.

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(b) **FLOOR AREA.** Every dwelling unit shall have at least one room which shall have not less than one hundred twenty square feet of floor area and no habitable room except kitchens shall be less than seven feet wide. Every room which is used for both cooking and living or both living and sleeping quarters shall have a floor area of not less than one hundred thirty square feet if used or intended to be used by only one occupant, or of not less than one hundred fifty square feet if used or intended to be used by more than one occupant. Every room used for sleeping purposes shall have not less than eighty square feet of floor area. Where more than two persons occupy a room used for sleeping purposes, the required floor area shall be increased at the rate of fifty square feet for each occupant in excess of two. In a dormitory, minimum floor area shall be sixty square feet per single or double bunk and providing aisles not less than three feet in width between the sides of bunks and from every bunk to an exit.

Provided, that one room dwelling units shall meet the following requirements:

(1) The unit shall have a habitable room of not less than two hundred twenty square feet of floor area. An additional one hundred square feet of floor area shall be provided for each occupant of such unit in excess of two;

(2) The unit shall be provided with a separate closet;

(3) The unit shall be provided with a kitchen sink, cooking appliances and refrigeration facilities each having a clear working space of not less than thirty inches in front. Light and ventilation conforming to this code shall be provided;

(4) The unit shall be provided with a separate bathroom containing a water closet, lavatory, and bathtub or shower. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.16.030 Light and ventilation.** (a) **LOCATION.** Every habitable room and bathroom shall have a window. Aggregate window area per room shall be not less than one-tenth of the floor area or ten square feet, whichever is greater. One-fourth of the required window area in any room shall be openable except where adequate ventilation is provided by other openings within the room or openings within an adjoining room or space.

Exception: A kitchen or a bathroom shall have an aggregate window area of not less than three square feet in each such room.

(b) **WINDOWS.** Required windows shall open on a street, yard, or court either directly or through a porch, having a minimum ceiling height of not less than seven feet. Such porch shall be at least fifty percent open on at least one side or on both ends.

(c) **OTHER MEANS.** An approved system of mechanical ventilation or vent shafts and artificial light may be used in lieu of the windows required by this section in bathrooms, toilet rooms and similar rooms. In no case shall transoms be used for required ventilation. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 101978 § 1; March 19, 1973).

**27.16.040 Sanitation.** (a) **DWELLING UNITS.** Every dwelling unit shall contain within a separate room or rooms accessible from inside the dwelling unit, a water closet, a lavatory, and a bathtub or shower. In no dwelling unit shall the only access from a bedroom to a bathroom be through another bedroom. No water closet shall be housed in any room or space used for the preparation of food nor shall a water closet compartment open directly, without a door, into any such room or space.

(b) **HOTELS.** In hotels, where private water closets, lavatories, and baths are not provided, there shall be provided on each floor at least one water closet and lavatory and one bath accessible from a public hallway. Additional water closets, lavatories, and baths shall be provided on each floor at the rate of one for every additional ten guests or occupants, or fractional number thereof in excess of ten.

(c) **OTHER BUILDINGS.** Every building, other than a hotel, containing housekeeping or guest rooms in which private water closets, lavatories and baths are not provided, shall contain not less than one water closet, one lavatory and one bathtub or shower on each floor, accessible from a public hallway, for each eight occupants, or fractional number thereof in excess of eight.

(d) **KITCHEN.** Every dwelling unit shall be provided with a kitchen. Every kitchen shall be provided with an approved kitchen sink, hot and cold running water, counter work space, cabinets for storage of cooking utensils and dishes, and an approved stove and refrigerator or adequate space for the installation of such stove and refrigerator. Splash backs and counter tops shall have an impervious surface.

(e) **FIXTURES.** All plumbing fixtures shall be trapped and vented and connected to a sanitary sewer or to an approved private sewage disposal system. There shall be an approved system of water supply, providing both hot and cold running water. All water closets shall be flush type in good working order. Hot water for the required sink, lavatory, and bathtub or shower shall be provided at a temperature not less than one hundred twenty degrees Fahrenheit at the fixture outlet.

(f) **MAINTENANCE.** All sanitary facilities, fixtures and equipment shall be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**Chapter 27.20**  
**STRUCTURAL STANDARDS**

**Sections:**

- 27.20.010 General.
- 27.20.020 Shelter.
- 27.20.030 Maintenance.

**27.20.010 General.** Roofs, floors, walls, chimneys, fireplaces, foundations and all other structural components of buildings shall be capable of resisting any and all normal forces and loads to which they may be subjected. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.20.020 Shelter.** Every building shall be weather protected so as to provide shelter for the occupants against the elements and to exclude dampness. No basement or cellar shall be used for human habitation unless it is dry and conforms to all requirements of size, lighting and ventilation for habitable rooms. No such basement or cellar shall have dirt floors. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.20.030 Maintenance.** Every foundation, room and exterior wall, door, skylight and window shall be reasonably weathertight, watertight, damp-free and rodent-proof; and shall be kept in a sound condition and good repair. Floors, interior walls and ceilings shall be kept in sound condition and good repair. Interior wall and ceiling finish shall be of approved materials; toxic paint or other toxic materials shall not be used on areas readily accessible to children. All exterior wood surfaces, other than decay resistant woods, shall be protected from the elements and decay by paint or other approved protective covering or treatment. Walls shall be capable of affording privacy for the occupants. Every premises shall be graded, drained, free of standing water, and maintained in a clean, sanitary and safe condition. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**Chapter 27.24**  
**MECHANICAL STANDARDS**

**Sections:**

- 27.24.010 Heating.
- 27.24.020 Ventilation.
- 27.24.030 Electrical equipment.

**27.24.010 Heating.** Every housing unit shall be provided with heating facilities capable of providing an inside temperature of seventy degrees Fahrenheit when the outside temperature is twenty degrees Fahrenheit.

All heating devices and appliances shall be of approved type and in good and safe working order and shall have been lawfully installed. No unvented or open flame heater shall be permitted. Ventilation for rooms and areas containing fuel-burning appliances shall be adequate for proper combustion. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.24.020 Ventilation.** Ventilating equipment shall be of approved types, maintained in a safe manner. Where mechanical ventilation is provided in lieu of the natural ventilation required by Section 27.16.030 of this code, such mechanical system shall be in working order during the occupancy of any building or portion thereof. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.24.030 Electrical equipment.** All electrical equipment wiring and appliances shall be of an approved type, installed and safely maintained in accordance with applicable provisions of the electrical code. (Title 4).

Every habitable room except kitchens, shall be provided with not less than two electrical convenience outlets or one such convenience outlet and one supplied electric light fixture. Every kitchen shall be provided with not less than three convenience and/or appliance outlets and one supplied light fixture. Two electrical appliance receptacles, properly installed as a part of a lawfully installed electric kitchen range, shall be accepted in lieu of two of the required outlets in a kitchen. In all cases, at least one of the wall-mounted outlets shall not be obscured, either partially or otherwise, by floor mounted appliances. Every water closet compartment, bathroom, laundry room, furnace room and public hallway shall contain at least one supplied electric light fixture. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 101978 § 2; March 19, 1973).

## Chapter 27.28

### EXIT STANDARDS

#### Section:

27.28.010 Minimum requirements.

**27.28.010 Minimum requirements.** (a) The purpose of this section is to require a reasonable degree of safety to persons living and sleeping in existing housing units and to provide for alterations to such existing buildings as do not conform with the minimum exit standards of the building code.

(b) The following provisions shall apply to all buildings less than four stories in height other than dwellings. Exit requirements for existing buildings four or more stories in height shall be as provided in the fire code. (Title 8).

(1) NUMBER OF EXITS. Every housing unit above the first floor or in a basement shall have access to not less than two approved exits. An approved fire escape as specified herein may be used as one required exit.

**Exceptions:** i. Housing units in a two-story building having an occupant load of not more than ten persons above the first floor or in a basement having an occupant load of not more than ten persons may have one approved exit,

ii. A housing unit on the second floor may have one means of egress providing it is a stairway or corridor leading directly to the outside without any other openings,

iii. Housing units may have one approved exit where an automatic fire sprinkler system is provided for all exit ways and other public rooms and areas within the building;

(2) STAIR CONSTRUCTION. All stairs shall have a minimum run of nine inches and a maximum rise of eight inches and a minimum width exclusive of handrails of thirty inches. Every stairway shall have at least one handrail. A landing having a minimum horizontal dimension of thirty inches shall be provided at each point of access to the stairway. Every required stairway shall have headroom clearance of not less than six feet six inches measured vertically from the nearest nose to the nearest soffit;

(3) INTERIOR STAIRWAYS. Every interior stairway shall be enclosed with walls of not less than one-hour fire-resistive construction.

Where existing partitions form part of a stairwell enclosure, wood lath and plaster in good condition will be acceptable in lieu of one-hour fire-resistive construction. Openings to such enclosures shall be protected by a self-closing door equivalent to a solid wood door not less than one and three-fourths inches thick. Enclosures shall include landings between flights and any corridors, passageways, or public rooms necessary for continuous exit to the exterior of the building. Doors shall not reduce the required width of a stairway or landing more than six inches when open.

**Exceptions:** Subject to approval by the superintendent of buildings, the stairway need not be enclosed:

(i) In a continuous shaft if cut off at each story by the fire-resistive construction required for stairwell enclosures, or

(ii) Where an approved automatic fire-extinguishing system is provided for all exitways and other public rooms and areas within the building;

(4) EXTERIOR STAIRWAYS. Exterior stairways shall be non-combustible or of wood of not less than two-inch nominal thickness with solid treads and risers;

(5) FIRE ESCAPES. When approved by the superintendent of buildings, existing fire escapes in good condition may be used as one means of egress, if the pitch does not exceed sixty degrees, the width is not less than eighteen inches, the treads are not less than four inches wide, and they extend to the ground or are provided with counterbalanced stairs reaching to

the ground. Access shall be by an opening having a minimum dimension of twenty-nine inches when open. The sill shall be not more than thirty inches above the floor and landing.

(6) **DOORS AND OPENINGS.** Exit doors other than from housing units shall be openable from the inside without the use of key or any special knowledge or effort, and when serving an occupant load of fifty or more shall swing in the direction of exit travel. Transoms, and openings other than doors, from corridors to rooms shall be fixed closed and shall be covered with a minimum of five-eighths-inch gypsum wallboard on both sides. Corridors shall be of approved construction with fire-resistance not less than that of wood lath and plaster. Existing dead end corridors in excess of thirty feet in length, serving housing units, shall be eliminated, unless protected by the installation of an approved automatic sprinkler system throughout the affected corridor, or by providing approved detectors of products of combustion other than heat, conforming to UBC Standard 43-6 within each housing unit whose corridor exit door is located beyond thirty feet limitation. Such detectors may be self-contained or installed as a part of the electrical system. All doors opening into a corridor not included as part of a stairwell enclosure shall be not less than solid wood doors one and three-eighths inches thick, or equivalent, except where an approved automatic fire sprinkler system is provided throughout all exitways and other public rooms and areas within the building.

(7) **EXIT SIGNS.** Every exit doorway or change of direction of a corridor shall be marked with a well-lighted exit sign having letters at least five inches high;

(8) **ENCLOSURE OF VERTICAL OPENINGS.** Elevators, shafts, ducts, and other vertical openings shall be protected with construction as required for stairways in Item (3) or by fixed wire glass set in steel frames. Doors shall be solid wood doors one and three-eighths inches thick or equivalent.

(9) **SEPARATION OF OCCUPANCIES.** Occupancy separations shall be provided as specified in Section 503 and Table No. 5-B of the building code.

(c) The following requirements shall apply to all existing buildings other than detached single family dwellings to provide the maximum possible security from criminal actions to the permanent and transient occupants thereof, and to their possessions:

(1) Unattended building entrance doors, including rear, service, and garage shall be capable of self-closing, self-locking and equipped with a dead latch, except that garage-to-exterior doors may be equipped with a remote control electrically operated opening and closing device in lieu of a dead latch. When garage-to-exterior doors are equipped with such remote control device, garage-to-building doors need not be self-locking. When either the garage-to-exterior doors or garage-to-building doors are equipped

for self-closing and self-locking, the other need not be so equipped;

(2) Entrance doors from interior corridors to individual housing units shall be without glass openings and shall be capable of resisting forcible entry equal to a single-panel or hollow-core door, one and three-eighths inches thick; building entrance doors (other than main) shall be solid, or if provided with glazed openings, shall have wire or grilles to prevent operation of the door latch from outside by hand or other instrumentality; main entrance doors may be framed or unframed non-shattering glass or framed one-quarter inch plate glass. Main entrance doors shall be self-closing, capable of self-locking and shall have a dead latch;

(3) Every entrance door to an individual housing unit shall have a dead bolt or a dead latch with at least a one-half inch throw. The lock shall be so constructed that the dead bolt or dead latch may be opened from inside without use of a key. In hotels and other multi-unit buildings having transient occupancies every entrance door to an individual unit shall also be provided with a chain door guard or barrel bolt on the inside;

(4) Housing unit-to-interior corridor doors shall have a visitor-observation port which port shall not impair the fire-resistance integrity of the door;

(5) In all leased or rented housing units in buildings other than hotels and other multi-unit buildings having transient occupancies, lock mechanisms and keys shall be changed upon a change of tenancy except that such change of locks and keys will not be required where an approved proprietary key system is used;

(6) All exit doors shall be openable from the interior without use of keys;

(7) Doors to storage, maintenance and building service rooms shall be capable of self-closing and self-locking;

(8) Dead bolts or other approved locking devices shall be provided on all sliding patio doors and installed so that the mounting screws for the lock cases are inaccessible from the outside;

(9) Passenger elevators, the interiors of which are not completely visible when the car door(s) are open, shall have mirrors so placed as to make visible the whole of the elevator interior to prospective passengers outside the elevator; mirrors shall be framed and mounted to minimize the possibility of their accidental falling or shattering;

(10) Elevator emergency stop button shall be so installed and connected as to activate the elevator alarm;

(11) Subject to approval by the superintendent of buildings, alternate locking devices may be substituted for those required herein provided such devices are of equal capability to resist illegal entry and further provided that the installation of same does not conflict with other requirements of this code and other ordinances regulating safety of exit. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 100015, Ord. 100641, and Ord. 101978 § 3; March 19, 1973).

**Chapter 27.30**

**DUTIES OF OWNERS AND TENANTS**

**Sections:**

- 27.30.010 Scope.
- 27.30.020 Duties of owners.
- 27.30.030 Duties of tenants.

**27.30.010 Scope.** There are imposed on owners and tenants certain duties with respect to the use, occupancy and maintenance of buildings as hereinafter specified in Sections 27.30.020 and 27.30.030. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.30.020 Duties of owners.** It shall be the duty of every owner of a building to:

(1) Except as to such duties of maintenance as are herein specifically imposed on the tenant of such building, maintain such building in compliance with the minimum standards specified in Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24, and 27.28 hereof;

(2) Maintain in a clean and sanitary condition the shared areas, including yards and courts, of any such building containing two or more housing units and where any building is unoccupied secure such building against attempts at unauthorized entry, remove all garbage, rubbish and other debris from the premises and maintain such building and premises in a secure and sanitary condition;

(3) Supply for the use of occupants of any such building containing three or more housing units garbage cans sufficient in number to contain all garbage disposed of by such occupants;

(4) Exterminate insects, rodents and other pests when:

(a) in any such building containing two or more housing units there is an infestation existing in two or more housing units or in the shared areas of such building, or

(b) in any such building infestation exists due to failure of such owner to perform the duties imposed on him by this section;

(5) Within a reasonable time after notice from the tenant of any such buildings, repair structural defects or damage which cause such building to be in violation of standards specified in Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24 and 27.28 and not caused by the negligent or intentional act of the tenant or any invitee or licensee of such tenant;

(6) Refrain from placing or storing in any such building or on the premises thereof any article, substance or material imminently dangerous to the health, safety, or welfare of any occupant thereof or which may substantially contribute to or cause deterioration of such building;

(7) Where heating is supplied to any housing unit, maintain heat at an inside temperature of at least sixty-five degrees Fahrenheit between

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the hours of seven a.m. and eight a.m., sixty-eight degrees Fahrenheit between eight a.m. and nine a.m., and seventy degrees Fahrenheit between nine a.m. and ten-thirty p.m. from October 1st until May 31st.

Contracts between an owner and his operator, manager, agent, or tenant shall not relieve the owner of his ultimate responsibility to perform the duties imposed in this section. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 101978 § 4; March 19, 1973).

**27.30.030 Duties of tenants.** It shall be the duty of every tenant of a building to:

(1) Maintain in a clean and sanitary condition the part or parts of such building and the premises thereof occupied or controlled by tenant, and upon termination of tenancy, leave the same in a clean and sanitary condition, normal wear and tear excepted;

(2) Store and dispose of all garbage and rubbish in a clean, sanitary, and safe manner, and in buildings containing two or less housing units, have and use garbage cans sufficient in number to contain all garbage disposed of by such tenant;

(3) Exterminate insects, rodents and other pests in any building occupied by him and containing only one dwelling unit, and in any building containing two or more housing units where his unit is the only unit infested; and comply with reasonable requests of the owner for the prevention or limitation of infestation including granting reasonable access for extermination or preventive measures by such owner;

(4) Exercise reasonable care in the use and operation of electrical and plumbing fixtures and maintain all sanitary facilities, fixtures and equipment in a clean and sanitary condition;

(5) Within a reasonable time, repair all damage to such building caused by the negligent or intentional act of such tenant or the invitees or licensees of such tenant;

(6) Grant reasonable access to the owner of any such building for the purpose of maintenance or repairs by the owner in the performance of any duty imposed on such owner by this code;

(7) Refrain from placing or storing in any such building or on the premises thereof any article, substance or material imminently dangerous to the health, safety, or welfare of any occupant thereof or which may substantially contribute to or cause deterioration of such building. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

### Chapter 27.32

## BUILDINGS UNFIT FOR HUMAN HABITATION OR OTHER USE

#### Sections:

- 27.32.010 Minimum standards.
- 27.32.020 Standards for repair or demolition.
- 27.32.030 Investigation, notice, and hearing.
- 27.32.040 Determination and order of superintendent after hearing.
- 27.32.050 Appeal from order of superintendent.
- 27.32.060 Petition to superior court.
- 27.32.070 Enforcement of final order.
- 27.32.080 Certificate of compliance.
- 27.32.090 Recovery of costs.

**27.32.010 Minimum standards.** Any building or portion thereof, used, or intended to be used for human habitation, including any dwelling unit, housekeeping room or guest room, or any structure appurtenant to such building, or the premises on which the same is located, in which there exists any of the following listed conditions or combinations thereof to an extent that endangers or is injurious to the health or safety of the occupants thereof, or the occupants of neighboring buildings, or the public is declared to be unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto.

(a) Structural defects, including, but not limited to the following:

(1) Footings or foundations which are weakened, deteriorated, insecure, or inadequate or of insufficient size to carry imposed loads with safety;

(2) Flooring or floor supports which are defective, deteriorated, or of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety;

(3) Members of walls, partitions, or other vertical supports that split, lean, list, buckle, or are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety;

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(4) Members of ceilings, roofs, ceiling and roof supports, or other horizontal members which sag, split, buckle, or are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety;

(5) Fireplaces or chimneys which list, bulge, settle, or are of insufficient size or strength to carry imposed loads with safety.

(b) Defective or inadequate weather protection, including, but not limited to the following:

(1) Crumbling, broken, loose, or falling interior wall or ceiling covering;

(2) Broken or missing doors and windows;

(3) Deteriorated, ineffective, or lack of waterproofing of foundations or floors;

(4) Deteriorated, ineffective, or lack of exterior wall covering, including lack of paint or other approved protective coating;

(5) Deteriorated, ineffective, or lack of roof covering;

(6) Broken, split, decayed or buckled exterior wall or roof covering.

(c) Defective or inadequate sanitation, including, but not limited to:

(1) Lack of, or inadequate number of, water closets, lavatories, bathtubs, showers, or kitchen sinks;

(2) Defective or insanitary plumbing or plumbing fixtures;

(3) Lack of hot and cold running water connections to plumbing fixtures;

(4) Lack of, or inadequate, water heating facilities;

(5) Lack of connection to approved sewage disposal system;

(6) Inadequate drainage;

(7) Dampness of habitable rooms;

(8) Infestation by insects, vermin, rodents or other pests;

(9) General dilapidation, uncleanness, disrepair, or lack of maintenance, including lack of care of premises and failure to provide for storage and removal of garbage and rubbish.

(d) Defective or inadequate light, heat, ventilation or equipment therefor, including, but not limited to:

(1) Lack of, or inadequate, natural light and ventilation;

(2) Lack of, or inadequate, electrical lighting;

(3) Defective, deteriorated or hazardous electrical wiring;

(4) Lack of, or inadequate, defective, hazardous, or improperly operated, ventilating equipment or systems;

(5) Lack of, or defective, hazardous, or improperly operated, heating equipment or systems sufficient to maintain an inside temperature of seventy degrees Fahrenheit when the outside temperature is twenty degrees Fahrenheit.

(e) Inadequate space or overcrowding, including, but not limited to rooms having less than required minimum dimensions.

(f) Defective or inadequate exits, including, but not limited to exits which are unsafe, improperly located, or less than required minimum number or dimensions.

(g) Defects increasing the hazards of fire or accident, including, but not limited to:

(1) Accumulations of junk and debris;

(2) Any building, or portion thereof, or device, apparatus, equipment, waste, vegetation or other material in such condition as to cause a fire or explosion or to provide a ready fuel to augment the spread or intensity of fire or explosion arising from any cause. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.020 Standards for repair or demolition.** Any building found unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto shall be ordered repaired or vacated and closed if the degree of structural deterioration of such building in relation to its repaired condition is less than fifty percent or the estimated cost of repairs will not exceed fifty percent of the market value of such repaired building; otherwise such building shall be ordered repaired or demolished. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.030 Investigation, notice, and hearing.** The superintendent of buildings shall investigate any building which, in his opinion, may be unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto, and if, after such investigation, he finds that such building is unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto, he shall cause to be served either by personal service or by certified mail, with return receipt requested, upon all persons having any interest therein, as shown upon the records of the department of records and elections of King County, and shall post in a conspicuous place on such property, a complaint stating in what respects such building is unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto. If the whereabouts of such persons is unknown and the same cannot be ascertained by the superintendent of buildings in the exercise of reasonable diligence, and the superintendent of buildings shall make affidavit to that effect, then the serving of such complaint upon such persons may be made by publishing the same once each week for two consecutive weeks in a legal newspaper published in the city. Such complaint shall contain a notice that a hearing will be held before the superintendent of buildings, at a time and place therein fixed, not less than ten days or more than thirty days after the serving of such complaint; or in the event of publication of such complaint, not less than fifteen days nor more than thirty days from the date of the first publication; and that all parties in interest shall have the right to file an answer to the complaint, and to appear in person, or otherwise, and to give testimony at the time and place fixed in the complaint. The superintendent of buildings, at any such hearing, shall have the power to administer oaths and affirmations, examine witnesses and receive evidence,

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and the rules of evidence prevailing in courts of law or equity shall not be controlling in hearings before the superintendent of buildings. A copy of such complaint shall be filed with the department of records and elections of King County, and such filing shall have the same effect as provided by law for other lis pendens notices. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.040 Determination and order of superintendent after hearing.** If, after the hearing provided for in Section 27.32.030 of this code, the superintendent of buildings determines upon the basis of standards set forth in Section 27.32.010 of this code, that such building is unfit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto, he shall further determine upon the basis of standards set forth in Section 27.32.020 of this code whether such building should be repaired or vacated and closed, or repaired or demolished, and shall state in writing his findings of fact in support of such determinations, and shall issue and cause to be served upon the owner or party in interest thereof, in the manner provided in Section 27.32.030 of this code, and shall post in a conspicuous place on said property, an order which requires the owner or party in interest within a reasonable time to be specified in such order, to (1) repair, alter or improve such building to render it fit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto, or vacate and close such building; or (2) repair, alter or improve such building to render it fit for human habitation or other use appurtenant thereto, or demolish and/or remove such building, whichever course of action is deemed proper on the basis of the standards set in said Section 27.32.020. If no appeal is filed, a copy of such order shall be filed with the department of records and elections of King County. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.050 Appeal from order of superintendent.** The owner or any party in interest, within thirty days from the date of service and posting of an order issued by the superintendent of buildings under the provisions of Section 27.32.040 of this code, may file a written notice of appeal with the citizens housing board, stating therein in what respects such order is erroneous and the specific grounds upon which such person relies for the reversal or modification of such order, providing such notice shall be accompanied by a receipt of the city treasurer showing payment by the appellant of a fee of ten dollars.

Upon receipt of such notice of appeal the citizens housing board shall issue and cause to be posted and served upon the owner and any party in interest, in the manner provided in Section 27.32.030 of this code, a notice that a hearing will be held before the citizens housing board, at a time and place therein fixed, not less than ten days nor more than thirty days after receipt of such notice of appeal; that all parties in interest shall have the right to appear in person, or otherwise, and to give evidence at the time and place fixed in such notice.

The citizens housing board shall have the power in connection with such appeal to administer oaths and affirmations, examine witnesses, and receive such evidence as may be presented on behalf of any party in interest, or on behalf of the order of the superintendent of buildings, including the records and files of the superintendent of buildings in connection therewith, and based on such evidence shall determine whether such order was erroneous, shall state in writing its findings of fact in support of such determination, and shall issue and cause to be posted and served upon the owner or party in interest, in the manner provided in Section 27.32.030 of this code, its order affirming, reversing or modifying the order of the superintendent of buildings.

All matters submitted to the citizens housing board under this section shall be resolved by said board within sixty days from the date of filing of such appeal, and a transcript of the findings of fact of said board in connection therewith shall be made available to the owner or other party in interest upon demand.

The findings and orders of the citizens housing board in connection with such appeals shall be reported and filed and shall bear the same legal consequences as if issued by the superintendent of buildings and shall be subject to review only in the manner and to the extent provided in Section 27.32.060 of this code. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.060 Petition to superior court.** Any person affected by an order issued by the citizens housing board pursuant to Section 27.32.050 hereof may, within thirty days after the posting and service of such order, petition to the superior court of King County for an injunction restraining the superintendent of buildings from carrying out the provisions of such order. In all such proceedings the court may affirm, reverse, or modify such order and such trial shall be heard de novo. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.070 Enforcement of final order.** If the owner or party in interest, following exhaustion of or failure to exercise his rights to appeal, fails to comply with a final order to (1) repair, alter or improve or vacate and close such building; or (2) repair, alter or improve, or demolish and/or remove such buildings, the superintendent of buildings, by such means and with such assistance as may be available to him, is authorized and directed to cause such building to be repaired, altered or improved, or vacated and closed, or demolished and/or removed, and the costs thereof shall be recovered by the city in the manner provided in Section 27.32.090 hereof. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.32.080 Certificate of compliance.** As to any such final order, if the superintendent of buildings finds that the repairs, alterations, or improve-

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ments required therein have been made in compliance therewith, he shall upon receipt of an application therefor issue to any party upon whom such final order was served a certificate of compliance, certifying that, as of the date of issue such building is in compliance with such final order. Each application for a certificate of compliance shall be accompanied by a receipt of the city treasurer showing payment by the applicant of a fee of ten dollars. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.32.090 Recovery of costs.** Unless the amount of the costs of repairs, alterations or improvements, or of vacating and closing, or of demolition and/or removal, by the superintendent of buildings pursuant to Section 27.32.070 hereof is previously paid, such amount shall be assessed against the real property as to which such costs were incurred; Provided, if the building is removed or demolished by the superintendent of buildings, said superintendent of buildings shall, if possible, sell the materials of such building pursuant to competitive bids, and shall credit the proceeds of such sale against the cost of removal or demolition, and if there is any balance remaining, pay the same to the parties entitled thereto, as determined by the superintendent of buildings, after deducting the costs incident thereto.

Upon certification to him by the city treasurer of the assessment amount being due and owing, the county treasurer shall enter the amount of such assessment upon the tax rolls against such real property for the current year to be collected at the same time and with interest at such rates and in such manner as provided for in RCW 84.56.020, as now or hereafter amended, for delinquent taxes, and when collected shall be deposited in the general fund of the city and credited to the housing and abatement revolving fund as provided in Section 27.08.040 of this code.

The demolition assessment shall constitute a lien against the property of equal rank with state, county and municipal taxes. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 102484 § 1; August 23, 1973).

**Chapter 27.36**

**ENFORCEMENT OF MINIMUM STANDARDS**

**Sections:**

- 27.36.010 Investigation and notice of violation.
- 27.36.020 Hearing before superintendent.
- 27.36.030 Certificate of compliance.
- 27.36.040 Emergency order.
- 27.36.050 Civil penalty.

**27.36.010 Investigation and notice of violation.** The superintendent of buildings shall investigate any building as to which, in his opinion, there may be a failure to comply with the standards and requirements set forth in Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24, 27.28, and 27.30 of this code, and if, after such investigations, he determines that such standards or requirements have not been met, he shall cause to be served, either by personal service or by certified mail, with return receipt requested, upon the owner, tenant, or other person responsible for such condition, and shall post in a conspicuous place on such property, a notice of violation stating separately each violation of such standards or requirements, and further stating what corrective action is necessary to comply with such standards or requirements and setting a reasonable time for such compliance. Demolition and removal of such building within the period of time set for compliance shall constitute compliance with this code. The time set for compliance shall not apply to a building which is vacated and closed to entry, provided it is not re-occupied until the standards and requirements of Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24, 27.28, and 27.30 of this code have been met.

Unless a request for hearing before the superintendent of buildings is made in accordance with Section 27.36.020 hereof, such notice of violation shall become the final order of the superintendent of buildings and a copy thereof shall be filed with the Department of Records and Elections of King County. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 101978 § 5; March 19, 1973).

**27.36.020 Hearing before superintendent.** Any person affected by a notice of violation issued by the superintendent of buildings may apply to said superintendent for reconsideration of such notice by filing within ten days after service of such notice, a written request for a hearing before said superintendent. Upon receipt of such written request the superintendent of buildings shall notify the applicant, and any other persons served with a copy of the notice of violation, of the time and place set for such hearing which shall be not less than ten nor more than thirty days from the date of filing such written request. All parties in interest shall have the right to appear in person, or otherwise, and to give evidence at the time and place fixed in such notice. After such hearing, the superintendent of buildings shall sustain, modify or withdraw such notice of violation, based on his findings as to whether there has been compliance with the standards and requirements of Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24, 27.28, and 27.30 of this code, and shall issue and cause to be served, posted and filed in the manner provided in Section 27.36.010 hereof, a final order in accordance with such decision; provided, that in specific cases, the superintendent of buildings may authorize variances from the standards and requirements of Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24, 27.28 and 27.30 if he determines that all of the following conditions or circumstances exist:

- (1) A literal interpretation and strict application of such standards

and requirements would result in an undue or unnecessary hardship and adversely affect the preservation and enjoyment of a substantial property right of the owner or tenant of the subject building; and

(2) Because of special conditions or circumstances applying to the subject building or to the occupancy thereof, such variance will not be materially detrimental or injurious to the safety or welfare of the occupants thereof, or of neighboring property or occupancies, or of the public (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.36.030 Certificate of compliance.** When the superintendent of buildings shall find that the corrections required by him in a notice of violation have been made and/or that the standards and requirements set forth in Chapters 27.16, 27.20, 27.24, 27.28 and 27.30 of this code have been complied with, he shall upon receipt of an application therefor issue to any party submitting such application, a certificate of compliance, certifying that, as of the date of issue, such building is in compliance with such standards and requirements. Each application for a certificate of compliance shall be accompanied by a receipt of the city treasurer showing payment by the applicant of a fee of ten dollars. (Ord. 99112 (part) as amended by Ord. 101978 § 6; March 19, 1973).

**27.36.040 Emergency order.** Whenever the superintendent of buildings finds that any building, or portion thereof, used for human habitation, is a menace to the life, safety or health of the occupants thereof, or the public, or is from any cause in such a dangerous and unsafe condition as to constitute an imminent hazard to the extent that persons in or around such building are in serious jeopardy of life or limb, he may without notice or hearing, issue an emergency order directing that said building be, by a time specified in said order, restored to a condition of stability and safety. Said order may also require that such building be vacated within a reasonable time to be specified in the order, and in the case of extreme and immediate danger, said order may specify immediate vacation and no person shall use or occupy such building from and after the date on which the same is required to be vacated, until said building shall be restored to a condition of stability and safety as required by said order. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.36.050 Civil penalty.** In addition to any other sanction or remedial procedure which may be available, any person failing to comply with a notice of violation or order issued by the superintendent of buildings, or failing to comply with any other provision of this code specifically made subject to civil penalty, shall be subject to a cumulative civil penalty in the amount of three dollars per day per each housing unit in violation from the date set for compliance until such violation is corrected or such notice of violation or order is complied with.

Such penalty shall be collected by civil action, brought in the name of the city and commenced in the municipal court, and the superintendent of buildings shall notify the corporation counsel in writing of the name of any person subject to such penalty and the amount thereof, and such officer shall, with the assistance of the superintendent of buildings, take appropriate action to collect the same.

The defendant in any such action may show, in mitigation of liability:

(1) That the violation giving rise to such action was caused by the willful act, or neglect or abuse of another; or

(2) That correction of such violation was commenced promptly upon receipt of notice thereof, but that full compliance within the time specified was prevented by inability to obtain necessary materials or labor, inability to gain access to the subject building, or other condition or circumstance beyond the control of defendant, and upon such a showing, the court may remit all or part of the accumulated penalty as justice may require. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

## Chapter 27.40 UNLAWFUL CONDUCT

### Sections:

- 27.40.010 Harassing or retaliating against tenant.
- 27.40.020 Harassing or retaliating against owner.
- 27.40.030 Occupying or renting building unfit for habitation or vacated building—Utilities.
- 27.40.040 Removing posted notices.
- 27.40.050 Penalties for violations.

**27.40.010 Harassing or retaliating against tenant.** It is unlawful for the owner of any building for the purpose of harassing, punishing or retaliating against the tenant thereof to interfere with the peaceable possession of such tenant by:

- (1) Changing or tampering with any lock or locks;
- (2) Removing any door, window, fuse box, or other equipment, fixtures or furniture;

(3) Requesting or causing any gas, electricity, water or other utility service to be stopped, or evicting, increasing rent, or otherwise imposing, threatening or attempting any punitive measure against such tenant for the reason that such tenant has in good faith reported violations of this code or otherwise exercised or attempted to exercise his legal rights in relation to such building. (Ord. 99112 (part); July 31, 1970).

**27.40.020 Harassing or retaliating against owner.** It is unlawful for the tenant of any building for the purpose of harassing or retaliating against the owner thereof to interfere with the owner's rights therein by:

- (1) Changing or tampering with any lock or locks;
- (2) Removing any supplied equipment, fixtures or furniture;
- (3) In any manner wilfully causing to exist in the building any violation of the provisions of this code;
- (4) In any manner wilfully or maliciously damaging or causing damage to the leased premises. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.40.030 Occupying or renting building unfit for habitation or vacated building—Utilities.** It is unlawful for anyone to use, occupy, rent, or to cause or suffer or allow another to use or occupy or rent:

(1) Any building found to be unfit for human habitation, from and after the date specified in a final order issued in accordance with Chapter 27.32 of this code for the repair, alteration or improvement, or vacation and closure, removal or demolition of such building, unless and until such building shall be made fit for human habitation in compliance with such order and a certificate of compliance in accordance with Section 27.32.080 is issued therefor; or

(2) Any building vacated in compliance with a notice of violation issued in accordance with Section 27.36.010 hereof unless and until a certificate of compliance in accordance with Section 27.36.030 is issued therefor.

As to any such building, the superintendent of buildings may by written notice directed to the owner thereof and to the superintendent of water, superintendent of lighting, or to the gas utility, request that service to such building of water, electricity, or gas respectively, be terminated or disconnected on or before a date specified therein, and upon receipt of such notice the superintendent of water, superintendent of lighting, or the gas utility, as the case may be, is authorized to terminate or disconnect such service, and to restore such service upon the issuance by the superintendent of buildings of a certificate of compliance in accordance with Section 27.32.080 or Section 27.36.030 of this code, or upon written notification by the superintendent of buildings that water, electricity or gas service is necessary for construction purposes in connection with such building.

It is unlawful for anyone other than the superintendent of water, superintendent of lighting, or gas utility respectively or duly authorized representatives thereof, to restore any water, electricity or gas service so terminated or disconnected. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.40.040 Removing posted notices.** It is unlawful for anyone other than the superintendent of buildings to remove any notice, complaint, or order posted in accordance with Chapter 27.32 or Chapter 27.36 of this code. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**27.40.050 Penalties for violations.** Anyone convicted of a violation of any of the provisions of Sections 27.40.010, 27.40.020, 27.40.030 and 27.40.040 shall be punishable by a fine of not more than five hundred dollars or by imprisonment for not more than one hundred eighty days, or both such fine and imprisonment. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

**Chapter 27.44**  
**MISCELLANEOUS**

**Sections:**

27.44.010 Abatement of nuisances.

**27.44.010 Abatement of nuisances.** In addition to any other remedy provided herein, the city council may by separate ordinance, after notice and public hearing declare any building or structure, or premises, which it finds to be in a condition endangering the public health, safety, morals or welfare, to be a public nuisance; provide for demolition and removal thereof by summary abatement under the direction of a city officer so authorized and designated in such separate ordinance; and if it is necessary for the city to incur any expense in such summary abatement, the city may recover such costs in the manner permitted by law as in other cases where a public nuisance is found to exist and summary abatement is authorized by ordinance. (Ord. 99112 (part) ; July 31, 1970).

