

Compliance is the Key to a Clean City

The Department of Administrative Hearings (DAH) was created to effectively and efficiently focus on code enforcement and adjudicate violators who pollute Detroit streets and neighborhoods.

To that end, the City of Detroit has established a Compliance Based Code Enforcement approach to blight management. It is a system developed to assist residents who may unknowingly find themselves in non-Compliance with blight code violations. Amendments have been made to Chapters 8.5 and 22 of the Detroit City Code to allow for:

- A “warning” system before the issuance of a blight ticket;
- Reduction of fine amounts;
- Property owners having the ability to comply prior to hearing to get a fine waiver;
- Administrative Hearing Officers having the discretion to consider a number of factors in determining the amount of the fine to be assessed.

These amendments were established to assist residents toward compliance versus a system geared toward revenue collection. Working together we can maintain a cleaner Detroit.

What is a Blight Violation?

The City of Detroit has ordinances that address how property owners must maintain the exterior of their property. The City issues a blight violation when an owner fails to follow these ordinances.

Examples of blight violations that come before the DAH are:

Property Maintenance: Failure to obtain certificate of compliance or rental registra-

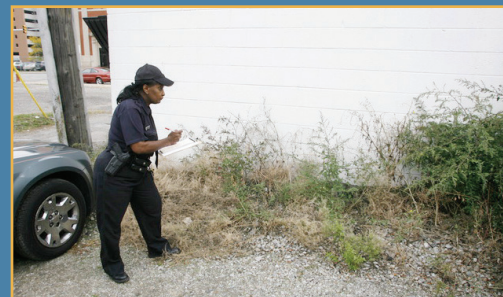
tion, failure to maintain exterior of property, failure to comply with emergency order, rat harborage and failure to remove snow and ice.

Zoning: Violation of special land use grant, change of use of land without permit, change of use of building without a permit, failure to obtain certificate of maintenance of grant conditions.

Solid Waste & Illegal Dumping: Early or late placement or improper storage of Courville containers, improper set-out during eviction, improper storage of solid, medial or hazardous waste, improper bulk set-out and illegal dumping.

Who issues Blight Violation Notices (BVNs)?

Blight Violation Notices (BVNs) are written tickets issued by City inspectors, police officers, and other City officials who investigate complaints of blight. Blight violation notices are issued to property owners or those in control of property that is in violation of the City’s anti-blight ordinances. If a blight violation notice is issued, the person or entity in receipt is called a respondent.



What happens when a Blight Violation Notice (BVN) is issued?

The written blight violation notice (BVN) received by a respondent will provide a description of the alleged violation and give the hearing date and time.

Once a BVN is issued, the following options are available to the respondent who received the BVN:

- Admit responsibility and pay the fine and fees before the DAH hearing date; fine is reduced 10% for early payment.
- Attend the hearing and contest the blight violation, with or without an attorney.
- If a property owner is found responsible at the hearing, the fine and fees imposed must be paid by the hearing date or a 10% penalty is imposed for late payment.

What is the DAH Hearing Process?

A respondent who receives a blight violation notice has the right to attend a hearing at the DAH. At the hearing, the respondent may present a defense to the blight violation. DAH hearings are presided over by Administrative Hearing Officers who are licensed Michigan attorneys and independent contractors. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Administrative Hearing Officer will make finding of facts and issue a written Decision and Order and Judgment. A Decision and Order and

Judgment issued by the DAH is a state civil judgment and is treated the same as any other state court judgment for enforcement purposes.

What are the Payment Options?

Respondents have the following options to pay the fine and/or judgment amount:

- Pay in person with cash, bank or personal check, money order or credit card at the DAH, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Mail check or money order payment to the **DAH**.
- Pay with a credit card via the telephone payment center 24 hours a day, by calling **(313) 224-0098**.
- Pay with a credit card online 24 hours a day via: **<http://www.detroitmi.gov/How-Do-I-Pay>**. Choose “**blight ticket**.”
- Payments received by the DAH before the hearing date are reduced 10%.
- Payments received by the DAH after the hearing date are increased by 10%.



What if payment is not made?

If an individual ignores a blight violation notice and doesn't appear at the hearing, a Decision and Order and Judgment by Default will be issued finding the respondent responsible for the blight violation.

If a respondent fails to pay the amount of the Decision and Order and Judgment, collection actions will be commenced, which may include the garnishment of wages, attachment of bank accounts and assets, and imposition of judgment liens upon real property.

Can a Decision and Order by the DAH be appealed?

Decisions and Orders and Judgments issued by the DAH may be appealed to the Wayne County Circuit Court. An appeal must be filed within 28 days of the order. If a Decision and Order and Judgment by Default is issued, a respondent may file a motion to set aside the default within 21 days.



How can I obtain information about a DAH case?

The DAH has a kiosk located in its lobby so that citizens can obtain information about any DAH case. Citizens can also obtain case-related information by calling **(313) 224-0098** or visiting the DAH.

How can my neighborhood or community organization learn more about the DAH?

The DAH invites neighborhood and community groups to come to the DAH to enjoy a tour, observe hearings and learn more about the code enforcement and adjudication process. Please contact DAH at **(313) 224-0098**.

City of Detroit DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE HEARINGS (DAH)

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 103
Detroit, Michigan 48226

HEARING ROOMS

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 1004
Detroit, Michigan 48226

HOURS OF OPERATION:
8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.



Citizen Guide

