



## CODE ENFORCEMENT PROCESS

### 1. ACKNOWLEDGMENT & SYSTEM ENTRY

An official complaint is filed with Sarasota County staff.

The alleged violation complaint 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 a violation is unfounded, the case is closed.

### 3. SERVICE of NOTICE

If a violation is found, a notice of violation (or public nuisance) is given with a reasonable time frame to correct.

Service of Notice may be perfected by personal service, certified mail, 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. AFFIDAVIT of VIOLATION

An Affidavit of Violation is a formal charging instrument requesting a hearing before the Special Magistrate.

### B. SPECIAL MAGISTRATE

The Special Magistrate shall make a finding of fact\* (violation), based on evidence of record and conclusions of law.

Special Magistrate hearings are categorized as evidentiary or penalty.

\*If a violation is unfounded, the case can be dismissed.

### C1. LIEN

A fine (or a fine plus repair costs) 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 penalty phase.

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

### C2. ABATEMENT

Some violations may be abated, including debris removal, mowing, obscene graffiti, and towing.

The property owner is invoiced and has 30 days to pay. If non-payment, a lien will be placed on the property.

## COMMONLY USED CODE COMPLIANCE TERMINOLOGY

### ABATEMENT

The act of eliminating, nullifying, lessening, or diminution of the nuisance.

### AFFIDAVIT OF RECURRENCE\*

Issued if a repeat violation is found; not required to give a reasonable time to correct.

### CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER (CEO)

Any designated employee/agent of the county whose duty is to enforce codes and ordinances enacted by Sarasota County.

### NOTICE OF PUBLIC NUISANCE\*\*

Notice issued for real property violations.

### NOTICE OF VIOLATION\*\*

Notice issued for all other violations.

### SPECIAL MAGISTRATE

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

\* Violations are defined as repeat violations after a finding of fact by the Special Magistrate.

\*\* Form of notification to initiate code enforcement proceedings, and may include a Special Magistrate hearing.

## NOTES & RESOURCES

All Florida municipalities adhere to Florida Statutes Chapter 162, visit [www.leg.state.fl.us](http://www.leg.state.fl.us) for more information.

The Sarasota County Code of Ordinances is available online at [http://library.municode.com/fl/sarasota\\_county](http://library.municode.com/fl/sarasota_county).



### HAVE A COMPLAINT?

Call the Contact Center at 941-861-5000 or download the SeeClickFix mobile application

