



**CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
REGULAR MEETING**

#25-0209

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the
Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: May 6, 2025

TITLE: First Reading - Ordinance Amending Maximum Daily Penalties for Code
Violations to Align with Chapter 162 of the Florida State Statutes -
(Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Recommendation

Staff recommends the City Commission approve an ordinance amending Chapter 11, Section 11-12.(c) of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Fort Lauderdale to align the maximum daily penalty for violations of city ordinances with Florida State Statutes, Chapter 162, Section 162.09(2)(d)(a).

Background

The purpose of Chapter 11 - Code Enforcement of the City of Fort Lauderdale's Code of Ordinances (Code) is to promote, protect, and improve the health, safety, and welfare of everyone in the City of Fort Lauderdale by creating a code enforcement system that provides an equitable, expeditious, efficient, and effective method for enforcement and encourages compliance with the ordinances and regulations of the City.

Currently, Chapter 11, Section 11-12(c) of the Code limits fines for municipal ordinance violations to up to \$500 per day for each day that a violation exists beyond the compliance deadline set by the Code Enforcement Board or Special Magistrate, and up to \$1,000 per day for each day a repeat violation exists. A repeat code violation refers to a situation where a person violates a code or ordinance after previously violating the same code or ordinance. However, Florida State Statutes, Chapter 162, Section 162.09(2)(d)(a) allows counties and municipalities with populations of 50,000 or more to adopt an ordinance that grants Code Enforcement Boards and Special Magistrates the authority to impose fines beyond those limits. Specifically, under this statute, counties and municipalities may increase fines to up to \$1,000 per day per violation for a first violation and up to \$5,000 per day per violation for a repeat violation.

In Fiscal Year 2023, the City presented a total of 2,654 cases to the Special Magistrate. Of these, 1,071 cases resulted in daily fines due to noncompliance with the Special Magistrate's order, and 40 cases resulting in daily fines of \$500. In Fiscal Year 2024, the City saw an increase in activity, taking 3,241 total cases before the Special Magistrate. Of these, 946 cases resulted in daily fines and 62 cases with daily fines of \$500.

The proposed amendment will align the City's code enforcement penalties with Florida law, ensuring that Fort Lauderdale has stronger enforcement mechanisms to deter ongoing and repeat violations. These changes will enhance compliance efforts and provide a more effective deterrent against violations that impact the community.

Resource Impact

There is no fiscal impact associated with action.

Strategic Connections

This item is a FY 2025 Commission Priority, advancing the Affordable Housing and Economic Development initiative.

This item advances the Fast Forward Fort Lauderdale 2035 Vision Plan: We Are Community

This item supports the Advance Fort Lauderdale 2040 Comprehensive Plan specifically advancing:

- The Neighborhood Enhancement Focus Area
- The Housing Element
- Goal 2: Be a community of strong, beautiful and healthy neighborhoods.

Attachments

Exhibit 1 – Business Impact Estimate

Exhibit 2 – Ordinance

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Acting Department Director: Porshia L. Garcia, Acting Director, Development Services Department