

Topic:	Vacant & Distressed Properties
Resource Type:	Regulations
State:	Pennsylvania
Jurisdiction Type:	Municipal
Municipality:	City of Philadelphia
Year (adopted, written, etc.):	Unknown
Community Type - applicable to:	Urban; Suburban
Title:	City of Philadelphia Property Maintenance Code
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Abstract

The Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Legislature enacted an ordinance called the Property Maintenance Code. The ordinance requires that all vacant premises be kept in a sanitary, safe, and secure manner. All entranceways, such as windows and doors, must be maintained in good repair and secured, not boarded. Failure to keep building entranceways secure will result in an unsafe building designation.

Upon an unsafe designation by the Building Department, notice shall be served upon the registered owner ordering compliance with the ordinance. Owners are required to comply with the notice immediately. If not, they must indicate to the Building Department the necessary steps being taken to comply with the ordinance within 10 days of receiving the notice. Noncompliance with the ordinance results in penalties that are listed in the local Administrative Code, assumed authorization of the Building Department to correct the conditions itself, and to collect the costs via lien, or otherwise.

Resource

SECTION PM-306.0 VACANT PREMISES

PM-306.1 General: All vacant premises shall be maintained in a clean, safe, secure and sanitary condition as provided in this chapter generally and in this section specifically, so as not to become unsafe or otherwise adversely affect the public health or safety.

PM-306.2 Responsibility: The owner of any vacant building shall keep all doors, windows and openings from the roof or other areas in good repair. Where such doors or windows or entrance to openings are readily accessible to trespassers, they shall be kept securely locked, fastened or otherwise secured. The owner shall take any other measures prescribed by the Department to prevent unauthorized entry to the premises by closing all openings with materials approved by the Department. A vacant building, which is not secured against entry shall be deemed unsafe within the meaning of Section PM-307.0.

PM-306.3 Notice: Where the Department determines that any vacant building is unsafe, a written notice of that determination shall be given to the registered owner together with an appropriate order to comply with this code, and a copy shall be posted in a conspicuous place on the premises. Such written notice shall indicate the number of doors, windows or other entrances or openings to the building that the owner has failed to secure or seal in violation of PM-306.2.

PM-306.3.1 Service: Notices required by this section shall be served on the owner in accordance with the administrative code.

PM-306.4 Compliance: The owner of any vacant building which is unsafe shall, upon written notice, either eliminate the unsafe condition(s) or demolish the building. Where immediate compliance is not feasible, the owner shall notify the Department in writing within 10 days of the notice served by the Department of the steps taken to correct the conditions, together with an estimate of the time required to fully comply with the provisions of the code.

PM-306.5 Penalties: If the owner does not comply with the notice or fails to correct the conditions specified in the Department's notice within the required period of time, the owner shall be subject to penalties set forth in the administrative code, provided that it shall be a separate offense, for which a separate fine may be imposed, for the owner to fail to secure or seal each separate door, window or other entrance or opening enumerated in the written notice required by PM-306.3. As provided in A-601.2, each day that each such separate offense continues after issuance of a notice or order shall also be deemed a separate offense for which a separate fine may be imposed.

PM-306.6 Abatement: If the owner does not comply with the order of the Department to correct the unsafe conditions, the Department is authorized to correct the conditions or demolish the building with its own forces or by contract and charge the costs thereof to the owner, and with the approval of the Law Department, collect the costs, including administrative costs, by lien, or otherwise.