



## **LEON COUNTY CODE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM**

### *Frequently Asked Questions*

#### ***What is Junk?***

By Ordinance definition, Junk shall mean any junked or abandoned motor vehicle or parts thereof; any real property, fixtures, personal property or other article having only nominal or salvage value which has been left unprotected from the elements; combustible and noncombustible waste materials of any kind or character; trash, debris, waste, litter, or refuse; and any other discarded or abandoned personalty, including, but not limited to, iceboxes, refrigerators, deep-freeze lockers, clothes washers, clothes dryers, stove, and household furniture and furnishing. The term does not include reasonable natural debris accumulations in wooded areas or on lawns, such as shrubbery and lawn clippings, leaves and compost piles for normal, personal, noncommercial use.

#### ***If there is a junk or litter problem on a lot in my neighborhood, who do I report it to?***

Leon County Department of Development Support and Environmental Management, Code Compliance Program at (850) 606-1300 or via email at [CodeCompliance@LeonCountyFL.gov](mailto:CodeCompliance@LeonCountyFL.gov). Pursuant to Section 6-30(a)(2) of the Leon County Code of Laws and Section 162.06(1)(b), Florida Statutes, Complainants generally cannot remain ANONYMOUS. Frivolous and unfounded complaints will not be processed or investigated.

#### ***If I complain about junk on a person's property, why doesn't the County come and get it?***

The proper disposal of junk and litter on an individual's property is the responsibility of the property owner, not the County. Garbage collection service in Leon County is currently provided by **Waste Pro**. You may contact them directly for specific rules and fees regarding junk and litter at (850) 606-1899. \*\*Public Works/Operations at (850) 606-1400 maintains the public roads and rights-of-way (including ditches) in Leon County. It is against the law, and considered "dumping," to place any junk or natural debris in these rights-of-way. You may also report "illegal dumping" and abandoned vehicles to the Leon County Sheriff's Office at (850) 606-3300.

#### ***When I complain about junk on a person's property, why does it take so long to remove the junk?***

There are several reasons for the perceived delay in removal of the junk:

- Leon County relies on the owner to remove any junk on his/her property. The County will not pick up and dispose of the junk.
- The enforcement process begins once an inspection is conducted from the Right-of-Way (ROW) by a Leon County Compliance Specialist which verifies that the complaint is valid. *An inspection is usually performed within 48-72 hours after the initial complaint is received.* Staff cannot Trespass onto private property. *Per County Code, a 15-day follow-up inspection is conducted to verify the status of property.*
- Leon County Code Enforcement operates under Florida Statutes (F.S.) Chapter 162, which requires legal notice and due process of the parties allegedly in violation. Meeting the requirements of this statute may extend compliance efforts a few weeks to several months.

#### ***If somebody filed a complaint against me because of a neighborhood dispute, do I still have to clean up my property?***

Leon County Code Enforcement deals ONLY in land use issues. Every complaint that is made by a citizen MUST be investigated by a Compliance Specialist, regardless of the reason for registering the complaint. If the Compliance Specialist finds the complaint to be valid, the enforcement process will begin in accordance with F.S. Chapter 162. If the complaint is not a violation of the County Codes, the matter is considered "Invalid".

#### ***If I receive a County letter about junk and litter on my property, when does the fine start running?***

There are no fines initially assessed when you receive a letter that you have junk on your property. Leon County's primary objective is **VOLUNTARY COMPLIANCE**. Fines for violations of the Junk Code are assessed by the Code Enforcement Board (CEB). Once the CEB finds that there is, in fact, a violation, and the violator does not comply within the time limit that the CEB ordered, there will be a fine placed on the property.

#### ***Is the Junk Code (Chapter 14 Section 14-31) enforced the same in Woodville, as in Killearn Lakes?***

Yes, the Junk Code (Chapter 14 Section 14-31) is enforced uniformly throughout the unincorporated portion of Leon County, no matter where the site is located.

***If I want to know who complained about me, can I find out?***

Under the Public Records Law of Florida, all information given to staff is a matter of Public Record, and it must be disclosed if the information is requested. If a citizen wants to know who made a complaint, they can contact our office via email at [CodeCompliance@LeonCountyFL.gov](mailto:CodeCompliance@LeonCountyFL.gov) OR in person (435 N. Macomb Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor.) and make a “public records request.” *Frivolous and unfounded complaints will not be processed or investigated.*

***When is a vehicle likely to be classified as junk?***

If the following conditions exist: 1) If it does not have a valid tag; 2) If any part, equipment, or piece necessary for its operation is and remains removed for a period of fifteen (15) days; 3) If for any other reason the vehicle appears, after reasonable inquiry and investigation to be junked or abandoned. However, a determination is only made after an investigation by the County. For more information, please contact the Code Compliance Program at (850) 606-1300 or via email [CodeCompliance@LeonCountyFL.gov](mailto:CodeCompliance@LeonCountyFL.gov) or call FLHSMV at (850) 617-2000.

***How many junk vehicles can be on a person’s property?***

All vehicles must be operable and have a valid tag or be properly stored in a completely enclosed structure or it must be removed.

***How many vehicles can be on a person’s property?***

As long as the vehicles are operable and have a valid tag, there is no limit to how many vehicles can remain on the property. (Excluding over-size vehicles, such as semi-trucks, etc.)

***How do I prevent other people from dumping on my property?***

There is no code requirement which addresses this issue. However, in order to prevent easy access to vacant property for illegal dumping, some people have blocked off road access or placed a barricade around the property with No Trespassing/No Dumping signs.

***When the Landfill will not take certain trash or junk, where can I take it?***

Contact Public Works/Landfill/Solid Waste at (850) 606-1800 to determine which landfill can take your trash. If none are available, then some private industries may collect the scrap metal materials.

***If I cannot afford to remove my junk vehicles, who can I call to get this done?***

Some private junk/salvage yards or tow companies may remove your vehicle if proper ownership is provided.

***Is there a mowing ordinance in Leon County?***

Currently, there is a lot mowing ordinance for the unincorporated portion of Leon County. Leon County Code of Laws, Lot Mowing Ordinance 04-11 and Amended Ordinance 04-41, requires that grass not exceed 18 inches in height. Also, the City of Tallahassee has a mowing ordinance, for more information please contact City of Tallahassee Code Enforcement at (850) 891-7007 or via email [Code.Enforcement@talgov.com](mailto:Code.Enforcement@talgov.com)

***Is there an ordinance to make a citizen cut down a tree that is diseased, dead, or can fall onto a property?***

No. County ordinances do not require citizens to cut down trees. Any tree concerns that are not covered in the ordinances are considered civil matters.

***How long can somebody live in a RV travel trailer?***

Living in a RV Travel Trailer is not allowed. Contact Leon County Development Services Division at (850) 606-1300 for further assistance.

***Why aren’t the County codes the same as the City codes? Why are they enforced differently?***

City Ordinances were designed for a more urban, densely populated setting. County Ordinances were designed for more rural, less dense areas. City of Tallahassee Code Enforcement can be reached at (850) 891-7007 or via email [Code.Enforcement@talgov.com](mailto:Code.Enforcement@talgov.com).

***Mud is washing off a construction site, in the unincorporated area of Leon County, causing a safety or environmental hazard. Who should I call?***

Leon County Development Support and Environmental Management, Environmental Services, (850) 606-1300.