

ORDINANCE NO. 14,810

AN ORDINANCE to amend the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, as heretofore amended, by repealing Section 60-5, Section 60-88, Section 60-102, Section 60-104 and Section 60-145 thereof, and enacting a new Section 60-5, Section 60-88, Section 60-102 and Section 60-104, regarding the Neighborhood Inspection Rental Code and the collection of fees, fines, penalties, costs and interest.

BE IT ORDAINED by the City Council of the City of Des Moines, Iowa:

Section 1. That the Municipal Code of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, 2000, adopted by Ordinance No. 13,827, passed June 5, 2000, as amended by Ordinance No. 14,432 passed April 25, 2005, by Ordinance No. 14,501 passed October 10, 2005, and by Ordinance No. 14,652 passed May 21, 2007, be and is hereby amended by repealing Section 60-5, Section 60-88, Section 60-102, Section 60-104 and Section 60-145 thereof, and enacting a new Section 60-5, Section 60-88, Section 60-102 and Section 60-104, regarding the Neighborhood Inspection Rental Code and the collection of fees, fines, penalties, costs and interest, as follows:

Sec. 60-5. Scope, applicability and exceptions.

The provisions of this article shall apply to the maintenance, repair, equipment, use and occupancy of all residential rental buildings and accessory structures now in existence or hereafter constructed, rehabilitated, renovated or converted to residential use within the corporate limits, including but not limited to single and two-family dwellings, multiple family dwellings, rooming houses, rooming units, shelters, dormitories and dormitory rooms, but excluding those buildings and structures specifically excluded from the provisions of this article and public nuisance structures as defined in article III. Any structure that was in compliance on the day previous to the adoption of this code will be allowed to remain.

EXCEPTIONS:

The provisions of this article do not apply to:

- (1) Buildings, structures and uses owned, licensed and operated by any governmental unit or governmental agency;
- (2) Single-family dwellings occupied by the owner, as defined in this chapter, or members of that owner's immediate family. Such members are defined as parents, grandparents, children and grandchildren. Owners must register the names of the immediate family members who reside in the dwelling on an annual basis and whenever there is a change in occupancy;
- (3) Transient shelters and group homes subject to state inspection;
- (4) Residential structures in which ownership passes to a governmental unit;
- (5) Where a nonresidential business or activity or a state-licensed or state-approved use

occupies a portion of the building and the building contains premises which would otherwise be subject to this article, this article shall be and remain applicable to the residential and common or public areas of such building and premises;

- (6) A duplex, at least one of the units of which is occupied by the owner, as defined in this chapter, and the other unit is occupied by a member of that owner's immediate family, as defined in subsection (2) of this section.

Sec. 60-88. Collection of fees, fines, penalties and costs.

- (a) All fees, fines, penalties and costs imposed upon an owner in the enforcement of this article not previously due, shall be due when notice of the amount of such fees, fines, penalties and costs is sent to the owner by first class mail. No late payment penalty or interest shall accrue, and such fees, fines, penalties and costs shall not be certified for collection in the same manner as a property tax unless such notice provides the information required by Iowa Code §364.17.
- (b) The amount of any such fees, fines, penalties and costs may be appealed to the housing appeals board in the manner set forth in section 60-102.
- (c) If notice containing the information required by Iowa Code §364.17 is given and the total amount of such fees, fines, penalties and costs is not paid within thirty days of when due, or in the event of a timely appeal if not paid within ten business days of final action by the board on the appeal, then:
- (1) The owner shall be charged a late payment penalty in the amount set forth in the schedule of administrative penalties adopted by the city council by resolution;
 - (2) Interest shall thereafter accrue on the unpaid balance at the rate of 1.5% per month; and,
 - (3) The city may certify the unpaid balance, interest and late payment penalty to the county auditor as a lien upon the rental property for collection in the same manner as a property tax.

Sec. 60-102. Appeals process.

- (a) Appeal of a cited violation.
- (1) Any owner objecting to a violation cited in the inspection notice may file a written appeal with the neighborhood inspection division requesting a hearing before the housing appeals board. An appeal shall be filed within ten days of the date of the inspection notice. An untimely appeal shall not be accepted, unless in the discretion of the neighborhood inspection officer good cause is shown for the untimely filing.
 - (2) An appeal objecting to a violation cited in an inspection notice shall be accompanied by a receipt from the city treasurer showing payment of a filing fee charged in the amount set forth in a schedule of fees adopted by the city council by resolution. The appeal shall state those violations that are being contested. The filing fee shall be refunded if the board finds that the objection is valid.
 - (3) An appeal consisting of an application for a variance shall be accompanied by a receipt from the city treasurer showing payment of a nonrefundable filing fee charged in the amount set forth in a schedule of fees adopted by the city council by resolution.
 - (4) An owner referred to the housing appeals board for failure to comply with an inspection notice shall be charged an administrative fee in the amount set forth in a schedule of fees adopted by the city council by resolution, if the board finds in favor of the neighborhood inspection division.
 - (5) If an owner referred to the housing appeals board has brought the structure(s) into

compliance prior to that board meeting, a fee in the amount set forth in a schedule of fees adopted by the city council by resolution, shall be charged.

- (6) The neighborhood inspection officer shall notify the appellant and all board members of the date, time and location of the hearing.
- (b) Appeal of fees, fines, penalties and costs. An owner objecting to the amount of any fees, fines or penalties imposed upon the owner pursuant to this article may file a written appeal with the neighborhood inspection division within thirty (30) days of the date notice is given of the City's intent to certify such fines, fees and penalties for collection in the same manner as a property tax. An untimely appeal shall not be accepted, unless in the discretion of the neighborhood inspection officer good cause is shown for the untimely filing. The notice of appeal must be accompanied by a receipt from the city treasurer showing payment of a filing fee in the amount set forth in the schedule of fees adopted by the city council by resolution. The filing fee shall be credited to the balance due or refunded if the board determines that an error was made in the calculation of the total amount of fees, fines, penalties and costs then due.

Sec. 60-104. Power to impose fines.

- (a) The housing appeals board may impose a fine for any violation of this article in the amount set forth in the Schedule of Administrative Penalties adopted by the city council by resolution. The board shall have the authority to impose the maximum fine, a lesser fine or to waive the fine upon good cause shown.
- (b) The neighborhood inspection division shall send a notice of the decision of the housing appeals board to the owner stating the amount of the fine imposed in the manner set forth in section 60-88. (c) If a property is brought into compliance the owner may, within ten days of reinspection, file with the neighborhood inspection division a request to have the imposition of the fine reviewed by the housing appeals board. The board may reduce, rescind or affirm the imposition of the fine.

Sec. 2. This ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication as provided by law.

FORM APPROVED:

Roger K. Brown, Assistant City Attorney

Christine Hensley, Mayor ProTem

Attest:

I, Diane Rauh, City Clerk of the City of Des Moines, Iowa, hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true copy of an ordinance (Roll Call No. 08-1980), passed by the City Council of said City at a meeting held November 10, 2008 signed by the Mayor

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ProTem on November 10, 2008 and published as provided by law in the Business Record on November 24, 2008. Authorized by Publication Order No. 6368.

Diane Rauh, City Clerk