KitsapCounty
Community Development

Code Compliance FAQs

Q: How are code compliance actions started?

A: Most code compliance actions happen when someone makes a complaint.

County staff may refer conditions or actions to code compliance for assistance.

Q: What happens if someone files a complaint about my property?

A: Code compliance staff reviews complaints to confirm county jurisdiction and determine if a violation exists. Complaints may be resolved if research shows a violation does not exist.

If it can't be resolved based on research, the property owner or other responsible party will be contacted by compliance staff.

Some issues may be handled over the phone, while others require a site visit.

Q: Are all complaints treated the same?

A: No – Complaints are categorized in three levels. Below is detail about the types and goal timelines for complaints.

Level	Includes	Timeline
1	• Lives or property in imminent danger • Irreparable harm to environment	As soon as possible
2	• Violation of Kitsap County Code • No immediate fire, life safety, structural integrity, or environmental hazards present	2 weeks
3	• Other complaints not classified as 1 or 2	1 month

Q: What should I expect if staff performs a site visit?

A: We will make all attempts to contact the occupant or other responsible party on site at the time of the visit. Often owners or other responsible parties will meet on site with staff.

Staff will always introduce themselves, provide identification. and explain the purpose of their visit. If no one is home, staff will leave a door hanger, business card, or other posting to request contact.

Revised Date 10/2/2026
Kitsap.gov/DCD
This content may include minor contributions generated with the assistance of AI tools.

Q: What "Right of Entry" does staff exercise to come onto my property?

A: Staff will go directly to the front door of the primary residence and typically no further without consent. If the property is posted and gated (closed), we will not proceed unless there is probable cause to believe that irreparable harm or immediate life safety hazards exist.

Kitsap County Code 14.04.860 - Enforcement.

Q: What information will staff use to validate a complaint?

A: Information provided with the complaint, discovered during the site visit, obtained through conversations with property owners and responsible parties, or by researching pertinent records.

Common sources of information include Assessor or Auditor records, Google Earth imagery, complaint photos, Washington State Archive data including aerial imagery, permitting and parcel file records, and GIS mapping.

Q: What happens if a violation is discovered or confirmed?

A: During a site visit, staff will provide general information about violations and what action may be required. After the site visit, a letter detailing violation, county code sections involved, and corrective steps.

Q: I have received a letter from the county advising me of violations that exist on my property. Now what?

A: First, contact staff following the letter's instructions. They will provide more information and tell you what steps need to be taken.

You may need some time to obtain permits (if required) and plan for corrections.

Compliance staff can work with clients to facilitate voluntary compliance and can set schedules that meet the needs of most situations. You may be able to resolve things on your own – or you might need to meet with other county staff to come up with a plan.

Occasionally, staff may direct parties to stop work, vacate structures, or end certain activities immediately as they present hazards to people or property.

Q: What if I disagree with the decision made by compliance staff?

A: Appeals involving fire and building codes may be submitted with the Fire Marshal or Building Official. Most other code enforcement decisions are Type One administrative decisions which may be appealed to the Hearing Examiner.

Kitsap County Code 21.04.290 | Kitsap County Code 14.04.860

Q: What happens if I ignore the letter, fail to stop work, or refuse to correct conditions?

A: *Staff prefer to resolve violations by working closely with owners and responsible parties to achieve voluntary compliance.* In fact, almost all compliance cases are resolved this way.

If voluntary compliance is not possible, you may be issued a citation requiring your presence in District Court. Fines may be assessed, notices may be recorded against the property, or injunctions compelling actions to be taken may be obtained and enforced.

In rare occasions, warrants of abatement may be obtained and the county may cause corrective actions to be taken. The cost of these actions is assessed to the property and are the responsibility of property owners.

Enforcement actions can easily be avoided by working with staff and making satisfactory progress towards compliance.

Q: Can I find out who turned me in?

A: Almost all information retained by Kitsap County is a public record and can be obtained by filing a Public Disclosure Request (PDR). In certain circumstances, state law requires the County to withhold or redact reporting parties or witness information.

Q: Once all violations are corrected how will I know that the compliance case is closed?

A: A letter or correspondence from the county will confirm that all necessary corrections have been made and violations no longer exist

More Questions?

Visit: www.kitsap.gov/DCD
Email: help@kitsap1.com
Call: 360.337.5777

This handout is provided for general information only and is not a substitute for, nor modifies or supersedes, any applicable federal, state, or local laws, rules, regulations, ordinances, or codes. In any apparent conflict between this handout and any applicable legal requirement, the applicable legal requirement will control. The applicant/property owner is solely responsible for determining and complying with all applicable legal requirements and should consult its own qualified professional(s) as appropriate. Kitsap County Code is available online and DCD makes no warranties and assumes no liability arising from use of or reliance on this handout.