

# **LEON COUNTY CODE COMPLIANCE PROGRAM ONE-TIME AMNESTY PROGRAM**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS & ANSWERS**

- Q** When is the One-Time Amnesty Program period?
- A** The One-Time Amnesty Program will be offered during a six-month period beginning September 1, 2007 through March 31, 2008, with a filing deadline of December 1, 2007. All liens imposed prior to January 1, 2007 would be eligible to participate.
- Q** Do all code violation problems have to be corrected before I can apply to participate in the Leon County's One-Time Amnesty Program?
- A** No. An inspection of the property will be done at the time of your application for Amnesty.
- Q** Do I have to correct all code violations before my Amnesty Application request is granted.
- A** Yes. You must correct all code violations cited by the Leon County Code Enforcement Board. Additionally, any new code violations identified at the time of the Amnesty inspection must also be corrected to be eligible for Amnesty.
- Q** How do I apply to participate in the Amnesty Program?
- A** Simply complete the enclosed application form in its entirety indicating your interest and send it or hand deliver to our address: Leon County Code Compliance Program, Renaissance Center, 435 North Macomb Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Tallahassee, FL 32301.
- Q** Will I have to attend a hearing to participate in this program?
- A** No, a panel of County staff, appointed by the County Commission, will conduct a review of the facts surrounding your case and pre-determine your final fine amount once it is verified that your property is in compliance with County Codes.
- Q** I do not live at the property address, but own property with identified code violations and I want to speak directly to the panel about the circumstances surrounding my non-compliance with County codes. May I speak directly to the panel?
- A** You do not have to attend a hearing to have your fine reduced. Your property must be in compliance and when it is, the panel will determine your fine reduction. If you wish to appeal their decision, your appearance would be necessary or you could designate a representative to attend the hearing for you.
- Q** What can I expect to pay for a reduced fine amount?

- A** The County Commission approved three (3) fine reduction amounts: \$250, \$500 and \$1,000. The amount to be levied against you will depend on the severity of the code violation, the amount of time your property was not in compliance with County Codes and any documented special circumstances surrounding your non-compliance with codes and the Order of the Board.
- Q** When will the reduced fine amount have to be paid?
- A** The panel will extend you up to thirty (30) days from the date of compliance to pay your reduced fine.
- Q** Where and to whom do I pay my fine? What form of payment will you accept?
- A** Personal checks, cashier checks or money orders, made payable to the Leon County, may be mailed to Leon County Code Compliance Program, Renaissance Center, 435 North Macomb Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Tallahassee, FL 32301. Payments may also be made in person at the same address. If you wish to make a cash payment, you must pay in person. **DO NOT MAIL CASH.**
- Q** What if I bring my property into compliance but do not pay the reduced fine?
- A** The lien and original fine will remain against your property and you would forfeit your opportunity to participate in the Amnesty Program. Further, your property would then become subject to additional legal proceedings initiated by the County Attorney's Office.
- Q** Will all the fines be removed against my properties under this program?
- A** The original fine levied by the Board for non-compliance with County Code on each of your properties will be reduced; however, any demolition associated assessments cannot be waived. Those costs must be paid along with the reduced fine amount.
- Q** What will happen if I do not take advantage of the Amnesty Program?
- A** The County will proceed with bringing about compliance by using all legal means available, including foreclosure on the property or securing judgments against the property owner. The property owner should not expect another opportunity to reduce the fines against the property.
- Q** Can my fine be reduced by the Code Enforcement Board?
- A** At any time, property owners can petition the Code Enforcement Board (CEB) for a reconsideration of their outstanding fines. However, once an application for fine reconsideration is submitted to the CEB, the property is not eligible for the One-Time Amnesty Program. The request to reduce the fine will be heard and a decision will be made by the CEB.