

COMPLAINTS

The property in question must be located in the county's jurisdiction (outside city limits and not in the Estes Valley Planning Area).

Code Compliance staff accept complaints from citizens who feel a property may be in violation of the Larimer County Land Use Code and/or Building Code.

Land Use Code complaints must be in written form, unless the violation involves a life-safety issue; one that Code Compliance staff determine has a significant impact on the public, nearby property and/or neighborhood; or commercial activity such as an illegal business or sign.

Building Code complaints are accepted on an anonymous basis due to the potential for life-safety issues associated with construction. However, a signed, written form is preferred.

Confidentiality: The County believes maintaining confidentiality is important to assure effective investigation and prosecution of code violations. Staff will only release the name of a complainant in response to advice from the County Attorney's office, in response to a lawful court order, or with the permission of the complainant.

Complaint forms are available in the Planning & Building Services office and via the Code Compliance web site (see addresses below). Complaints may be submitted as follows:

1. **Hand-deliver** complaint forms to Code Compliance staff at: 200 W. Oak Street, Suite 3100, Fort Collins, CO 80521
2. **Mail** forms to: Code Compliance Section, Larimer County Planning and Building Services Division, P.O. Box 1190, Fort Collins, CO 80522-1190
3. **Email** complaint forms can be submitted online via the Larimer County web site: www.larimer.org/codecompliance
4. **Phone:**
Ask for the Code Compliance
Staff on Call (SOC) (970) 498-7683

Code compliance complaints may be initiated by County staff or by other agencies, i.e., Fire Departments, Health Department, Assessor's Office, etc., for issues involving life, health and/or safety of the public, an illegal business or illegal sign, or building without required permits.

COMPLAINT RESOLUTION

After a **complaint** is reported to Code Compliance staff, the following process begins.

1. **A case number** is assigned to track information and communication regarding the alleged violation.
2. When necessary, an on-site inspection of the property will be conducted by a Code Compliance Officer to **verify information** and establish the facts.

The complaint will be closed if the Code Compliance Officer does not find a potential violation of the Land Use Code and/or Building Code.

3. **Property owner notification**

A Code Compliance Officer will attempt to telephone or visit with the property owner on site. If verbal communication is not possible, a courtesy letter will be mailed, or a notice will be posted at the site to notify the property owner of the alleged violation.

The owner is asked to respond within 15 days by calling or writing Code Compliance staff at the address shown on the front of this pamphlet and under **Complaint Forms**.

A Code Compliance Officer's goal is to bring the property into compliance by working with the property owner to help him/her understand the Land Use Code and/or Building Code.

If the property owner fails to respond to the initial notice, a final notice is sent. In the notice, the property owner is notified he/she has 30 days to comply with the Land Use Code and/or Building Code.

In most cases, the property is re-inspected after the final notice is sent. If the property is in compliance with the Land Use Code and/or Building Code, the file is closed.

4. **Notice of Hearing before County Commissioners**

Code complaints are scheduled for public hearing before the Larimer County Commissioners for the following reasons:

- The property owner has not responded to the Code Compliance Officer's attempts to resolve the issue.
- A code violation continues after a deadline set to meet compliance.
- The property owner does not make satisfactory progress toward resolving a code violation.

The property owner is notified of the public hearing via certified mail and standard mail.

The issue may be withdrawn from the Board of County Commissioners hearing agenda if the following two (2) conditions are met at least seven (7) days prior to the hearing:

1. The property is brought into compliance; and
2. Compliance is documented by a Code Compliance Officer.

5. **Public Hearing Before the Board of County Commissioners**

At the hearing, the Code Compliance Officer describes the nature of the violation and what is required to bring the property into compliance.

The property owner is given time to give his/her presentation to the Board of County Commissioners.

Neighbors and the public attending the hearing are allowed to voice their concerns.

After listening to all interests, the Board of County Commissioners determine appropriate enforcement action.

6. **Timeline for Bringing a Property into Compliance**

The Board of County Commissioners will determine a compliance date and may authorize legal action in cases that warrant further compliance.

Code violations vary widely in nature. The property owner may be required to go through multiple stages and processes to satisfy both the Land Use Code and Building Code requirements.

7. **Legal Action**

A violation that is not resolved in the time determined by the County Commissioners is referred to the County Attorney's Office.

The County Attorney is authorized by State statute to use the court process to enforce County regulations.

When a violation goes to court, Larimer County is the plaintiff and is required to follow all Colorado State Statutes while seeking compliance.

CODE COMPLIANCE STAFF

- Code Compliance Supervisor
Candace Phippen (970) 498-7724
- Code Compliance Officer
Eric Fried (970) 498-7706
- Code Compliance Officer
Chad Gray (970) 498-7664
- Code Compliance Technician
Jane Culler (970) 498-7708
- Code Compliance Fax (970) 498-7667

Visit our website for more information on code issues, FAQ's and complaint forms.

www.larimer.org/codecompliance

Larimer County Code Compliance staff have adopted the American Association of Code Enforcement (AACE) Code of Ethics:

I will uphold the constitutional property rights of all citizens to ensure due process and fairness and consistency.

I will seek to improve the quality of life within my jurisdiction by enforcing all laws in an exemplary manner.

I will strive to inspire public confidence and trust in my profession by performing my duties with honor, integrity, truthfulness and fairness.

I will carefully avoid conflicts of interests, or appearance of impropriety, and will not accept, nor offer any form of gift for the performance of my duties.

I will strive to become more knowledgeable of my profession through continuous training and education.

I will not permit personal feelings, prejudices nor influences (political or otherwise) to interfere, prohibit or delay in the process of enforcement.



www.larimer.org/codecompliance

Code Compliance
Planning & Building Services
200 W. Oak Street
Suite 3100
Fort Collins, CO 80521

Land uses within unincorporated Larimer County are regulated by zoning districts. Larimer County regulations dealing with zoning and land use are combined into a single document known as the Land Use Code, adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

Citizens should call the Planning Department at (970) 498-7683 to check their zoning district and learn what land uses are allowed by right or by Special Review.

Effective October 2, 2007, the Larimer County Commissioners adopted the 2006 International Codes. Citizens should call the Building Department at (970) 498-7700 for information concerning building codes and building permits.

Code Compliance staff enforce all aspects of the Land Use Regulations and Building Codes.