



The City of Morgantown

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How Code Enforcement Handles Complaints from Citizens

Morgantown Code Enforcement receives thousands of complaints yearly from citizens about several different issues within city limits. Once they are made aware of a violation on a property, there are several steps Code Enforcement officers must take. The allotted amount of time to move a complaint through the legal system can be upwards of 60 to 80+ days.

Below is a list, from start to finish, of how a complaint is handled within the City of Morgantown Code Enforcement Department.

1. Code Enforcement Receives a Complaint
2. Staff Determines the Nature of the Complaint – Does the complaint deal with property maintenance, commercial property, residential property, or an electrical issue?
3. Complaint is Assigned – The appropriate compliance officer, building inspector, housing inspector, or electrical inspector is assigned the complaint to investigate.
4. On-site Review Performed – Within 24 hours of the complaint, an officer makes an on-site review. If the complaint is validated, the owner is verified and an official notice is issued to the owner in person or by certified mail with the allotted time to correct the issue. Time can vary from immediate for an emergency, anything that threatens life, health or property, to 20 days for a non-emergency. That time begins when the owner receives the notice.
5. Citation is Issued – If the above time expires and no work is completed on the violation, the owner is given a citation. The court date given for the citation is 21 days from the issuance.
6. Request for an Extension/Conflict with Court Date – On or before the court date, the violator often requests an extension of time from the court and may be given up to another 20 days to address and fix the violation.
7. Court Date- Once in court, a judge may grant the requested extension of 20 days.
8. Larger Fines Administered – If the owner still has not fixed the violation, a judge will issue more, and often larger, fines.



Many complaints appear as if they are not addressed, but Code Enforcement always uses this process to take the necessary steps and move the violation through the legal system.

