



Village of Berrien Springs Code Enforcement Process

The Village of Berrien Springs believes that supplying our residents and property owners with the current codes and an understanding of how they are applied and enforced is an important first step in maintaining a positive relationship between local government and our residents and property owners.

To view the Village of Berrien Springs Code of Ordinances please visit the *Municode* website and search for Berrien Springs. <https://library.municode.com/>

Beyond the development and adoption of ordinances, the Council entrusts our Code Enforcement Officer with the task of keeping our community in compliance with existing ordinances. Code enforcement is an important key in maintaining the appearance, functionality, and property values of a neighborhood, as well as reducing crime and improving community pride. Please join us in working toward these goals!

Be assured that our goal is amicable teamwork to bring properties into compliance in order to achieve the outcomes stated above, not punishment. Please reach out when you have challenges maintaining your property as we often work with residents in various ways, or if you have any questions. We appreciate your input – it truly takes a Village!

– Berrien Springs Village Council

The Process

The Village of Berrien Springs Code Enforcement Officer will wear attire clearly identifying them as an official employee of the Village

1. Cass St. and Ferry St. divide the Village into four quadrants that the Code Enforcement Officer uses to review for notices. Quadrants may, at times, take up to a week to complete due to the workload and other responsibilities of the Code Enforcement Officer. Please be aware that properties in other quadrants may not receive a notice until a later date.

2. However, if a complaint comes in about a property within a different quadrant than the Code Enforcement Officer is working in, a notice may be given for just that property within its quadrant.

3. Within each quadrant the Code Enforcement Officer surveys the properties for violations. Properties within that quadrant that are found to be in violation of the Village ordinances are given a notice by way of placard placed on the door that is thought to be the most used entrance.

4. Once a notice is presented you are typically given 3 days (noxious weeds, grass, saplings, etc.) or 10 days (blight, etc.) to bring your property into compliance. It is within this timeframe that the resident/renter/owner should address concerns by calling the Village and requesting to speak to the Code Enforcement Officer about their notice. Communication is key, and the Village will often work with you, including giving extensions when appropriate. If a discussion with the Code Enforcement Officer does not resolve the issue, there is a *Village of Berrien Springs Situation Form* available at the Village Hall, that begins an appeals process. This process must be initiated within the number of days given on the notice for compliance. Once the *Situation Form* is submitted:

- The imposed enforcement will be delayed until the situation has been reviewed by the Public Properties and Ordinances committee.
- Once the situation has been reviewed a committee member will call the resident/owner with the disposition status of the complaint.

5. Once the allotted 3-day or 10-day period has expired (without resolution of the issue or an extension given) we will then contact the company that has been contracted with the Village to bring properties into compliance.

6. At the completion of bringing a property into compliance an invoice payable within 30 days will be sent to the homeowner. In addition to the direct cost, a \$35 fee to offset administrative costs will be assessed. If the invoice is not paid within 30 days a second notice will follow. If no payment is made after the final notice it will be applied to the tax bill of the property.

- If the contracted company arrives at the property and they are asked to leave before bringing the property into compliance, the homeowner will still be assessed a fee (reduced) for their mobilization/time.
- If you are an owner of a rental property within the Village of Berrien Springs and your rental property receives a notice and your tenant fails to notify you of the posting that is considered a civil issue between you and your tenant. To alleviate this problem, we suggest you add this matter to your rental agreement.

7. Photographs will be taken before and after work is done on any property.