

9. Shipping Containers & PODs/Smartboxes

Portable Storage Units (POD's), dumpsters and similar structures, can be placed in your yard temporarily for up to 15 consecutive days. If it is to remain longer than 15 days, it must meet normal yard (setback) requirements and may be located on a lot only after issuance of a certificate of zoning compliance. It may, however, remain for a longer period if you are repairing your property. If you cannot locate it on the lot, the Department of Public Works (804-646-0999) allows and issues permits for these structures to be placed in the street — on a limited basis. For additional information regarding the zoning ordinance on Portable Storage Units, please contact the Zoning Office at (804) 646-6340.



10. Trailers & Vendors (Food Carts)

Vendor food carts, placed on City sidewalks (sidewalk vendors), are regulated by the Department of Finance [See: Sections 18-521 of the Richmond City Code]. For additional information, please call a Finance representative at: (804) 646-7295 or 6928.

Vendor food carts and trailers permanently parked on private property are typically not permitted and must obtain a Certificate of Occupancy (C.O.) under the Building Code. For more information, contact Permits & Inspections at: (804) 646-4169 as well as the Zoning Administration Office at: (804) 646-6340.

11. Trash Collection Areas (Dumpsters)

Trash collection areas are required to be enclosed and screened to provide a visual barrier from adjoining properties, public streets or other public spaces, as well as to prevent trash from blowing onto neighboring properties. Screening must be opaque and can be vegetative or structural (brick, stone, wood or some other appropriate material). Chain-link fences with slats are not an approved screening method. Before constructing a trash enclosure, submit a plan to Zoning Administration for review and approval.

12. Yard (Setback) Requirements

Each zoning district has a specified front, rear and side yard (setback) and it is important to check your requirement prior to locating any building or structure on your property. Some buildings or structures may not require a building permit, but they still must comply with yard requirements.

REPORTING A ZONING VIOLATION

If you believe a property within the City of Richmond is in violation of any zoning laws, contact the Zoning Administration office *via* telephone at 804-646-6340 or send an email to:

DCDZoningAdministration@Richmondgov.com

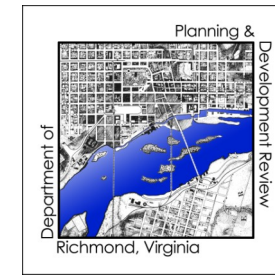
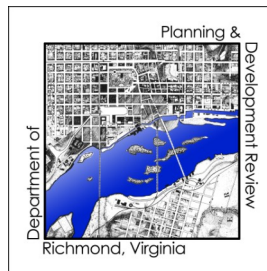
Please provide a detailed description of the violation and an accurate property address. Once an alleged violation is reported to our office, it is assigned to enforcement staff for investigation by researching records and, if necessary, performing an on-site inspection.

If our office determines that a property violates a zoning requirement, a *Violation Notice & Correction Order* is sent to the owner and/or occupant of the property. The violator is normally given thirty (30) days to abate the violation, as Virginia law requires a 30-day appeal period.

If a violation is not abated or an appeal filed, a summons may be issued for criminal court. Violation of the Zoning Ordinance is a Class I misdemeanor, subject up to a \$2,500 fine and/or up to a year in jail.

City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance:

[www.richmondgov.com/
planninganddevelopmentreview/
ZoningDivision.aspx](http://www.richmondgov.com/planninganddevelopmentreview/ZoningDivision.aspx)



Zoning Violations: A - Z

A Quick Tour Through the City of Richmond's Zoning Requirements

The Zoning Administration Division is responsible for enforcing the Richmond Zoning Ordinance within the City limits. There are specific regulations that apply to residential, commercial and industrial properties. This brochure provides an overview of zoning regulations.



Department of Planning & Development Review Zoning Administration Division

900 E. Broad Street, Room 110

Richmond, VA 23219

(804) 646-6340

[www.richmondgov.com/
planninganddevelopmentreview/
ZoningDivision.aspx](http://www.richmondgov.com/planninganddevelopmentreview/ZoningDivision.aspx)

Zoning Administration Division enforcement duties specifically apply to:

1. Auto Service & Repair (junked vehicles & unlicensed vehicles)
2. Certificate of Zoning Compliance (CZC)
3. Commercial Vehicles
4. Definition of Family (Occupancy Limits)
5. Domestic Animals and Household Pets
6. Fence & Wall Height & Location
7. Illegal or Excessive Signage
8. Lodginghouses
9. Shipping Containers & PODs/Smartboxes
10. Trailers & Vendors (Food Carts)
11. Trash Collection Areas
12. Yard Setback Requirements

The following sections of the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance detail these issues.

1. Auto Service & Repair (For all vehicles, including junked vehicles & unlicensed vehicles) Servicing and minor repair of motor vehicles within enclosed service bays or stalls is a permitted use in the following zoning districts: B-2, B-3, M-1 & M-2.

General vehicle repair, body repair, sanding and painting that involves heavier, noisier and more intense repair work that must be within a completely enclosed building. These facilities are only permitted in the following zoning districts: B-3, M-1 & M-2.

Auto repair is not a permitted use in any residentially-zoned district. Be aware that **none** of the districts allow junked or dismantled vehicles unfit for operation on the streets or to be stored outside of an enclosed building. Additional requirements for auto-repair shops include on-site parking, landscaping and a Plan of Development (POD).

2. Certificate of Zoning Compliance (CZC)

City Code (Section 114-1020) requires that **ALL** properties within the City obtain a CZC. A CZC is a permit issued by the Zoning Administration Division certifying conformance with the Zoning Ordinance. A CZC is also required to obtain a City business

3. Commercial Vehicles

No vehicle that exceeds an empty container weight of 6,500 pounds, semi-trailer, or commercial vehicle shall be parked or stored outside of a completed enclosed building in any Residential zoning district.

4. Definition of Family

The City of Richmond regulates the number of people residing in a housing unit by defining "family" as follows:

- (a) • One (1) or more persons related by blood, marriage, legal guardianship or adoption, including foster children;
 - Not more than three (3) unrelated persons or a combination of related and unrelated persons;
 - Two (2) unrelated adults plus children related to one or both adults by blood, marriage, legal guardianship or adoption, or foster children.

- (b) Not more than eight (8) unrelated mentally ill, mentally retarded, or developmentally disabled persons occupying a single dwelling unit, exclusive of resident counselors or other staff persons for which the Virginia Department of Behavioral & Developmental Services is the licensing authority, except for persons currently using or addicted to a controlled substance.

- (c) Not more than eight (8) handicapped persons, as defined by the federal fair housing act, occupying a single dwelling unit, exclusive of resident counselors or other staff persons.

5. Domestic Animals and Pets

Commercial boarding of more than five (5) dogs, cats or other household pets over the age of four (4) months constitutes a kennel and can only be located within certain zoning districts. Also, keeping of domestic animals (i.e. - horses, goats or more than four (4) chickens) for non-commercial purposes are allowed provided that all pens, runs, out-buildings and other facilities for the housing or enclosure of the animals shall be not less than two-hundred feet (200') feet from all property lines. Up to four (4) female chickens are permitted in residential districts, provided no fenced area, pen or structure housing the chickens shall be located closer than fifteen feet (15') to any dwelling on an adjacent lot and is not allowed within any required yard.

6. Fence & Wall Height & Location

Fences and walls up to 6½ feet in height may be located within any required yard. However, in certain zoning districts (R-6, R-7 & R-63) they cannot exceed four feet (4') in height if they are located in the front yard.

No building permit is required for a fence, but it may require approval if located in a historic district.

Most walls, because they are structural, require a building permit. In addition, electric fences are permitted only in M-zones. Barbed and razor-wire fences are also regulated.

7. Illegal or Excessive Signage

Each zoning district within the City has specific regulations regarding the type, number, location and size of signs.

There are two categories of signs: permanent and temporary. In addition, there are several permanent sign types with varying methods of installation, including: wall signs, projecting signs, suspended signs, awning and canopy signs and freestanding signs.

Many sign displays, though intended to be temporary, may not be permitted. These generally include sign displays attached to fences, walls or poles or other buildings or structures, which typically advertise tobacco or drink products.

8. Lodginghouse Definition

A building containing any number of lodging units (separate living quarters or rooms) with or without board that are not available for occupancy for periods of less than one week. Existence of any one or more of the following characteristics constitutes lodginghouse use:

- Separate entrance
- Separate rental agreements
- Locking mechanisms on doors to each lodging unit
- Common areas of the dwelling unit, such as the living room, family room or dining room, are being used as sleeping areas or are not available on an equal or common basis to all occupants.