

CITY OF SALEM LIEN FORGIVENESS PROGRAM

The City of Salem Lien Forgiveness Program is a limited duration program designed to incentivize property owners to voluntarily correct public nuisances, derelict structures, and other Property Maintenance Code violations on their properties. To achieve this, the City will forgive liens resulting from the monetary civil penalties or derelict structure fees imposed for violations of the City of Salem's Property Maintenance Code, and any associated penalties, fees and interest, if the Property Maintenance Code violations are fully corrected to the City Health Official's satisfaction during timelines established by the City under this program.

Monetary civil penalties and derelict structure fees are issued for violations of the Property Maintenance Code requirements established by the Salem Revised Code Chapter 50. The civil penalties and derelict structure fees are secured by liens and placed in the City Lien Docket. This occurs when property owners fail to correct the violations and pay the penalties by a certain date. Liens will accrue penalties, fees, and interest, if not timely paid.

Property owners who have already corrected the Property Maintenance Code violations, but who have not fully paid off the liens, penalties, fees, and interest, will also be eligible for forgiveness during the program. Representatives of the property owners with lawful authority over the property will also be eligible to apply for the program.

- **Background:** Property owners in Salem have received monetary penalties and fees for Property Maintenance Code Violations such as overgrown vegetation, trash accumulation, and derelict and unsafe structures. Unpaid, these penalties and derelict structure fees are filed as liens against properties and placed in the City Lien Docket where they accumulate additional penalties, fees, and interest, creating financial strain on owners and complicating property transactions.
- **Objective:** To encourage property owners to take active measures in addressing Property Maintenance Code violations, thereby improving community livability and safety.
 1. **Enhanced Public Safety:** Reduction of hazards associated with neglected properties.
 2. **Improved Aesthetics:** Cleaner neighborhoods that promote community pride and property values.
 3. **Increased Property Values:** Well-maintained properties contribute to overall neighborhood stability and attractiveness.

HOW IT WORKS

- Property owners who apply for the program and voluntarily correct all Property Maintenance Code violations on their property during the program period, and those who have already corrected the violations but have not paid in full the related liens, penalties, and interest, will be eligible for forgiveness of the liens and derelict structure fees, and associated penalties, fees, and interest.
- **Lien Forgiveness Program Eligibility Criteria & Process:**
 - Must be the property owner or their representative with lawful authority to act as their agent with respect to making decisions regarding the maintenance of the property (“Property Owner”).
 - Own a property with current civil penalty and/or derelict structure fee liens in the City Lien Docket resulting from violations of Salem Revised Code (SRC) Chapter 50, Property Maintenance Code, and/or associated penalties, fees, and interest.
 - Submit an application on a form approved by the City’s Health Officer.
 - Enter into an agreement with the City that all Property Maintenance Code violations on the property will be corrected to the satisfaction of the City’s Health Officer by June 30, 2026.
 - All actions taken to correct the Property Maintenance Code violations must be done in accordance with all applicable laws, ordinances, rules, regulations, licenses, and permits.
 - Only liens resulting from violations of SRC Chapter 50, Property Maintenance Code, and any associated penalties, fees, and interest, will be forgiven. Civil penalties imposed for the same violations which have not yet been reduced to liens will also be forgiven. Forgiveness will occur if all Property Maintenance Code violations are corrected to the satisfaction of the City’s Health Official prior to 5 p.m. on June 30, 2026, which is the end of the Lien Forgiveness Program period. All Property Maintenance Code violations on the property must be corrected to receive forgiveness, even if the violations were not part of a Correction Notice, Enforcement Order, Notice and Assessment of Civil Penalty, or other enforcement proceedings by the City.

- Penalties, fees, and interest will continue to accrue on liens, and new liens may be imposed, in accordance with City ordinances and policies during the time the Property Owner is participating in the Lien Forgiveness Program, and will only be forgiven upon the City's Health Officer's determination that all Property Maintenance Code violations have been corrected.
- The City Manager may agree to subordinate liens in the City's Lien Docket resulting from violations of SRC Chapter 50, and any associated penalties, fees, and interest, to facilitate the transfer of a property to a new property owner as long as the new property owner enters into an agreement to correct all Property Maintenance Code violations on the property during the program period.
- The City's Health Officer may forgive liens in the City's Lien Docket resulting from violations of SRC Chapter 50, and any associated penalties, fees, and interest, where the violations have been corrected to the satisfaction of the City's Health Officer prior to the establishment of the Lien Forgiveness Program. In this circumstance, an application to participate in the Lien Forgiveness Program is not required.
- The decisions of the City's Health Officer with respect to eligibility to participate in the Lien Forgiveness Program and whether the violations have been corrected may be appealed to the Director of the Community Planning and Development division ("Director"). Appeal procedures shall be in the manner and form established by the Director.

- **Program Timeline**

The City of Salem Lien Forgiveness Program begins on Monday, November 10, 2025, and ends on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, unless Council acts to continue the program.

Applications to participate in the Lien Forgiveness Program will be accepted until 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2026.