

VACANT LOT PROGRAM FAQ

WHAT IS THE VACANT LOT PROGRAM (VLP)?

On May 22, 2018, the City Council adopted Chapter 8.136 of the Sacramento City Code establishing the Vacant Lot Program (VLP) to prevent blight and ensure proper maintenance of these properties.

Council determined that there are vacant lots within the city that are undeveloped, poorly maintained, and open to the public by reason of the owner's failure to adequately secure and maintain their property. These lots are often overgrown with weeds; frequently damaged or destroyed by fire; and used by trespassers as places of habitation resulting in the accumulation of junk, debris, and human waste.

The VLP requirements:

1. Register their vacant undeveloped property annually with the City of Sacramento
2. Pay an annual program fee of \$65
3. Designate a local contact representative with full authority to act on behalf of the owner if the owner resides beyond 35 miles from Sacramento city hall

WHO IS REQUIRED TO REGISTER?

All persons that own a vacant undeveloped property in the City of Sacramento must register their vacant lot.

WHAT IS DEFINED AS A VACANT LOT?

Sacramento City Code section 8.136.020 defines "vacant lot" as any parcel of real property that is not improved with a completed permitted structure.

HOW DO I REGISTER MY VACANT LOT?

You can visit <https://www.citizenserve.com/Portal/PortalController> to register your vacant lot.

HOW MUCH IS THE REGISTRATION FEE AND HOW OFTEN MUST IT BE PAID?

The annual registration fee is \$65 and must be paid annually accompanied by a registration form.

WHAT HAPPENS IF A PROPERTY OWNER FAILS TO REGISTER THEIR VACANT LOT AND PAY THE ANNUAL FEE?

Property owners that fail to comply with requirements of the VLP are subject to administrative citations of up to \$25,000.

WHEN MUST A PROPERTY OWNER PROVIDE A LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE?

Property owners that live more than 35 miles from Sacramento city hall shall provide a local contact representative with full authority to act on behalf of the owner.

ARE THERE EXEMPTIONS TO THE VACANT LOT REGISTRATION AND ANNUAL FEE?

Yes, Sacramento City Code section 8.136.080 allows for a waiver of the vacant lot program fee required in section 8.136.030, **but the waiver does not waive the registration requirement.**

The waiver of the annual fee only applies if the property is not in violation of Chapter 8.136 and one of the following applies:

1. A structure is being constructed on the vacant lot under an active building permit
2. The vacant lot has a private community garden as defined in section 17.108.040 of the Sacramento City Code
3. The vacant lot is subject to a conservation easement, as defined in section 815.1 of the California Civil Code
4. The vacant lot has a parking lot as defined in section 17.108.170 of the Sacramento City Code
5. The vacant lot is being used for general use agriculture, as defined in section 17.108.020 of the Sacramento City Code
6. The vacant lot is located on a parcel that was created within the past 24 months pursuant to division VIII of title 17
7. The vacant lot is used as an extension of a primary parcel and meets all the following criteria:
 - a. The vacant lot abuts the primary parcel
 - b. The vacant lot and primary parcel have identical ownership
 - c. The primary parcel is not in violation of this code
8. There is an active Urban Agriculture Incentive Zone contract, pursuant to chapter 17.722, covering the vacant lot

HOW DO I QUALIFY FOR A WAIVER?

Upon registering your vacant lot, there is an option to request a waiver of the program fee. The request for the waiver will be reviewed to determine if it meets the qualifications provided above.

Click here to register your lot and request a waiver
<https://www.citizenserve.com/Portal/PortalController>

HOW OFTEN MUST I APPLY FOR A WAIVER?

The waiver is valid for only one year.

WHAT IS A NUISANCE VACANT LOT?

A vacant lot with two or more administrative orders including but not limited to administrative penalties and orders to abate imposed in the prior 24 months is considered a Nuisance Vacant Lot and subject to additional requirements and fees.

Nuisance vacant lots will remain designated as such until a community garden is installed upon the property or permitted construction of a residence/commercial building is completed upon the

property or the property has remained nuisance-free for a period of 24 or more consecutive months.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A LOT IS DEEMED A “NUISANCE VACANT LOT”?

The owner of the property is subject to monthly monitoring fees and must complete the following:

- The owner shall post a sign of a minimum size of 4 x 4 feet on the property with the local contact representative or the property owner’s phone number. The sign shall have lettering of not less than 6 inches high and must be clearly visible from the public right-of-way.

WHO SHOULD I CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTION REGARDING THE PROGRAM?

You may contact the Code Compliance Division at (916)808-7902 or by email at vacantlots@cityofsacramento.org.