



Regional Parks and Open Space

Citation Authority Program



County Code – Chapter 95

- May 24, 2022 – Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted changes to Washoe County Code Chapter 95.
- One of the changes was to add citation authority for enforcement officers, both Park Rangers and District Park Managers
- What has been happening since May of 2022?
 - Staff have been working closely with several internal Washoe County Departments to understand the current acceptable practices & have a review of all policies, procedures, and forms needed for the program.
 - This includes Regional Animal Services, Code Enforcement, WC District Attorney's Office, Office of the County Manager's Administrative Hearing Office



County Code – Chapter 95

- Our Park Ranger staff are part of the Park Ranger Association of California (PRAC) as there is a Nevada Chapter.
- Since BCC approval in May of 2022, they have been reaching out to other agencies who have citation authority, but are not peace officers.
- Important distinction which relates to training needs.



Training

- The issuing of citations by Park Rangers and District Managers will be considered a peripheral duty and not the focus of their duties.
- Park Rangers and District Managers have visitor contacts multiple times on a daily basis and that will continue.
- A solid set of policies and procedures to follow, along with extensive training will provide them the background they need to perform these new job duties to the best of their ability.



Training - Policies and Procedures

- The policies and procedures are as follows:
 - Visitor Safety and Resource Protection
 - Notice of Civil Penalty
 - Park Exclusion Policy
 - Use of Force Policy
 - Chemical Restraint Policy

Forms associated with the policies:

- Warning notice
- Notice of civil penalty
- AHO Administrative Order
- Misdemeanor Citation form
- DA Case Submission
- Park Exclusion Form
- Voluntary Statement Form



Training

- The following is a list of trainings taken or scheduled for each enforcement officer:
 - Basic First Aid
 - De-escalation tactics
 - Report Writing
 - Introduction to the Incident Command System (ICS)
 - OC Training (pepper spray)
 - Defensive Tactics
- Park Rangers and District Managers did ride alongs with RAS field staff and can continue to do that as needed.
- Four of our nine staff have attended Park Ranger Excellence School and we plan to have all attend in the next three years.



Fine schedule

- Washoe County Code Chapter 125 is for enforcement, remedies, and penalties
- Per WCC Chapter 125.170, there is clear direction that the fee schedule must be adopted by the Board of County Commissioners
- Since Parks has a fee schedule associated with park facility reservations and recreation programs, it is important to distinguish between a fee schedule and a fine schedule
- Per WCC Chapter 95.510 – civil penalties may be imposed in an amount no less than \$100 and no more than \$1000



Fine schedule

- The fine schedule illustrates that the fines double upon each successive infraction of the same violation, up to a third violation. This is within a 2-year period.
- For ease of use, each fine for each violation of the code is the same.
- First violation - \$200
- Second violation - \$400
- Third violation - \$800



Fine schedule

- Process:
 - Violator will pay fine, if within 30-day of the violation, 50% payment is to be considered paid in full.
 - If violator chooses to contest the civil penalty, they will request an administrative hearing through the administrative hearing office (AHO) within 30 calendar days of the notice of civil penalty (NCP). There is a fee associated with an administrative hearing, fees approved by the BCC.
 - Should the NCP fine not be paid, and no request for an administrative hearing is scheduled, the lack of action is considered an admission of liability and a waiver of any right to an administrative hearing. The fines then go into a collections process within Washoe County – a separate fee schedule approved by the BCC.
 - If collections is unsuccessful in collecting fines and fees, a lien can be placed on the property of the violator.



Fine schedule

- Goals:
 - To have all fines paid within the 30-day period.
 - These fines will be deposited into a separate cost center within Parks and Open Space Administration, created for the citation program.
 - If the violator requests an administrative hearing, all fines/fees will be deposited into a cost center associated with the administrative enforcement process through the Office of the County Manager.
 - Working with the Communications Team to inform park visitors of these upcoming changes.
 - Sandwich board signs at Regional Parks with QR code link to website
 - Short videos for website and social media posts
 - On-going messaging to keep the information relevant and out to the public



Overall program goals

- Maintain safe parks and provide resource protection for all to enjoy their public spaces.
- Minimize the use of additional resources such as WCSO and RAS.
- Provide warnings and maintain compliance with WCC Chapter 95 ordinances.
- As appropriate, keep citations in the civil process, so as not to not put more pressure on our court system.

Thank you!

Questions?

