

Seattle Fire Prevention Division

220 3rd Avenue S. Seattle, WA 98104-2608

Email: SFD_FMO_Compliance@seattle.gov



Nightlife Inspections, Safe Operating Practices, and Avoiding Violations

The Seattle Fire Department provides inspections of nightlife and event venues to promote an environment that is safe for employees and patrons. The Seattle Fire Department prefers to educate building owners and managers about fire code requirements and work to achieve voluntary compliance. In general, when we find violations, our inspectors issue a correction notice with information and a timeline for remedying the issue.

However, some violations pose a significant and immediate threat to life safety, and beginning January 1, 2020, SFD will write a citation at the time of inspection if our Fire Prevention officers observe the following:

- **Overcrowding** or admittance of any person beyond the approved capacity of a building, room, or space.
- **Exiting** Not maintaining reliability of means of egress (for example, blocked exits, pathways, doors).
- **Unsafe conditions** that involve illegal or improper occupancy or inadequate maintenance, or that are otherwise dangerous to human life or public welfare.

In addition, beginning January 1, 2020, the following violations will receive citations:

- **False alarms** Two or more preventable alarms in a quarter of a calendar year.
- **Failure to test and maintain fire protection systems** within the legally prescribed timelines.

Penalties The penalty for fire code citations is \$373 for the first violation and \$746 for each subsequent violation in a 12-month period, except citations for preventable alarms which have a penalty range depending on the number of preventable alarms transmitted.

Resources to Help You Avoid Violations The most important step you can take to avoid citations is to ensure your team of employees understands and does not allow overcrowding or blocked exiting. Additional information about fire safety inspections in nightlife venues and how to prepare for a successful inspection can be found in Client Assistance Memoranda on our website seattle.gov/fire:

- [#5032 "Fire Inspections for Clubs and Entertainment Establishments"](#)
- [#5062 "Nightclub Fire Safety Requirements"](#)
- [#5969 "Fire Safety Building Inspections"](#)
- [#5970 "Preventable Fire Alarms or 'False Alarms'"](#)

Appeals Citations may be appealed at a hearing in front of the City's Hearing Examiner, if an appeals hearing is requested by writing within 15 days of the date the citation was served.

For more information, please contact us at SFD_FMO_Compliance@seattle.gov. Thank you for your partnership with the Seattle Fire Department in helping to preserve lives and protect property for all who live, visit, and do business in Seattle.