# **ORDINANCE NO. 14-19**

# AN ORDINANCE RECODIFYING ARTICLE V RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION AND CERTIFICATION OF THE WEST LAFAYETTE CITY CODE

WHEREAS, the Indiana Supreme Court did, on the date of March 15, 2019, make a decision which impacts City of West Lafayette Rental Housing; and

WHEREAS, in order to ensure full compliance with such ruling and all other applicable laws, it is determined that West Lafayette City Code, Chapter 6, Article V - Rental Housing Inspection and Certification requires modification.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE that:

- I. Chapter 6, Article V of the West Lafayette City Code is hereby **DELETED IN ITS ENTIRETY** and replaced with the language attached as Exhibit A hereto.
- II. Chapter 2, Article I, Section 2-6 Schedule of Fines of the West Lafayette City Code shall be amended by deletion and insertion to list the items below which pertain to Article V Rental Housing Inspection and Registration and its associated fines. In all other respects, the Schedule of Fines is unamended.

6-210	Submitting false or incomplete property owner registration pursuant to section 6-193	\$500.00 (1st); \$2,500.00 (subsequent)
	Submitting incorrect occupancy affidavit pursuant to section 6-195	\$1,000.00 (1st); \$2,500.00 (subsequent)
	Renting without inspection and occupancy verification pursuant to section 6-193	\$250.00 (1st); \$1,000.00 (subsequent)
	Failure to timely sign or submit a complete occupancy affidavit pursuant to section 6-195(c)	\$100.00
	Failure to post/display inspection and occupancy verification pursuant to section 6-198(c)	\$200.00 (1st); \$1,000.00 (subsequent)
	Violation of rental occupancy rules under section 6-198(d)	\$200.00 (1st); \$2,500.00 (subsequent)
	General rental housing chapter violation (not otherwise specified)	\$100.00

III. Chapter 12, Article I, Section 12-1 Table of Fees of the West Lafayette City Code shall be amended by deletion and insertion to list the items below which pertain to Article V Rental Housing Inspection and Registration and its associated fees. In all other respects, the Table of Fees is unamended.

6-197(B)(1)	-197(B)(1) Rental inspection—single-family unit (Category 1)			
6-197(B)(2)	Rental inspection—purpose built multi-unit housing/duplex (Category 3)	\$48.00 per bedroom		

6-197(B)(3)	Rental inspection—converted housing (Category 4)	\$225.00
6-197(B)(4)	Rental inspection—condo (Category 5)	\$48.00 per bedroom
6-197(B)(5)	Annual rental registration fee	\$5.00
6-197(B)(6)	First reinspection of rental property	No charge
6-197(B)(6)	Subsequent reinspection of rental property	\$100.00
6-197(B)(6)	Owner/Agent fails to appear for inspection	\$100.00
6-207	Transfer of inspection and occupancy verification to new owner	\$5.00

INTRODUCED ON FIRST READING ON THE \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_ ANI 2019.

MOTION TO ADOPT MADE BY COUNCILOR , AND SECONDED BY COUNCILOR

DULY ORDAINED, PASSED, AND ADOPTED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE, INDIANA, ON THE DAY OF \_, 2019, HAVING BEEN PASSED BY A VOTE OF 🕙 IN FAVOR 0 OPPOSED, THE ROLL CALL VOTE BEING: AND

	AYE	NAY	ABSENT	ABSTAIN
Bunder				
DeBoer	-			1
Dietrich	~			
Jones	-			
Keen				
Leverenz	-			
Sanders			-	
Thomas	-			
Wang	-			

Peter Bunder, Presiding Officer

Attest:

Sana G. Booker, Clerk

PRESENTED BY ME TO THE MAYOR OF THE CITY OF WEST LAFAYETTE, INDI ON THE *L* DAY OF , 2019.

ina G. Booker, Clerk

THIS ORDINANCE APPROVED AND SIGNED BY ME ON THE \_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_, 2019. John R. Dennis, Mayor Attest:

Sana G. Booker, Clerk



# ARTICLE V. - RENTAL HOUSING INSPECTION AND REGISTRATION

# Sec. 6-191. - Legislative finding and purpose.

- (a) It is hereby declared that the purpose of the ordinance codified in this Article is to protect the health and safety of the people and to promote the public welfare by requiring periodic systematic inspection and registration of all rental housing now in existence or hereafter created or constructed in the city.
- (b) The common council did, under Resolution No. 19-76, mandate a systematic inspection program of housing-property maintenance code enforcement and that program began in August of 1976 and has been in continuing operation from that time.
- (c) It is hereby found that there exist and may in the future exist within the city units of rental housing which, by reason of their operation, use or occupancy affect or are likely to affect adversely the public health (including the physical, mental and social well-being of persons and families), safety and general welfare.
- (d) The program of inspection and registration of rental housing established by Ordinance No. 14-78 has improved the maintenance and appearance of rental housing property in the city and the level of compliance with the city's housing code, thereby promoting the health and safety of the residents of rental housing, the appearance of the city's residential neighborhood, and the preservation of residential property values throughout the city to the benefit of all its citizens.
- (e) It appears that there continue to be widespread problems with the over-occupancy of rental housing, especially that rental housing consisting of single-family houses converted to rental housing and that this over-occupancy adversely impacts the city's residential neighborhoods through overcrowding, excessive traffic, demand for too much parking, noise, various nuisances and the diminution of the public welfare of the city's existing residential neighborhoods.

Based upon the information and experience of the program administrator, the common council finds that there is a significant likelihood of noncompliance of rental housing with the various city, county and state codes in the following circumstances:

- (1) Registration for new rental housing;
- (2) Previous inspection finding any violation that has not been reinspected; or
- (3) After a period of one year from the previous inspection and that there is reasonable cause for a warrant to conduct an inspection under any of these circumstances.

(Prior Code, § 117.01; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-192. - Definitions.

(a) The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this Article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

*Converted housing* means any single-family dwelling physically changed to use as two or more units or a duplex physically changed to use as three or more units.

Duplex means a structure purpose built as two dwelling units.

*Dwelling unit* means the abode of a family; a single unit providing complete, independent facilities for the exclusive use of the household, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.

Family means one or more persons all related by blood, marriage or adoption.

*Guest* means a person who temporarily resides (cumulatively no more than eight 24-hour days per calendar month) in a dwelling unit and does not utilize the unit as an address for any purpose.

Housing property maintenance code means the International Property Maintenance Code, 2018 edition, adopted by the city.

*Initial inspection* means a periodic systematic inspection of a rental property, according to the district and schedule, for the purpose of determining compliance with the housing-property maintenance code.

*Initial rental conversion* means the change of use of a single-family dwelling from owner occupied to use as a Category 1 rental unit.

Inspection and occupancy verification means a form prescribed by the City which contains information concerning the rental unit or rental unit community's most recent inspection and occupancy.

*Maximum allowable occupancy* means the maximum number of unrelated persons permitted to occupy a dwelling unit, determined under the housing-property maintenance code or the county unified zoning ordinance (Ordinance No. 32-97), whichever is less.

Occupant means any individual living or sleeping in a dwelling unit, other than a guest, having possession of a space within a dwelling unit or using the property as a legal address for any purpose.

*Owner's agent* means a person or entity that acts as property manager for the owner, and can work with the program administrator to achieve full compliance of this Article.

*Person* includes a corporation, firm, partnership, association, organization or any group acting as a unit, as well as a natural person. References in the masculine gender include the feminine and the neuter, in the present tense include the future, and the singular includes the plural.

*Professional real estate manager* means a person who by the education, training, or experience is qualified to perform the functions necessary to manage rental units.

*Program administrator* means the person designated by the mayor to perform the duties as such under this chapter.

*Purpose-built multi-unit housing* means any building that was originally built for the purpose of multiunit (three or more units) housing.

R-2 district means an R-2, R-2U or PD-R zoning district allowing single-family or two-family residences.

*Registration* means an annual filing certifying that a rental unit or rental unit community will be rented within the jurisdictional limits of the City and in compliance with this Article.

*Reinspection* means an inspection of rental property to determine the owner's correction of code deficiencies cited during the initial inspection. Provisions for the notification of code deficiencies and time period for code compliance is made under section 6-203.

*Rental unit* is a term denoting any room, dwelling unit, rooming unit or portion thereof let or intended to be let to a family or person for compensation (which may include money or services and includes the sharing of expenses).

*Rooming unit* means a room or suite of rooms forming a single, separate, habitable unit to be used for living, or for living and sleeping, but not for cooking and eating purposes.

*Rental unit community* means one (1) or more parcels of contiguous real property upon which are located one (1) or more structures containing rental units, if: (1) the combined total of all rental units in all of the structures is five (5) or more rental units; and (2) the rental units are not occupied solely by the owner or the owner's family.

Structure means that which is built or constructed and shall have a common roof.

(b) All other terms that are not defined in this Article shall have the meanings assigned to them, in the following order, by the city housing and property maintenance code, the unified zoning ordinance or common usage.

(Prior Code, § 117.02; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-193. - Rental registration.

It shall be a violation of this Article for any person to allow another person to occupy rental housing without a registration and a valid inspection and occupancy verification for such rental housing at the specific location set forth thereon, except in the following circumstances:

- (1) One- and two-family dwelling sales. The sale of any one- or two-family dwelling intended for occupancy by the owner or owners of record which are to be occupied by the seller under a rental agreement for a period of less than 90 days following closing. The sale of any one- or two-family dwelling intended for occupancy under a lease with option to purchase agreement, life estate agreement or any other form of conditional sale agreement, shall require registration if legal or equitable ownership is not transferred in its entirety within 90 days of execution of the conditional sales agreement.
- (2) Exchange student, visiting clergy, medical caregiver, child care. For an owner-occupied dwelling, additional occupancy by exchange students placed through a recognized education exchange student program, one visiting clergy or clerical aide to a local church or congregation, or one person to provide child care or medically prescribed care.
- (3) Estate representative. Occupancy by a personal representative, trustee, or guardian of the estate and their family where the dwelling was owner-occupied for the last year prior to the owner's death, and the occupancy does not exceed two years from the date of death of the owner by notifying the code enforcement department, on a form provided by the department, in writing, which notice includes the owner's name, date of death, and name of the person occupying the premises.

(Prior Code, § 117.03; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

## Sec. 6-194. – [Reserved]

(Prior Code, § 117.04; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-195. - Occupancy affidavit.

- (a) Any occupancy affidavit required under this Article shall be executed by the owner or agent in a form provided by the program administrator. The occupancy affidavit must include the names of each occupant and identify the familial relationships, if any, among the occupants. The owner or agent shall execute the occupancy affidavit based upon personal knowledge and after diligent inquiry with respect to the information contained therein. Each occupant shall also sign the occupancy affidavit and affirm that information contained therein is true.
- (b) For any building located in an R-3W or R-4W zone or in a PD-R permitting only multi-unit residential structures, the requirement to execute an occupancy affidavit is waived unless there has been a complaint about occupancy concerning the building. For any owner or owner's agent of more than six units in one building, the program administrator may waive the requirement of such a statement for all units and may require such statement only for certain units, being not less than two units, selected by the program administrator.
- (c) Each applicant shall submit an updated occupancy affidavit and each occupant shall sign the same, as set forth above, for each unit located in a single-family district and R-2 district not less than annually and upon any change in occupants. If there is no change since the previously filed occupancy affidavit, the owner may indicate "no change" in place of the occupants' names and need not include occupant signatures. The updated occupancy affidavit shall be delivered to the program administrator's office within 15 calendar days.

(Prior Code, § 117.05; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-196. - Categories of rental units.

All rental units shall be divided into the following categories for the purposes of determining the term of the rental registration and the registration fees to be charged:

- (1) Category 1 is any occupancy other than by the owner of a single-family dwelling unit.
- (2) (Category 2 is intentionally omitted.)
- (3) Category 3 is purpose-built, multi-unit housing or purpose-built duplex.
- (4) Category 4 is converted housing.
- (5) Category 5 is any occupancy of a condominium unit.

(Prior Code, § 117.06; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-197. – Rental inspection terms.

All rental units and rental unit communities within West Lafayette must have current and valid inspections as described below. Inspections must either comply with (A) the terms set out for rental inspections under Indiana law, pursuant to Indiana Code § 36-1-20-4.1 (as may be amended from time to time) or (B) an inspection performed by West Lafayette.

#### (A) Indiana inspection requirements -

- (1) The rental unit must be managed by, or part of a rental unit community that is managed by, a professional real estate manager.
- (2) Within the last twelve (12) months, the rental unit or rental unit community must have been inspected by:
  - a. United States Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, or another federal or state agency;
  - b. a financial institution or insurance company authorized to do business in Indiana; or
  - c. By an inspector who:
    - i. is a registered architect;
    - ii. is a professional engineer; or
    - iii. satisfies the qualifications for an inspector of rental units on file with the West Lafayette Building Commissioner; and
    - iv. is not an employee of the owner or landlord.
- (3) A written inspection report from the last twelve (12) months must be filed with the West Lafayette Building Department and verify that the rental unit or rental unit community is safe and habitable with respect to:
  - a. electrical supply and electrical systems;
  - b. plumbing and plumbing systems;

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- c. water supply, including hot water;
- d. heating, ventilation, and air conditioning equipment and systems;
- e. bathroom and toilet facilities;
- f. doors, windows, stairways, and hallways;
- g. functioning smoke detectors; and
- h. the structure in which a rental unit is located.
- (4) It shall be the duty of the property owner or owner's agent to file an updated verified inspection report with the West Lafayette Building Department at or before the expiration of each twelve (12) month inspection period. Upon receipt of the verified inspection report, the program administrator shall issue an inspection and occupancy verification to the property owner or owner's agent.

# (B) Inspection performed by West Lafayette -

- (1) For Category 1, the fee shall be in an amount established by the city and the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of one year. Provided that if the property meets the following conditions, the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of two years:
  - a. The registration of rental property is filed in a timely manner and in response to the first notice;
  - b. All applicable fees are paid on time and in response to the first notice;
  - c. The property owner or owner's agent for all existing (or established) rental property must have a history of compliance with all aspects of the inspection program and this Article in the two previous inspection rounds;
  - d. The program administrator does not find the rental property to be in violation of the housing property maintenance code or any other applicable codes, standards or regulations of the city, the county or the state.
- (2) For Category 3, the fee shall be in an amount established by the city and the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of two years. Provided that if the property meets the following conditions, the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of four years:
  - a. The registration of rental property is filed in a timely manner and in response to the first notice;
  - b. All applicable fees are paid on time and in response to the first notice;
  - c. The property owner or owner's agent for all existing (or established) rental property must have a history of compliance with all aspects of the inspection program and this Article in the two previous inspection rounds;
  - d. The program administrator does not find the rental property to be in violation of the housing property maintenance code or any other applicable codes, standards or regulations of the city, the county or the state;

- e. The property has maintenance personnel readily available and an established maintenance and renovation program that provides for the routine inspection and maintenance and the long-term upgrades of the units, building and property.
- (3) For Category 4, the fee shall be in an amount established by the city and the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of one year. Provided that if the property meets the following conditions, the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of two years:
  - a. The registration of rental property is filed in a timely manner and in response to the first notice;
  - b. All applicable fees are paid on time and in response to the first notice;
  - The property owner or owner's agent for all existing (or established) rental property must have a history of compliance with all aspects of the inspection program and this Article in the two previous inspection rounds;
  - d. The program administrator does not find the rental property to be in violation of the housing property maintenance code or any other applicable codes, standards or regulations of the city, the county or the state.
- (4) For Category 5, the fee shall be in an amount established by the city and the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of two years. Provided that if the property meets the following conditions, the rental inspection shall be valid for a term of four years:
  - a. The registration of rental property is filed in a timely manner and in response to the first notice;
  - b. All applicable fees are paid on time and in response to the first notice;
  - c. The property owner or owner's agent for all existing (or established) rental property must have a history of compliance with all aspects of the inspection program and this Article in the two previous inspection rounds;
  - d. The program administrator does not find the rental property to be in violation of the housing property maintenance code or any other applicable codes, standards or regulations of the city, the county or the state;
  - e. The property has maintenance personnel readily available and an established maintenance and renovation program that provides for the routine inspection, maintenance, and long-term upgrades of the units, buildings, and property.
- (5) Rental registration fee is an amount established by the city.
- (6) For any reinspection after the first reinspection, there shall be an additional fee in an amount established by the city. If the owner or agent fails to attend any scheduled inspection, there shall be an additional fee in an amount established by the city for each such failure to appear.
- (7) It is the goal of the common council that the rental registration and housing inspection program be self-supporting. Each two years after adoption of this Article, the program administrator shall review the revenue from fees and fines and evaluate the expenses of administering the rental registration and housing inspection program. The program

administrator shall recommend to the common council any revisions to the schedule of fees and fines to maintain the goal of a self-supporting program and to minimize the fees on owners who have a history of full compliance with the rental registration and housing inspection program. The program administrator shall also recommend to the common council any other revisions of this Article.

(Prior Code, § 117.07; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 03-09; Ord. No. 16-18)

# Sec. 6-198. - Inspection and occupancy verification, display and removal; monitoring dwelling occupancy.

- (a) The rental inspection and occupancy verification shall be for the stated term of the rental inspection but in no event shall the rental inspection expire before 30 days after the inspection of the rental property.
- (b) For all units with a properly completed inspection, the city shall issue an inspection and occupancy verification stating the unit's registration, date of inspection expiration and allowable occupancy. The property owner and/or agent must prominently and continuously display the inspection and occupancy verification, or legible copy thereof at the registered property, for the benefit of the occupants.
- (c) It shall be a violation of this Article to remove the inspection and occupancy verification or for the owner and/or agent to fail to continuously display the inspection and occupancy verification as provided in subsection (b) of this section at the registered property.
- (d) It shall be the continuing duty of the owner and/or owner's agent to personally monitor the occupancy of each dwelling unit and to ensure that it is not occupied by more persons than the maximum allowed. It shall be a violation of this Article by the occupants to exceed the maximum allowable occupancy. It shall be a violation of this Article by the owner or agent to:
  - (1) Exceed the allowable occupancy;
  - (2) Hold the dwelling unit out for occupancy by more than the maximum allowable occupancy;
  - (3) Permit or allow the dwelling unit to be occupied by more persons than the maximum allowable occupancy; or
  - (4) Fail to personally monitor the occupancy of each dwelling unit, which monitoring shall include the following measures, as well as other that are reasonable and prudent under the particular circumstances:
    - a. Filing an occupancy affidavit not less than annually and updating the occupancy affidavit upon any change in occupants;
    - b. Displaying the inspection and occupancy verification required under this Article;
    - c. Not advertising a rental price per bedroom for more bedrooms than the legally permitted number of occupants;
    - Monitoring the cars regularly parked at the property for possible additional occupants;
    - e. Not receiving payments of deposit or rent from persons other than the occupants listed in the occupancy affidavit or from other person who are known to be non-occupants who paid on behalf of a known occupant;

- f. Monitoring the names posted at the entry or on any mailbox or mail slot; and
- g. Monitoring the number of occupants observable by an employee or agent of the owner/agent in the event of entry for repairs, showing the property to prospective tenants/buyers or other entry for any purpose.

(Prior Code, § 117.08; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 03-09; Ord. No. 16-18)

Sec. 6-199. – [Reserved] Sec. 6-200. – [Reserved] Sec. 6-201. – [Reserved]

(Prior Code, § 117.10; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-202. - Inspections.

It shall be the duty of the property owner or owner's agent to notify the Program Administrator of the building inspection method that will be used to renew the inspection and occupancy verification at least 60 days prior to the expiration of the rental inspection. In the registration, the owner or owner's agent shall indicate whether consent is granted to inspect the rental property.

The city may inspect a rental unit, if the city (1) has reason to believe; or (2) receives a complaint; that the rental unit does not comply with applicable code requirements. In cases where a valid inspection report is on file pursuant to Indiana law, the city shall not charge a fee for an inspection under this subsection. However, if the inspection of a rental unit reveals a violation of applicable code requirements, the owner of the rental unit may be fined for violation of any applicable code requirements.

(Prior Code, § 117.12; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-203. - Notification of deficiencies to owner.

In the event any inspection reveals a violation of this chapter, the program administrator shall give reasonable notice from the date of the inspection, notify the owner or owner's agent of the subject property of any deficiency and shall apprise and fix a time within which all code compliance and corrections shall be made. Any person so notified shall have the right of appeal to the housing appeals board, as provided in the ordinances adopted and amended by the city.

(Prior Code, § 117.13; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-204. - Remedy of violations prior to renting or leasing.

If any rental unit within a building is found to be deficient with respect to the codes cited herein, the subject unit shall not be rented by the owner or owner's agent until the code violations are remedied in total and an inspection and occupancy verification has been issued by the program administrator. Rental of a unit with an uncured violation shall be a separate and distinct offense for each day that a violation occurs or continues. Following notice and reasonable opportunity to cure, the City may bring action in the circuit or superior courts of the county or state for mandatory and injunctive relief in the enforcement of and to secure compliance with any applicable code requirement, and any such action for mandatory or injunctive relief may be joined with an action to recover the fees and penalties provided for in this Code.

(Prior Code, § 117.14; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

Sec. 6-205. - Owner's agent.

If no owner of the property resides in the county or an adjoining county, the owner must retain and keep at all times an agent responsible for the management of the property, and who is also authorized to receive notices from and work with the program administrator for purposes of this Article. The owner's agent shall reside or maintain a permanent office within the county or an adjoining county.

(Prior Code, § 117.15; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

## Sec. 6-206. - Change of address.

Within ten days of any change of address of the owner or any agent, such owner or agent shall notify the program administrator in writing.

(Prior Code, § 117.16; Ord. No. 1-05)

### Sec. 6-207. - Transfer of an inspection and occupancy verification.

An inspection and occupancy verification is issued to an owner of a rental unit and allows the owner to lease the rental unit in conformance with the inspection and occupancy verification. An inspection and occupancy verification may be transferred to a new owner, except as prohibited in this section, by the owner filing the required owner information and agent information, if applicable, and payment of a fee in an amount established by the city. This includes transfers of ownership between corporations or other legal entities even where there is identical ownership interest in the acquiring legal entity as in the previous legal entity.

(Prior Code, § 117.17; Ord. No. 1-05)

## Sec. 6-208. - Exterior maintenance responsibility.

The owner is responsible for snow removal on the public sidewalk, if any, for keeping the exterior clean and free from trash and all yard maintenance of their rental properties. The owner is responsible for providing proper trash receptacles as required by the city.

(Prior Code, § 117.18; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-209. - Truth in advertising.

- (a) No owner or owner's agent of a specific rental unit shall fail to clearly state in any advertisement, sign, other form of written or verbal representation, the occupancy limits of the rental unit.
- (b) No lessee of a rental unit advertising for sublease shall fail to clearly state in an advertisement, sign or other form of written or verbal representation, the occupancy limits of the rental unit.

(Prior Code, § 117.19; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 16-18)

### Sec. 6-210. - Violation; fine.

Violation of this Article shall subject the violator to a fine in an amount established by the city.

(Prior Code, § 117.20; Ord. No. 1-05; Ord. No. 03-09; Ord. No. 16-18)

# Secs. 6-211-6-228. - Reserved.