

1 [Building Code - Registration of Vacant/Abandoned Buildings; Maintenance and Security  
Requirements; Annual Fee and Penalties for Violation.]

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3 **Ordinance amending the San Francisco Building Code by adding Section 103A.4 to**  
4 **require the owner of a vacant or abandoned building to register the building with the**  
5 **Department of Building Inspection, require the owner to maintain the grounds and the**  
6 **exterior and interior of the building secured and in good condition, and provide that a**  
7 **property in violation of the requirements is a public nuisance; and by amending**  
8 **Section 110, Table 1A-J to establish an annual registration fee; adopting environmental**  
9 **and other findings.**

10 NOTE: Additions are *single-underline italics Times New Roman*;  
11 deletions are *strike-through italics Times New Roman*.  
12 Board amendment additions are double-underlined;  
Board amendment deletions are ~~strike-through normal~~.

13 Be it ordained by the People of the City and County of San Francisco:

14 Section 1. Findings.

15 (a) Environmental Findings. The Planning Department has determined that the  
16 actions contemplated in this Ordinance are in compliance with the California Environmental  
17 Quality Act (California Public Resources Code sections 21000 et seq.). Said determination is  
18 on file with the Clerk of the Board of Supervisors in File No. \_\_\_\_\_ and is  
19 incorporated herein by reference.

20 (b) General Findings.

21 (1) Abandoned or vacant buildings are a major cause and source of blight in both  
22 residential and nonresidential neighborhoods, especially when the owner of the property fails  
23 to actively maintain and manage it.

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1 (2) Boarded buildings, substandard or unkempt properties, and long-term vacancies  
2 discourage economic development, lower property values or retard their appreciation, and  
3 constitute a public nuisance.

4 (3) Vacant properties are often overgrown with weeds and other vegetation, used  
5 as a dumping ground for debris, toxic or other hazardous substances, and used drug needles.  
6 Blighted vacant properties also attract vagrants, gang members, and other criminal elements  
7 as prime locations to conduct their illegal activities.

8 (4) When the owner of a vacant or abandoned building allows the building to  
9 deteriorate to such an extent that the building must be demolished, persons and neighboring  
10 properties could be endangered. In these circumstances, the owner of the building can often  
11 evade Planning Code notice and hearing procedures that would otherwise be required, and  
12 the neighborhood and the City as a whole lose an important and sometimes historically  
13 significant resource.

14 Section 2. The San Francisco Building Code is hereby amended by adding Section  
15 103A.4, to read as follows:

16 103A.4. Vacant or Abandoned Buildings – Annual registration; registration fee; maintenance  
17 and security requirements.

18 103A.4.1. Definition. A building shall be defined as a vacant or abandoned if it (1) is  
19 unoccupied and unsecured; or (2) is unoccupied and secured by boarding or other similar means; or  
20 (3) is unoccupied and unsafe as defined in Section 102 of this Code; or (4) is unoccupied and has  
21 multiple code violations; or (5) has been unoccupied for over 30 days. A building which is partially  
22 unoccupied and has been cited for blight under Chapter 80 of the San Francisco Administrative Code,  
23 shall also be deemed a vacant or abandoned building that is subject to this Section.

24 For purposes of this Section 103A.4, a building shall not be considered vacant or abandoned if:  
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1           (1) There is a valid building permit for repair, rehabilitation, or construction of a building  
2 on the parcel and the owner is progressing diligently to complete the repair, rehabilitation, or  
3 construction within one year from the date the initial permit was issued; or

4           (2) The building complies with all codes, does not contribute to blight as defined in Chapter  
5 80 of the San Francisco Administrative Code, is ready for occupancy, and is actively being offered for  
6 sale, lease, or rent.

7           103A.4.2. Property owner's obligation to register a vacant or abandoned building. The owner  
8 of a building defined as vacant or abandoned under Section 103A.4.1 shall register that building with  
9 the Department 30 days after it has become vacant or abandoned on a form provided by the  
10 Department. The form shall describe the methods by which the owner has secured the property against  
11 unauthorized entry, declare any future plans for the property, state whether or not there is fire and  
12 liability insurance coverage, and provide such other information as the Department may require. A  
13 registration fee shall be paid at the time of registration and annually thereafter. See Section 110A,  
14 Table 1A-J for applicable fee.

15           103A.4.3. Notice. Whenever the Director has probable cause to believe, based upon an  
16 inspection, complaint, or report from another agency of the City and County of San Francisco or other  
17 governmental agency, that a building is vacant or abandoned and it has not been registered as required  
18 by this Section 103A.4, the Director shall serve the owner of record, as shown on the Assessor's  
19 Records, or authorized agent with a written notice requiring the owner to register the building with the  
20 Department as vacant or abandoned and pay the registration fee within the period of time specified in  
21 the notice, which shall be no greater than 30 days.

22           103A.4.4. Sign posting. The owner of record of the vacant or abandoned building is required  
23 to post a sign at the front of the building, in a conspicuous location protected from the weather, that  
24 provides the current name, address, and phone number of the owner of record ~~or an~~ and authorized  
25 agent if different from the owner. If a notice of default or foreclosure has been recorded for the

1 property, the lender's name, address, and telephone number must also be provided. The sign shall be  
2 no smaller than 8 1/2 inches by 11 inches.

3 103A.4.5. Maintenance and security requirements. The following maintenance and security  
4 requirements shall apply to a vacant or abandoned building. The Director has the discretion to modify  
5 these requirements in the case of a partially vacant building, and to modify or waive some or all of  
6 these requirements in the case of a building that has been damaged by fire, a natural disaster, or other  
7 calamity.

8 104A.4.5.1. Maintenance of property - exterior. The property owner shall actively maintain  
9 and monitor the exterior of the building and the grounds so that they remain in continuing compliance  
10 with all applicable codes and regulations, and do not contribute to and are not likely to contribute to  
11 blight as defined in Chapter 80 of the Administrative Code. Active maintenance and monitoring shall  
12 include, but not be limited to:

13 (1) Maintenance of landscaping and plant materials in good condition;

14 (2) Regular removal of all exterior trash, debris, and graffiti;.

15 (3) Maintenance of the exterior of the building in a good condition that is structurally safe  
16 and preserves the physical integrity of the structure. including but not limited to paint and finishes,  
17 foundation, roof, chimneys, flues, gutters, downspouts, scuppers, flashing, skylights, windows, exterior  
18 stairs and decks;

19 (4) Prevention of criminal activity on the premises and trespass by unauthorized persons;

20 and

21 (5) Turning off all utilities that are not necessary for the upkeep and maintenance of the  
22 building.

23 103A.4.5.2. Maintenance of property – interior. The property owner shall preserve the interior  
24 of the building from damage by the elements or plumbing leaks, and keep it free from accumulation of  
25 garbage and other debris, and from infestation by rodents, insects, or other pests.

1           103A.4.5.3. Security. The building shall be secured against unauthorized entry. The methods  
2 of security shall be as approved by the Director, who shall take into consideration whether the property  
3 has been cited for nuisance activities or criminal conduct by another department of the City and  
4 County of San Francisco or other government agency.

5           103A.4.6. Insurance. The owner of record shall maintain whatever fire and liability insurance  
6 coverage the Director determines is necessary. Any insurance policy shall require notice to the  
7 Department in the event of cancellation of insurance or a reduction in coverage.

8           104A.4.7. Violation a public nuisance; enforcement. A property in violation of the provisions  
9 of this section is deemed to be a public nuisance and subject to enforcement by the Department and  
10 penalties under Section 102A and 103A of this Code or under other applicable sections of the San  
11 Francisco Municipal Code.

12           Section 3. The San Francisco Building Code is hereby amended by amending Section  
13 110, Table 1A-J, to read as follows:

14 TABLE 1A-J – MISCELLANEOUS FEES

15 1. Central Permit Bureau Processing Fee for	Standard Administrative Hourly Rate –
16     Miscellaneous Permits from other disciplines	Minimum One-Half Hour
17 2. Building numbers (each entrance)	\$210.00
18 3. Extension of time: application cancellation and	
19     permit expiration:	
20     Each application extension (in plan review)	\$160.00 plus 20% of All Plan Review
21	Fees
22     Each permit extension	\$160.00 plus 10% of all Permit
23	Issuance Fees
24 4. Product approvals	
25     General approval – initial or reinstatement	Standard Hourly Plan Review Rate –

1		Minimum Three Hours
2	General approval – modification or revision	Standard Hourly Plan Review Rate –
3		Minimum Three Hours
4	General approval – biannual renewal	Standard Hourly Plan Review Rate –
5		Minimum Three Hours
6	<u>5. Vacant building –initial and annual registration fee</u>	<u>Standard Inspection Hourly Rate –</u>
7		<u>Minimum Six Hours</u>

8           Section 4. Statement of General Welfare. In undertaking the enforcement of this  
9 ordinance, the City is assuming an undertaking only to promote the general welfare. It is not  
10 assuming, or is it imposing on its officers and employees, an obligation for breach of which it  
11 is liable in money damages to any person who claims that such breach proximately caused  
12 injury.

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14 APPROVED AS TO FORM:  
15 DENNIS J. HERRERA, City Attorney

16 By: \_\_\_\_\_  
17       JUDITH A. BOYAJIAN  
18       Deputy City Attorney

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