

CHAPTER 10: GENERAL PROVISIONS

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§ 10.01 Title of Code

The ordinances embraced in this and the following chapters shall constitute and be designated the "Code of Ordinances, City of Overton, Texas", and may be so cited. However, such Code may also be cited as the "Code of Ordinances" of Overton or "Overton Code."

§ 10.02 Interpretation

Unless otherwise expressed or by law or implication required, the same rules of construction, definition, and application shall govern the interpretation of this Code as those governing the interpretation of state law.

§ 10.03 Application to Future Ordinances

All provisions of this chapter shall apply to ordinances hereafter amending or supplementing this Code unless otherwise specifically provided.

§ 10.04 Definitions and Rules of Construction

In the construction of this Code and of all ordinances and resolutions passed by the City Council, the following rules shall be observed, unless such construction would be inconsistent with the manifest intent of the City Council:

Acts by Assistant - When a statute or ordinance requires an act to be done which, by law, an agent or deputy may do as the principal, such requisition shall be satisfied by the performance of such act by an authorized agent or deputy.

Chapter - Whenever the words "this ordinance", "article", "section", "subsection", "provision", or "paragraph" are used, they shall pertain to the chapter or section of this Code of Ordinances in which they are found unless specifically and clearly in reference to a separate chapter or section.

City - The word "City" shall mean the City of Overton, State of Texas.

City Council - Whenever the words "City Council", "the council", "board of aldermen", or "governing body" are used, they shall mean the City Council of Overton, Texas.

Code - The words "this Code" shall mean the Code of Ordinances of the City of Overton as designated in § 10.01 above.

Computation of Time - Whenever a notice is required to be given or an act to be done a certain length of time before any proceeding, the day on which such notice is given or such act is done shall not be counted and the date on which such proceeding is to occur shall be counted.

County - The words "county," "the county" or "this county" shall mean Rusk/Smith County, Texas.

Gender - Throughout this Code, words used expressing masculine gender shall be construed to include the feminine.

Month - The word "month" shall mean a calendar month, unless otherwise expressed.

Number - Any word importing the singular number shall include the plural and any word importing the plural number shall include the singular.

Official Time - The official time, as established by applicable state and federal law, shall be the official time for the transaction of all municipal business.

Owner - The word "owner," applied to a building or land shall include any part owner, joint owner, tenant in common, tenant in partnership, joint tenant, or tenant by the entirety, of the whole, or of a part of such building or land.

Person - Whenever the word "person" or its plural form is used in this Code it shall mean any person, firm, corporation, partnership, association of persons, owner, agent, lessee, or receiver.

Public Place - Whenever the word "public place" is used, unless otherwise specifically defined, it shall mean any public road, street, alley, park, building, or other property of the city or any other places to which people commonly resort for the purpose of business, recreation, or amusement.

Reasonable Time - In all cases where an ordinance or provisions of this Code requires an act to be done in a reasonable time or requires reasonable notice to be given, reasonable time or notice shall be deemed to mean the time which is necessary for a prompt performance of such act or the giving of such notice. (Also see "Computation of Time" and "Official Time" in this section.)

State - The words "the state" or "this state" shall be construed to mean the State of Texas.

Street - The term "street" shall include any highway, alley, street, avenue, or public place or square, bridge, viaduct, underpass, overpass, tunnel, or causeway in the city, dedicated or devoted to public use.

V.A.C.S. - Abbreviation for Vernon's Annotated Civil Statutes.

V.T.C.A. - Abbreviation for Vernon's Texas Codes Annotated.

V.T.C.S. - Abbreviation for Vernon's Texas Civil Statutes.

Year - The term "year" shall mean a calendar year, unless otherwise expressed.

§ 10.05 Prior Offenses and Contracts Not Affected By Code

Nothing in this Code or the ordinance adopting this Code shall affect any offense or act committed or done or any penalty or forfeiture incurred or any contract or right established or accruing before the effective date of this Code.

§ 10.06 Amendments or Additions to Code

(a) All ordinances passed subsequent to the adoption of this Code which amend, repeal, or in any way affect this Code may be numbered in accordance with the numbering system of this Code and printed for inclusion therein. When subsequent ordinances repeal any chapter, section, or subsection, or any portion thereof, such repealed portions may be excluded from the Code by omission from reprinted pages. The subsequent ordinances as numbered and printed, or omitted in the case of repeal, shall be prima facie evidence of such subsequent ordinances until such time that this Code and subsequent ordinances numbered or omitted are readopted as a new Code by the City Council.

(b) Amendments to any of the provisions of this Code shall be made by amending such provisions by specified reference to the section number of this Code in the following language:

"That Chapter _____, Section _____, of the Overton Code of Ordinances is hereby amended to read as follows..."

The provisions shall then be set out in full as desired.

(c) If a new section is to be added to the Code, the following language shall be used:

"That Chapter of the Overton Code of Ordinances is hereby amended by adding a new Section _____, which said section shall read as follows ..."

The new section shall then be set out in full as desired.

(d) If a section is to be deleted from the Code, the following language shall be used:

"That Chapter _____, Section _____, of the Overton Code of Ordinances is hereby repealed."

(e) Any subsequent ordinance which fails to amend this Code in the manner provided for above, however, shall not be deemed invalid as a result of such failure to follow the procedure outlined in this section.

§ 10.07 Supplementation of Code

(a) Supplements to this Code of Ordinances shall be prepared and printed whenever authorized by the City Council. A supplement to the Code shall include all substantive, permanent, and general parts of ordinances passed by the City Council during the period covered by the supplement and all changes made thereby in the Code. The pages of a supplement shall be so prepared that, when they have been inserted, the Code will be current through the date of the adoption of the latest ordinance included in the supplement.

In preparing a supplement to this Code, all portions of the Code which have been repealed shall be excluded from the Code by omission thereof from reprinted pages.

(b) When preparing a supplement to this Code, the codifier (meaning the person, agency, or organization authorized to prepare the supplement) may make formal, nonsubstantive changes in ordinances and parts of ordinances included in the supplement, to facilitate the development of a unified code. The codifier shall not make any change in the meaning or effect of ordinance material included in the supplement.

§ 10.8 General Penalty for Violations of Code¹

(a) Whenever in this Code or in any ordinance of the city an act is prohibited or is made or declared to be unlawful or an offense or a misdemeanor, or wherever in such Code or ordinance the doing of an act is required, or the failure to do any act is declared to be unlawful, and no specific penalty is provided therefor, the violation of any such provision of this Code or any such ordinance shall be punished by a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars (\$500.00), except for:

(1) Violations of municipal ordinances that govern fire safety, zoning, public health and sanitation, including dumping of refuse, vegetation and litter violations, in which instances the maximum fine shall be two thousand dollars (\$2,000.00) for each offense and

(2) Violations of traffic laws and ordinances which are punishable as a Class C misdemeanor shall be punished by a fine not to exceed five hundred dollars (\$500.00), with such fine being determined by the Municipal Judge.

No penalty shall be greater or less than the penalty provided for the same or similar offense under the laws of the state.

¹ State law reference – V.T.C.A., Local Government Code, § 54.001, authorizes municipalities to adopt penalties for violations of ordinances. Penalties for traffic violations are found in V.A.C.S., Art. 6701d, Secs. 143 and 143A.

(b) Each day any violation of this Code or of any ordinance shall continue shall constitute a separate offense.

§ 10.09 Severability

It is the intention of the City Council that the sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this Code are severable and, if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, or section of this Code shall be declared unconstitutional by the valid judgment or decree of any court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, and sections of this Code, since the same would have been enacted by the City Council without the incorporation in this Code of any unconstitutional phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph, provision, subsection, or section.

§ 10.10 Altering or Tampering With Code

It shall be an offense for any person to change or amend, by addition or deletion, any part or portion of this Code, or to insert or delete pages or portions thereof, or to alter or to tamper with this Code in any manner whatsoever which will cause a law of the city to be misrepresented thereby.