



Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

Christine C. Quinn
City Council Speaker

**ANSWERS TO THE MOST FREQUENTLY
ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT**

**NYC PENALTY RELIEF PROGRAM
FOR HOMEOWNERS AND BUSINESS OWNERS**

Filing Period: September 21, 2009 through December 21, 2009

1. What is the NYC Penalty Relief Program?

It's a three-month program authorized by Mayor Bloomberg and the City Council that allows businesses and homeowners to resolve Environmental Control Board ("ECB") violations that are "in default" and for which a hearing was scheduled before May 1, 2009. Applicants can resolve their default violations by paying the base fine and will NOT have to pay additional penalties, late fees or interest. If a violation is associated with a correctible condition, known as a compliance violation, you must correct the condition before you may participate in the program.

2. Who Can Apply for Penalty Relief?

Any business or individual with Environmental Control Board violations in default may participate.

3. What is an Environmental Control Board Violation?

It is a violation issued by certain City agencies, including Sanitation, Buildings, Consumer Affairs, Transportation and others. Below are some of the most common violations:

- Dirty Sidewalk
- Failure to Properly Post Permits
- Failure to Properly Separate Recyclable Materials
- Failure to Restore Street Cut
- Illegal Posting of Handbill/Notice
- Sidewalk Obstruction
- Street Closing Without Permit
- Vending Merchandise Without a License/Permit
- Vending Food Without a License/Permit
- Vending in a Restricted Area such as a Bus Stop or Within 10 Feet of a Driveway, Subway, Crosswalk, etc.

4. What Does It Mean for an Environmental Control Board Violation to Be "In Default"?

A violation is in default if the individual or business that received the violation failed to pay the fine or challenge the violation in a hearing within the required time frame. This causes the violation to be "in default" and results in penalties, late fees and interest.

5. How Will the Program Work?

During the Penalty Relief Program, the City will waive the additional "default" penalties, late fees and interest if the individual or business that received the violation pays the original fine amount and corrects the violating condition (if applicable).

6. How Long Will the Program Last?

The program starts on September 21, 2009 and continues through December 21, 2009. In order to receive penalty relief, you must apply on or before December 21, 2009.

7. How Do I Apply for the Program?

- a) If you don't know what violation you have, if you are not sure how much you owe, or if you have more than five violations, you can apply for the program online, by phone or by mail. It takes less than five minutes to apply because all we need is your name and address:

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS - Continued

- **Online** at www.nyc.gov/finance. This is the quickest way, and we will process your application even faster if you provide an email address.
- **By Phone** by calling 311. From outside New York City, dial 212-639-9675.
- **By Mail** by filling out an application (available for print-out at www.nyc.gov/finance or by calling 311) and mailing it to: **NYC Department of Finance, 66 John Street, Room 104, New York NY 10038, Attention: NYC Penalty Relief Program.**

b) If you have five or fewer violations and know how much you were originally charged, you can bring the information to one of the Department of Finance's Business Centers in the five boroughs to resolve them on the spot. For Business Center locations click [here](#).

8. What Happens After I Apply?

Once we receive your application, we will send you a Resolution Packet that consists of:

- A list(s) of violations associated with the names and/or addresses submitted and the resolution amount;
- A Resolution Agreement; and
- Instructions for how to pay and resolve.

9. How Can I Pay?

- Sign the Resolution Agreement and include a check or money order for the resolution amount indicated in the packet and mail to: **NYC Department of Finance, 66 John Street, Room 104, New York, NY 10038. Attention: NYC Penalty Relief Program. *Please don't forget to write the case number on the check or money order.***
- Pay by cash, check, money order or credit card in person at one of Finance's five borough Business Centers.

10. What If a Violation Requires Corrective Action?

We will let you know if you have one or more violations that require corrective action. You must correct the violating condition and obtain proof from the issuing agency before you can resolve these violations as part of the program.

11. What If I Don't Agree with the List of Violations the City's Record Shows I Have Outstanding?

If you disagree with the list of violations and the amount owed, contact the Department of Finance to have the violations in dispute removed from the Resolution Packet. You are still responsible for paying these violations unless you resolve them by contacting ECB or the issuing agency directly. If you do not apply to resolve disputed violations by December 21, 2009, you will owe the base fine PLUS associated penalties, late fees and interest.

12. What If I Don't Pay What the City's Record Shows I Have Outstanding?

Unless you apply for the program and contact the issuing agencies to resolve the disputed violations by December 21, 2009, you will owe the full amount, including default penalties, late fees and interest. In addition, the City could take enforcement action and deny your business a license or permit.

13. What If I Need Help or Have Other Questions?

Visit www.nyc.gov/finance or call 311. From outside New York City, dial 212-639-9675.

It Pays to Pay