

ORDINANCE NO. _____, SERIES 2026

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING THE LOUISVILLE METRO CODE OF ORDINANCES (“LMCO”) AND CREATING A NEW SECTION OF CHAPTER 32 REGARDING THE ISSUANCE, REQUIREMENTS, AND EXECUTION OF SEARCH WARRANTS.

SPONSORED BY: COUNCIL MEMBER DAN SEUM, JR.

WHEREAS, in 2024, the Louisville Metro Fire Department responded to 92 structure fires related with trespassing in vacant and abandoned properties; and

WHEREAS, Louisville Metro Code Enforcement deals with a significant number of cases involving vacant and abandoned property with noncompliant property owners; and

WHEREAS, administrative warrants are a best practice to ensure community safety and compliance with LMCO in instances where violations create a danger to the community; and

WHEREAS, codifying the administrative warrant process through LMCO will ensure greater code officer and judicial consistency and oversight in decision making.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF THE LOUISVILLE/JEFFERSON COUNTY METRO GOVERNMENT AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION I: Section 32.275 of the LMCO is hereby amended to add the following definitions:

ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCH WARRANT means a written order of a judge or other officer authorized by statute to issue search warrants that command the search or inspection of any property, place or thing, and the seizure, photographing, copying, or recording of property or physical conditions found. An ***ADMINISTRATIVE SEARCH WARRANT*** authorizes an officer to enter an occupied or unoccupied premises to conduct any inspection, sampling, and other functions required or authorized by law to determine

compliance with the provisions of an ordinance, code, statute, or other regulation including, but not limited to, those relating to the use, condition, or occupancy of property or structures.

ADMINISTRATIVE OR CODE OFFICER: means a Building Inspector, Code Enforcement Officer, ABC Director or designee, Fire Chief or Chief's designee, Professional Engineer, Health Inspector, or any duly authorized representative responsible for the enforcement of the Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances.

SECTION II: Section 32.293 of the LMCO is hereby created as follows:

§ 32.293 SEARCH WARRANTS.

(A) Whenever any law, statute or regulation in the Commonwealth of Kentucky, including but not limited to the **Louisville Metro Code of Ordinances**, requires or authorizes an inspection or investigation of any place or thing, the Administrative or Code Officer charged to enforce that law, acting in the course of his or her official duties, may apply for an administrative search warrant from a judge of competent jurisdiction.

SECTION III: This Ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval, or otherwise becoming law.

Sonya Harward
Metro Council Clerk

Brent Ackerson
President of the Council

Craig Greenberg
Mayor

Approval Date

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND LEGALITY:

Michael J. O'Connell
Jefferson County Attorney

By: _____

O-047-26 Amending Chapter 39 Metro Government Policies - RH