

**ORDINANCE NO.**

**AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING  
PROCEDURES FOR ENFORCING ADMINISTRATIVE OFFENSES**

**THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICE HEREBY ORDAINS:**

**SECTION 1.**            **Purpose and Intent:**

Purpose: Administrative offense procedures established pursuant to this Section are intended to provide the public and the City of Rice with an informal, cost effective, and expeditious alternative to traditional criminal charges for violations of certain City Code provisions. The procedures are intended to be voluntary on the part of those who have been charged with administrative offenses. At any time prior to the payment of the administrative penalty as is provided for thereafter, the individual may withdraw from participation in the procedures, in which event the City may bring criminal charges in accordance with law. Likewise, the City of Rice in its discretion, may choose not to initiate an administrative offense and may bring criminal charges in the first instance. In the event a party participates in the administrative offense procedures, but does not pay the monetary penalty which may be imposed, the City of Rice will seek to collect the costs of the administrative offense procedures as part of a subsequent criminal sentence, in the event the party is charged and is adjudicated guilty of the criminal violation.

**SECTION 2.**            **Administrative Offense Defined:**

An administrative offense is a violation of a provision of the City Code and is subject to the administrative penalties set forth in the schedule of offenses and penalties referred to in Section 9, entitled "Offenses and Penalties", hereinafter.

**SECTION 3.**            **Notice:**

Any officer of the City of Rice's Police Department or any other person employed by the City, authorized in writing by the Mayor, and having authority to enforce the City Code, shall upon determining that there has been a violation, notify the violator, or in the case of a vehicular violation, attach to the vehicle a notice of the violation. Said notice shall set forth the nature, date and time of the violation, the name of the official issuing the notice, and the amount of the scheduled penalty.

**SECTION 4.**            **Payment:**

Once such notice is given, the alleged violator may, within seven (7) days of the time of issuance of the notice, pay the amount set forth on the schedule of penalties for the violation, or may request a hearing in writing, as is provided for hereinafter. The penalty may be paid in person or by mail, and payment shall be deemed to be an admission of the violation.

SECTION 5.            Hearing:

Any person contesting an administrative offense pursuant to this Section may, within seven (7) days of the time of issuance of the notice, request a hearing by a hearing officer who shall forthwith conduct an informal hearing to determine if a violation has occurred. The hearing officer shall have authority to dismiss the violation or reduce or waive the penalty. If the violation is sustained by the hearing officer, the violator shall pay the penalty imposed within seven (7) days.

SECTION 6.            Hearing Officer:

The Mayor shall designate in writing a hearing officer. The hearing officer is authorized to hear and determine any controversy relating to administrative offenses provided for in this Section and may be compensated by the City for such hearings and related findings.

SECTION 7.            Failure to Pay:

In the event a party charged with an administrative offense fails to pay the penalty, a misdemeanor or petty misdemeanor charge may be brought against the alleged violator in accordance with the applicable statutes. If the penalty is paid or if an individual is found not to have committed the administrative offense by the hearing officer, no such charge may be brought by the City of Rice for the same violation.

SECTION 8.            Disposition of Penalties:

All penalties collected pursuant to this Section shall be paid to the City of Rice and deposited in the General Fund.

SECTION 9.            Offenses and Penalties:

Offenses which may be charged as administrative offenses and penalties for such offenses shall be established by resolution of the City Council from time to time. Copies of such resolution shall be maintained in the Office of the City Administrator.

THIS ORDINANCE SHALL SUPERSEDE AND REPEAL ALL PRIOR INCONSISTENT ORDINANCES. THIS ORDINANCE SHALL BE EFFECTIVE UPON PASSAGE AND PUBLICATION REQUIRED BY LAW.

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

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City Clerk

Mayor

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