

1119.04 APPLICABILITY.

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Sheffield Lake

Codified Ordinances of Sheffield Lake, OH

1119.04 APPLICABILITY.

CHAPTER 1119 Signs

CHAPTER 1119

Signs

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1119.01 PURPOSE.

(a) The purpose of this chapter is to provide minimum standards to safeguard life, health, property and public welfare by regulating and controlling the quality of materials, construction, illumination, installation and maintenance of all signs and sign structures.

(b) In establishing these purposes, the City has determined that signs which do not comply with these regulations (type, size, location, and limitation on the number of signs) are a public nuisance. Unregulated signs are unduly distracting to motorists and pedestrians, and thereby create a traffic hazard and reduce the effectiveness of signs needed to direct the public.

(c) The City does not intend to infringe on the rights of free speech as protected by the First Amendment to the United States Constitution and Chapter I, §11 of the Ohio Constitution. All regulations in this chapter are to be construed, whenever possible, in favor of vigorous political debate and accommodation of the rights of persons to speak freely.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.02 SUBSTITUTION AND PROTECTION CLAUSE.

Wherever a sign with a commercial message is allowed or permitted under this chapter, an owner may replace the message with a noncommercial message, subject to the time, place and manner provisions of this chapter, without applying for a permit and/or paying a fee that otherwise would be required for the placement of a commercial message sign on the lot; provided, that the sign structure or mounting device is legal without consideration of message content. This provision prevails over any provision to the contrary in this chapter. The purpose of this provision is to prevent any inadvertent favoring of commercial speech over noncommercial speech or favoring of any particular noncommercial message over any other noncommercial message. This provision does not create a right to increase the total amount of signage on a lot or parcel, nor does it affect the requirement that a sign structure or mounting device be properly permitted.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.03 RECLASSIFICATION OF SIGNAGE.

If the type of any sign that legally existed prior to the effective date of this amendment is reclassified by this amendment, such sign shall be classified as the sign type defined in this chapter and Chapter 1131: Definitions, and shall be subject to the applicable standards for such sign type from the effective date of this amendment. Such reclassification shall be regardless of any variances that were approved prior to the effective date of this amendment.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.04 APPLICABILITY.

(a) No person shall erect, place, relocate, expand, modify, maintain, or otherwise alter a sign, or cause a sign to be erected, placed, relocated, expanded, modified, maintained, or otherwise altered unless all provisions of this code have been met.

(b) Unless otherwise provided, this chapter shall apply to any sign, in any zoning district, that is visible from a public right-of-way or from an adjacent property.

(c) Any sign legally established prior to the effective date of this chapter, and which sign is rendered nonconforming by the provisions herein, shall be subject to the nonconforming sign regulations of Section 1119.11: Nonconforming Signs.

(d) Any person installing, structurally altering and/or relocating a sign for which a permit has been issued shall be responsible for the scheduling of necessary inspections, including, but not limited to, an inspection of footings on a free-standing sign, building, and electrical inspections, etc., during the course of the work.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.05 REVIEW AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS.

(a) To ensure compliance with these regulations, a zoning permit shall be required to be issued unless specifically exempted in this chapter.

(b) All signs related to a use or development that requires a site plan review approval shall be required to be reviewed as part of the site plan review application prior to issuance of a zoning permit.

(c) Zoning Permit Exemptions for Signs. The following signs are subject to the requirements of this chapter but do not require a zoning permit. Permit-exempt signs may still be subject to building code or other applicable code requirements.

(1) Signs and/or notices issued by any court, officer, or other person in performance of a public duty. Any such sign shall be removed no later than seven (7) days after the last day it is required to be displayed;

(2) Whenever any sign, either conforming or nonconforming, is required to be removed for the purpose of repair, relettering, or repainting, the same may be done without a zoning permit or any payment of fees provided that all of the following conditions are met.

(3) There is no alteration or remodeling to the structure or the mounting of the sign itself;

(4) There is no enlargement or increase in any of the dimensions of the sign or its structure;

(5) Whenever there is an exchange of sign panels when a sign is designed to have replaceable sign faces;

(6) Signs that are an integral part of the original construction of vending or similar machines, fuel pumps, automated teller machines or similar devices that are not of a size or design as to be visible from a street or by any person other than those using the machine or device;

(7) Any sign that is located completely inside a building that is not visible from the exterior (see also definition of window sign);

(8) Signs that are located within a stadium, open-air theater, park, arena or other outdoor use that are not visible from a public right-of-way or adjacent property, and can be viewed only by persons within such stadium, open-air theater, park, arena or other outdoor use;

(9) Certain temporary signs as established in Section 1119.10: Temporary Signs;

(10) No more than four flags located on flagpoles or on wall-mounted posts provided that the following shall apply:

A. The maximum height of flag poles shall not exceed the maximum building height for structures in the subject zoning district, and a maximum sign area of area of forty (40) square feet for any individual flag attached to the pole.

B. The maximum projection for a wall-mounted flag post is six (6) feet and a maximum sign area of fifteen (15) square feet per flag.

(11) A single wall sign placed on the façade of an individual dwelling unit that is not illuminated and does not exceed two (2) square feet in area.

(12) Signs that are an integral part of the historic character of a structure that has been designated an official landmark or historic structure by any agency or body of the governments of the United States, State of Ohio, Lorain County or City of Sheffield Lake;

(13) Any signs located on umbrellas, seating, or similar patio furniture;

(14) Ground signs and markings located completely within the interior of a lot used for a cemetery where such signs are not designed to be visible from a public street;

(15) Any sign on a truck, bus or other vehicle that is used in the normal course of a business (e.g., deliveries or fleet vehicles for contractors) for transportation (See also Section 1119.06: Prohibited Signs.), or signage required by the State or Federal government;

(16) Signs installed or required by a governmental agency including the City of Sheffield Lake, Lorain County, State of Ohio, and United States, including local and regional transit agencies;

(17) Any warning signs or traffic safety signs required by public utility providers;

(18) Hand-held signs not set on or affixed to the ground;

(19) Any address numbers required by the City of Sheffield Lake, Lorain County, or the State of Ohio;

(20) Changes of copy on signs with changeable copy;

(21) Any signs, including illuminated signs, or related decorations erected in observance of religious, national or state holidays which are not intended to be permanent in nature and which contain no advertising material; and

(22) General maintenance, painting, repainting, cleaning and other normal maintenance and repair of a sign or any sign structure unless a structural change is made. See also Section 1119.08(m).

(d) Revocation of Permits for Noncompliance. The Zoning Inspector is hereby authorized and empowered to revoke any permit issued upon failure of the applicant or holder thereof to comply with any provision of this chapter.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.06 PROHIBITED SIGNS.

The following types of signs are specifically prohibited within the City of Sheffield Lake:

(a) Any sign that copies or imitates a sign installed by any governmental agency or purports to have been authorized by a governmental agency;

(b) Signs that interfere with, obstruct the view of, or are similar in appearance to any authorized traffic sign, signal, or device because of its position, shape, use of words, or color;

(c) Signs that constitute a hazard to safety or health by reason of inadequate or inappropriate design, construction, repair, or maintenance, as determined by the building official;

(d) Signs that employ any parts or elements which revolve, rotate, whirl, spin, or otherwise make use of motion to attract attention. This shall not include electronic message centers as allowed in this chapter;

(e) Signs with moving or flashing lights except for electronic message centers as allowed in this chapter;

(f) Beacons and searchlights, except for emergency purposes;

(g) Windblown devices, pennants, streamers, and similar signs that are designed to move by atmospheric, mechanical, electrical, or other means, whether containing words or numerals or containing no message except that feather signs may be permitted in accordance with Section 1119.10: Temporary Signs;

(h) Air-activated graphics;

(i) Balloon signs;

(j) Roof signs;

(k) Signs that are applied to trees, bus shelters, utility poles, benches, trash receptacles, newspaper vending machines or boxes, or any other unapproved supporting structure, or otherwise placed in the public right-of-way except as provided for in Section 1119.08(h);

(l) Signs that obstruct or substantially interfere with any window, door, fire escape, stairway, ladder, or opening intended to provide light, air, ingress, or egress to any building;

(m) Signs which are not securely affixed to the ground or otherwise affixed in a permanent manner to an approved supporting structure unless specifically permitted as a temporary sign;

(n) Portable signs;

(o) Vehicle signs viewed from a public road with the primary purpose of providing signage not otherwise allowed by this chapter. A vehicle sign shall be considered to be used for the primary purpose of advertising if the vehicle fails to display current license plates; if the vehicle is inoperable; or if the sign alters the standard design of such vehicle. Vehicle signs include those attached to or placed on a vehicle or trailer. Vehicles or trailers shall not be parked continuously in one location to be used primarily as additional signage. This does not apply to a vehicle parked at a driver's residence and is the primary means of transportation to and from their place of employment; and

(p) Any sign not specifically allowed by this chapter.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.07 MEASUREMENTS AND COMPUTATIONS.

(a) Sign Setback. All required setbacks for signs shall be measured as the distance in feet from the lot line or right-of-way, whichever is applicable, to the closest point on the sign structure.

(b) Sign Height.

(1) The height of a sign shall be computed as the distance from the base of the sign at normal grade (average grade at the base of the sign) to the top of the highest attached component of the sign. Normal grade shall be construed to be the newly established grade after construction, exclusive of any filling, berming, mounding, or excavating undertaken for the purpose of locating or increasing the height of sign.

(2) The filling of a pre-existing hole or depression to create an average grade at the same level as that surrounding the hole or depression is permitted, provided such filling is allowed by other ordinances.

(3) In cases where the normal grade is below grade at street level, sign height shall be computed on the assumption that the elevation of the normal grade at the base of the sign is equal to the elevation of the nearest point of the crown of a public or private street. See Figure 1119-A.

Figure 1119-A: Illustration of the measurement of sign height when the grade at the bottom of the sign is below the grade of the adjacent street

(4) Any material whose major function is providing structural support for a sign shall be considered part of the sign for purposes of determining sign height.

(5) Where a distance is established for the clearance of a sign, such measurements shall be made from the normal grade of the ground, directly under the applicable sign or structure supporting the sign, and the bottom most point of the sign or the structure supporting the sign, whichever is closest.

(c) Sign Area. The surface of a sign to be included when computing maximum allowable square footage of sign area shall be calculated as established in this section. For the purposes of calculating sign area, any of the following regular geometric shapes may be used: circle, ellipse, triangle, square, rectangle, trapezoid, pentagon, or hexagon.

(1) The calculation of sign area shall not include any supporting framework, bracing or decorative fence or wall unless such structural support is determined to constitute an integral part of the sign design by means of text or other message, as determined by the Zoning Inspector. See Figure 1119-B.

(2) For sign copy mounted or painted on a background panel, cabinet or surface distinctively painted, textured, lighted or constructed to serve as the background for the sign copy, the sign area shall be computed by means of the smallest permitted shape, or combination of permitted shapes, that encompasses the extreme limits of the background panel, cabinet or surface. See

Figure 1119-B and Figure 1119-C.

Figure 1119-B: Illustration of sign area calculation for a ground sign with a copy on a distinct, rectangular cabinet. The brick structural support is not included in the sign area calculation.

Figure 1119-C: Illustration of computing the sign area for wall signs with a background panel or cabinet.

(3) For sign copy where individual letters or elements are mounted on a building façade or window where there is no background panel, cabinet or surface distinctively painted, textured, lighted, or constructed to serve as the background for the sign copy, the sign area shall be computed by means of the smallest permitted shape, or combination of permitted shapes, that encloses all the letters or elements associated with the sign. See Figure 1119-D.

Figure 1119-D: Illustration of sign area calculation for wall signs with individual letters.

(4) In cases where there are multiple sign elements of sign copy on the same surface, any areas of sign copy that are within two feet of one another shall be calculated as a single sign area that shall be computed by means of the smallest permitted shape, or combination of permitted shapes, that encloses all sign copy within two feet of one another, otherwise the sign area shall be computed for each separate piece of sign copy. See Figure 1119-E.

Figure 1119-E: Illustration of sign area calculations for multiple sign areas on a window sign.

(5) Decorative edging or other window treatments that are not an integral part of the sign copy shall not be considered a part of the sign for the purposes of this chapter. See Figure 1119-E.

(6) Except for three-dimensional signs, the sign area for a sign with more than one face (multi-faced signs) shall be computed by adding together the area of all sign faces when the interior angle is greater than forty-five (45) degrees.

(7) When two identically sized, flat sign faces are placed back-to-back or at angles of forty-five (45) degrees or less, so that both faces cannot be viewed from any one point at the same time, the sign area shall be computed by the measurement of one of the sign faces. If the two faces are unequal, the sign area shall be calculated based on the larger of the two faces.

(8) In the case of a three-dimensional sign where the sign faces are not mounted back-to-back, the sign area shall be calculated by the smallest permitted shape, or combination of permitted shapes, that encompasses the profile of the sign message multiplied by two. The profile used shall be the largest area of the sign message visible from any one point.

(d) Façade Measurements.

(1) When calculating the permitted sign area based on the width of any façade, such calculation shall be based on viewing the façade from a ninety (90)-degree angle (i.e., straight on), regardless of façade insets, offsets, or angles. See Figure 1119-F.

Figure 1119-F: Illustration of façade width measurement on varied façade shapes.

(2) For multi-tenant buildings, the portion of a building that is owned or leased by a single occupant or tenant shall be considered a building unit. The façade width for a building unit shall be measured from the centerline of the party walls defining the building unit.

(3) The primary facade shall be the portion of a frontage that serves as the main access point

to a building or building unit. A site or building will be considered to have secondary facades when any of the following site/building characteristics are present (See Figure 1119-G.):

- A. The subject site is a corner lot;
- B. The primary parking area is not located adjacent to a public street; or
- C. The building or unit has walls with public or customer entrance points that do not face the public street.

Figure 1119-G: Common examples of the location of primary and secondary facades.

(4) When a site has primary and secondary facade as defined herein, the Zoning Inspector shall determine which wall shall be the primary building facade and which wall(s) shall be the secondary building facade. Only one outside wall of any business shall be considered its primary facade.

(5) For multi-tenant buildings where each tenant has its own exterior entrance, the portion of a building that is owned or leased by a single occupant or tenant shall be considered a building unit. The façade width for a building unit shall be measured from the centerline of the party walls defining the building unit. For uses, such as office buildings, where multiple tenants may locate within the same building and all tenants have interior access to their tenant space, such building shall be considered one building without separate building units.

(6) The Zoning Inspector shall have the authority to make the determination of what façades are primary facades and secondary façades for the purposes of this chapter.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

1119.08 GENERAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL SIGNS.

Unless otherwise specifically stated, the following regulations shall apply to all signs within the City:

(a) Permanent signs are considered accessory uses and shall be accessory to a principal use provided for in this code. Temporary signs may be permitted on all lots, regardless of the presence of a principal use.

(b) All signs shall be constructed in compliance with the applicable building and electrical codes as well as any other City regulations.

(c) No sign shall be erected, relocated, or maintained so as to prevent free ingress or egress, or block any light or ventilation openings.

(d) No sign shall obstruct or interfere with fire ingress or egress from any door, window, or fire escape, nor shall it obstruct or interfere with traffic or traffic visibility.

(e) All signs shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent swinging or other significant noticeable movement, not including movement related to permitted electronic message centers.

(f) Signs supported by or suspended from a building shall hang so as to maintain a minimum clear height of nine feet above a pedestrian path and fifteen (15) feet above a vehicular path.

(g) All signs shall comply with the vision clearance requirements of Section 1113.05: Intersection Visibility.

(h) Signs in Rights-of-Way.

(1) Signs shall be prohibited in the right-of-way with the exception of:

A. Signs installed by the City of Sheffield Lake, Lorain County, State of Ohio, or United States, including local and regional transit agencies;

B. Permanent monument signs if approved by the Zoning Inspector and where a homeowners' or property owners' association agreement or covenants provide for the maintenance of the sign; or

C. Any warning signs or traffic safety signs required by public utility providers.

(2) The building official may remove or cause to be removed any unlawful sign in the public right-of-way.

(i) Engineering Design and Materials.

(1) Signs shall be fabricated on and of materials which are of good quality, good durability and are complimentary to the building of which they become a part.

(2) All signs shall be designed and constructed to withstand wind pressures of not less than that required for buildings and other structures.

(3) Signs adequately designed to withstand wind pressures specified in subsection (2) hereof are considered capable of withstanding earthquake shock, except in areas subject to high-intensity shocks where all signs shall be designed in accordance with local requirements to resist earthquake shock. Wind loads and earthquake loads need not be combined to determine the maximum horizontal loads acting upon a sign. Only the larger of the two loads need be used for design.

(4) Nonstructural trim may be made of metal or wood or approved combustible plastics or any combination thereof. Sign faces, letters, and decorations of all types of signs may be made of metal or approved combustible plastics. Sign faces, letters, and decorations of signs other than electric signs may be made of wood.

(5) The owner of any sign as defined and regulated by this chapter shall be required to have properly painted all parts and supports of the sign as are necessary to maintain safety factors.

(j) Sign Illumination and Electronic Message Centers. All signs, unless otherwise stated in this chapter, may be illuminated by internal or external light sources, provided that such illumination complies with the following:

(1) Illuminated signs shall not have any flashing or blinking lights or rotating beacons, nor shall any beam of light be projected through a mechanism which periodically changes the color of the light reaching the sign.

(2) All illumination shall be oriented so as to prevent glare onto traffic or onto adjacent property or structures.

(3) Illuminated signs shall be constructed of noncombustible materials, provided, however, that facings, letters, figures, decorations, and structural trim thereof may be made of approved combustible plastics.

(4) Illuminated signs produced in quantity (other than signs custom built for specific locations) shall be constructed in accordance with the "Standard for Electric Signs (U.L. 48) of Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc." and bear the label of Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc.

(5) All electrical illumination devices shall be designed to be weather-resistant and shatterproof.

(6) Electronic Message Centers. All electronic message centers shall be subject to the following requirements:

A. The maximum brightness of the electronic message center shall be:

i. The electronic message center shall come equipped with an automatic dimming photocell, which automatically adjusts the display's brightness based on ambient light conditions.

ii. The brightness level shall not increase by more than 0.3-foot candles (or 3.23 lumens per square meter or lux) (over ambient levels) as measured using a foot candle meter at a pre-set distance.

iii. The procedure and distances for measurement of brightness shall be as established by the International Sign Association's Recommend Night-time Brightness Levels for On-Premise

Electronic Message Centers.

B. The owners of such signs shall include specifications accompanying their zoning permit application, demonstrating that they will comply with the prescribed brightness limitations set by this code.

C. Electronic message centers shall be designed and equipped to freeze the device in one position if a malfunction occurs. The displays must also be equipped with a measure to immediately discontinue the display if it malfunctions.

D. Any message change shall be a static, instant message change meaning the sign shall not include animation, full motion video, flashing, scrolling, strobing, racing, blinking, changes in color, fade in or fade out in any manner imitating movement, or any other means not providing constant illumination.

E. Messages can only change once every ten (10) seconds.

F. Electronic message centers in residential zoning districts shall be set back a minimum of 200 feet from any adjacent residential dwelling.

G. Only Light Emitting Diodes (LED) technology or similar quality signs shall be permitted for electronic message centers.

H. Wherever an electronic message center is permitted, a manual changeable copy sign shall also be permitted. A zoning permit shall be required to change between each type of sign.

(k) Unsafe Signs.

(1) If the Building Inspector finds that any sign regulated herein is unsafe or insecure or has been constructed or erected or is being maintained in violation of the provisions of this chapter, they shall give written notice in person or by registered mail to the owner thereof. If the owner fails to remove or alter the structure so as to comply with the standards herein set forth within ten (10) days after such notice, such sign or other advertising structure may be removed or altered to comply by the Building Inspector at the expense of the owner of the property upon which it is located.

(2) The Building Inspector may cause any sign or other advertising structure which is an immediate peril to persons or property to be removed summarily and without notice.

(l) Removal of Signs.

(1) The Zoning Inspector is authorized to order the removal, repair or maintenance of any sign which constitutes a nuisance, or for which the required permit has not been obtained, or when a sign no longer advertises a bona fide business conducted or product sold, or which advertises an event which has been concluded, or which pertain to an issue or candidate to be decided upon in an election which has been concluded or which violates any provision of this chapter.

(2) Whenever the removal, repair or maintenance of any permanent sign has been ordered by the Zoning Inspector, the owner or person in possession of such sign shall comply with such order within ten (10) days after notice is served upon him.

(3) Whenever the removal, repair or maintenance of a temporary or portable sign has been ordered by the Zoning Inspector, the owner or person in possession of such sign shall comply with the order within forty-eight (48) hours after notice is served upon him. In the event of noncompliance, the Zoning Inspector may seek an order of removal from a court of competent jurisdiction, or may pursue criminal action against the owner and/or person in possession in accordance with the appropriate provisions of this code relating to violations.

(4) If, following an inspection, the Building Inspector determines that any sign constitutes an immediate danger to the public safety, or creates an imminent risk of substantial harm to the rights of another, the Building Inspector may order the immediate removal of said sign without

regard to the time intervals for compliance cited above, at the sign owner's expense. Removal of sign shall include the sign face, enclosing frame, all sign supporting members and base, unless otherwise specified in the order to remove.

(m) Inspections and Maintenance.

(1) The Zoning Inspector or Building Inspector shall inspect annually or at such times as he deems necessary each sign regulated by this chapter for the purpose of ascertaining whether the same is secure or insecure and whether it needs removal or repair, and they shall keep a record thereof.

(2) It shall be the duty and obligation of every person owning or controlling the existence of a sign to see to it that such sign maintains a neat and clear physical appearance.

(3) Every sign shall be maintained in a safe, presentable, and good structural condition at all times, including the replacement of a defective part, painting, cleaning, and other acts required for the maintenance of the sign so as not to show evidence of deterioration, including peeling, rust, dirt, fading, damage, discoloration, or holes.

(4) Whenever a sign is to be removed pursuant to the requirements of this section, all parts of the sign and supporting structure (e.g., pole, foundation, cabinet structure, etc.), excluding buildings for wall, projecting, or similar signage, shall be removed in its entirety. This section shall not require the removal of a raceway if mounted to such structure on a building.

(5) The Building Inspector may order the removal or repair of any sign that, has become insecure, in danger of falling or otherwise unsafe, or presents a threat to the public safety.

(n) Revocability of Privileges. All rights and privileges acquired under the provisions of this chapter are mere licenses revocable at any time by the Law Director upon the recommendation of the Building Inspector or Zoning Inspector.

(Ord. 26-22. Passed 4-26-22.)

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- ORDINANCES OF THE CITY OF SHEFFIELD LAKE, OHIO
- ORDINANCE NO. 116-84
- ORDINANCES OF SHEFFIELD LAKE
- effectiveness of signs needed to direct the public
- Ord. 26-22
- effective date of this amendment is reclassified by this amendment, such sign shall be classified as the sign type defined in this chapter and Chapter 1131: Definitions, and shall be subject
- effective date of this amendment
- effective date of this chapter, and which sign is rendered nonconforming by the provisions herein, shall be subject to the nonconforming sign regulations of Section 1119
- ords, or color;
- ords or numerals or containing no message except that feather signs may be permitted in accordance with Section 1119
- ordinances
- ordinance with local requirements to resist earthquake shock
- ordinance with the "Standard for Electric Signs (U
- order the removal, repair or maintenance of any sign which constitutes a nuisance, or for which the required permit has not been obtained, or when a sign no longer advertises a bona f
- ordered by the Zoning Inspector, the owner or person in possession of such sign shall comply with such order within ten (10) days after notice is served upon him
- ordered by the Zoning Inspector, the owner or person in possession of such sign shall comply with the order within forty-eight (48) hours after notice is served upon him
- order of removal from a court of competent jurisdiction, or may pursue criminal action against the owner and/or person in possession in accordance with the appropriate provisions of t
- order the immediate removal of said sign without regard to the time intervals for compliance cited above, at the sign owner's expense
- order to remove
- ord thereof
- order the removal or repair of any sign that, has become insecure, in danger of falling or otherwise unsafe, or presents a threat to the public safety
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