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NEVADA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS Board Agenda Memo

MEETING DATE: January 29, 2026

TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Matt Kelley, Code & Cannabis Compliance Director

SUBJECT: Code Compliance Division Update

RECOMMENDATION: Information Only.

FUNDING: Not Applicable

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This memorandum is provided for information in support of the January 2026 Board of Supervisors Workshop and presents an overview of key operational enhancements within the Code & Cannabis Compliance Department. It summarizes:

- Code Compliance Procedure Manual updates
- Code compliance case resolution improvements
- Use of enforcement tools including Nuisance Abatements and Receiverships

The memorandum also provides informational context regarding body-worn cameras as a potential public safety technology investment to support field operations, documentation, and transparency.

CODE COMPLIANCE PROCEDURE MANUAL UPDATES:

The Department is currently undertaking a comprehensive update of the Code Compliance Policy and Procedure Manual to ensure alignment with current County ordinances, best practices, and prior direction given by the Board of Supervisors.

Key areas of improvement include:

- Clearer and more standardized code violation case intake, investigation, and documentation protocols.
- Refined enforcement sequencing that emphasizes voluntary compliance while allowing for timely and appropriate escalation.
- Improved internal consistency across warning notices, administrative citations, abatements, and receivership referrals.
- Enhanced coordination with County Counsel and other Community Development Agency Departments for complex or priority code violation cases.

These updates are intended to improve predictability, defensibility, and overall efficiency across the code compliance enforcement program.

CODE COMPLIANCE CASE RESOLUTION IMPROVEMENTS:

As a result of procedural refinements and targeted code violation case prioritization, the Department has improved its ability to resolve code violation cases more effectively, particularly those involving health, fire and life-safety concerns.

Emphasis has been placed on:

- Earlier identification of code violation cases that warrant elevated enforcement tools.
- Proactive management of older and long-standing code violation cases.
- Clearer compliance pathways for property owners, including the use of compliance agreements when appropriate.

Code Violation Case Metrics:

- 2024: 248 cases opened; 230 cases closed (93% closure rate)
- 2025: 290 cases opened: 252 cases closed (87% closure rate)

While overall case volume increased in 2025, the Division maintained a strong case closure rate despite a 17% increase in new cases. This performance reflects continued emphasis on effective case management, prioritization, and operational capacity, and demonstrates the Division's ability to sustain resolution of code compliance matters under increased workload. Cases that have not yet been closed continue to be processed either through compliance agreement, continued application of fines, or other processes.

Staffing and Caseload Management:

The above-described improvements were achieved within the context of active staffing management and workload balancing across the Code Compliance Division. On average, each Code Compliance Officer manages approximately 89 code violation cases. All open cases are subject to ongoing inspection, monitoring, and follow-up, and are actively progressing through appropriate enforcement tools, including voluntary compliance, compliance agreements, administrative citations, abatements, receiverships, or other authorized enforcement mechanisms.

ENFORCEMENT TOOLS:

Nuisance Abatements:

Nuisance abatements remain a critical enforcement tool for addressing hazardous conditions that present an immediate or ongoing risk to public health, safety, and welfare and that cannot be resolved through voluntary compliance or administrative citations alone. Abatements are applied deliberately and only after due process requirements have been satisfied, including notice, opportunity to cure, and administrative hearings when required.

The Department has continued to refine its abatement framework to improve effectiveness, transparency, and cost recovery. Key elements of the current abatement program include:

- Clear internal thresholds for escalation from administrative enforcement to abatement, with a focus on severe solid waste accumulation, unsafe structures, fire hazards, and environmental health concerns.
- Standardized coordination with County Counsel, contracted vendors, and Administrative Hearing Officers to ensure legally defensible actions and consistent outcomes.
- Improved project management and cost documentation practices to support recovery of eligible costs through special assessments, liens, or placement on the secured property tax roll.

The County initiated and completed one abatement action in 2025. A detailed summary is provided below:

12300 Elnora Drive – Completed

Summary:

- Code Violation Case initiated September 2024 due to large amounts of solid waste.

- After numerous communications, outreach with the property, and connecting them to County services for assistance, an Abatement Order was served to the owner on the property in April 2025.
- May 2025, the County invited multiple vendors to participate in a job walk resulting in the Triple M Towing being awarded the contract.
- June 2025, an abatement warrant was executed, and the contractor successfully removed and disposed of all solid waste from the property.
- October 2025, a Hearing Officer affirmed the cost of the abatement after an Administrative Cost Accounting Hearing was held.
- Tentative February 2026, the Board of Supervisors will be presented with a resolution to adopt the recommendation of the Hearing Officer to have the administrative costs of the abatement specially assessed and recorded as a lien for cost recovery.

Total Abatement Administrative Costs: \$6,837.98

Strategic Outlook for Nuisance Abatements:

Looking ahead, the Code & Cannabis Compliance Department will continue leveraging abatements as a focused enforcement tool for the County's less complex but more hazardous nuisance cases. Staff anticipate initiating two to three abatements per year, ensuring that the most severe violations, particularly those posing ongoing threats to health and safety, are addressed through the abatement process.

This targeted approach will enable the County to:

- Maintain consistent progress in resolving long-standing nuisance properties.
- Maximize cost recovery through special assessments and recorded liens.
- Reduce community blight and improve neighborhood safety; and
- Strengthen public confidence in the County's enforcement transparency and accountability.

By continuing to apply this method judiciously, the Department will balance the need for strong enforcement with fairness, fiscal responsibility, and the County's broader goal of fostering safe, compliant, and sustainable communities.

Receiverships:

Receiverships continue to be one of the County's most effective and legally robust mechanisms for resolving the most severe, complex, and long-standing nuisance properties. This tool is reserved for cases where repeated voluntary compliance efforts, administrative enforcement, and other tools have proven insufficient to mitigate ongoing threats to health, safety, or the environment. Receiverships protect the community, ensure due process, and remove the County from direct liability or perception of bias while addressing hazardous situations that conventional code enforcement methods cannot remediate.

Overview of the Receivership Process:

1. Petition and Court Appointment
The County petitions for the appointment of a Receiver following Board of Supervisors authorization. If granted, the Court vests the Receiver with authority to take control of the property and correct violations.
2. Property Stabilization and Compliance Work
The Receiver assesses the site, secures the property, removes hazardous conditions, coordinates contractors, and works toward full compliance. If rehabilitation is not financially viable, the Receiver may recommend a Court-authorized sale.
3. Property Sale and Cost Recovery
Sale proceeds are applied first to the Receiver's costs, then to legal costs incurred by the County's outside counsel (Jones Mayer), and lastly toward reimbursement of County staff time and nuisance-abatement expenditures.

4. Case Closure

The County closes the code case once violations are corrected and compliance is verified. This may occur either through rehabilitation by the Receiver or compliance by a new owner following sale.

In addition to physical remediation, receiverships often result in improved neighborhood safety, site stabilization, and environmental protection. Where occupants are present, the process may also allow coordination with service providers to support rehousing or assistance when appropriate.

The Department anticipates continuing to initiate approximately two to three receiverships per year on a strategic basis, ensuring this tool remains focused on the County's highest-risk properties. Included as *Attachment A* to this memorandum, is an update and summary of current receivership case statuses.

BODY-WORN CAMERAS (INFORMATIONAL):

As part of the Department's ongoing commitment to transparency, accountability, and staff safety, a public safety technology assessment was conducted to evaluate the potential use of body-worn cameras (BWC) and associated digital evidence management systems for Code Compliance field operations. BWCs may be used to supplement written inspection notes and photographs with time-stamped video documentation and to support consistent records management for administrative proceedings and Public Records Act (PRA) requests.

Evaluation of BWCs:

Potential benefits associated with the use of body-worn cameras in Code Compliance operations include:

- Enhanced documentation: Objective, time-stamped video records of site conditions, violations, and compliance progress that supplement photographs and written inspection notes.
- Staff safety support: Additional documentation during field inspections, particularly in complex, high-tension, or contested environments.
- Transparency and accountability: Objective records that can assist in clarifying disputed interactions or observed conditions and support consistent application of County policies.
- Improved evidence management: Centralized digital storage and retrieval capabilities that support administrative hearings, case continuity, and efficient PRA response processes.

Potential operational limitations and negative impacts associated with the use of body-worn cameras in Code Compliance operations include:

- Reduced approachability and voluntary compliance: The use of body-worn cameras may alter the tone of field interactions by creating a perception of law enforcement or surveillance, which can undermine trust, rapport, and cooperation. Property owners may be less willing to engage openly or voluntarily comply when recorded on their private property.
- Privacy and PRA impacts: Recorded footage would be subject to PRAs and may capture private spaces, personal property, tenants, reporting parties, or minors. Review and redaction of such footage would require significant staff time, training, and oversight and could increase the risk of inadvertent disclosure.
- Increased administrative and records management burden: Video recordings would require secure storage, retention, retrieval, and case-specific management, adding workload to staff responsible for records management, discovery, and PRA responses.
- Fiscal and resource impacts: Ongoing costs would include equipment maintenance, software licensing, data storage, and potential staffing needs. Additional costs related to PRA compliance, redaction, and legal review would need to be identified and funded.
- Limited added value to compliance outcomes: Existing tools such as photographs, inspection notes, and site documentation already support violation verification and enforcement. The extent to which body-worn cameras would meaningfully improve

compliance outcomes is unclear.

Budgetary Evaluation:

For planning purposes, the Department obtained a non-binding, budgetary five-year quote for a body-worn camera and digital evidence management system, which also includes an optional in-vehicle camera component. The proposed configuration includes:

- Nine (9) body-worn cameras with docking stations and magnetic shirt mounts.
- Seven (7) in-vehicle cameras installed in County vehicles.
- A digital evidence management platform with licenses supporting staff use and PRA processing; and
- Unlimited device-based storage and warranty coverage.

The total estimated five-year cost for this system is \$196,329.68. Not included in this cost is the administrative and records management costs that would be associated with the implementation of such a system. Currently the Department does not have sufficient staff support to absorb the increased workload.

Peer Practices:

The use of body-worn cameras for code compliance and code enforcement functions is not uniform across California. However, based on staff research, a limited number of county and city jurisdictions have formally evaluated or implemented body-worn camera programs for non-law-enforcement field staff, including:

- Lake County (County example): Lake County has publicly presented and adopted a Code Enforcement Body-Worn Camera Policy through action of the Lake County Board of Supervisors, establishing a documented county-level framework for code enforcement use.
- City of Sierra Madre (Los Angeles County): The Sierra Madre City Council has approved the use of a body-worn camera for the City's Code Enforcement Officer.
- City of Imperial (Imperial County): The Imperial City Council has approved a body-worn camera policy that outlines use for official code enforcement and inspection activities.
- City of Pinole (Contra Costa County): The City's Fiscal Year 2024–25 budget documentation references a pilot program utilizing a body-worn camera for the Code Enforcement Officer position.

Collectively, these examples demonstrate that the use of body-worn cameras for code compliance functions is an emerging practice in California. Governance structures, operational use, and scope vary by jurisdiction based on local policy direction, field conditions, privacy considerations, fiscal capacity, and resource availability.

Board Consideration:

If desired, further evaluation of a BWC system could be completed and presented to the Board at a public meeting.

CONCLUSION:

The Code & Cannabis Compliance Department remains committed to protecting public health and safety, improving neighborhood conditions, and resolving code violations in a fair, transparent, and fiscally responsible manner. As outlined in this memorandum, the Code Compliance Division continues to emphasize voluntary compliance while strategically utilizing enforcement tools such as policy and procedural updates, Nuisance Abatements, and Receiverships to address complex and persistent violations.

Looking ahead to 2026, continued refinements to the Code Compliance Procedure Manual, updated notice and enforcement practices, prioritization of long-standing cases, and judicious use of available enforcement tools will further strengthen the Division's ability to achieve timely and effective resolution of code violation cases. These efforts support the County's broader goal of fostering safe, compliant, and sustainable communities for all residents of Nevada County.

Item Initiated By: Matt Kelley, Director, Code & Cannabis Compliance

Approved By: Trisha Tillotson, Director, Nevada County Community Development Agency
Director

Attachments:

- A. Summary of Current Receivership Case Statuses