

# How to Help

## Lead by Example!

Keep your yard mowed, trash and debris picked up, bushes trimmed, and house in good repair.

## Help Others!

If you know someone who is unable to perform basic property maintenance, offer to lend a hand. Helping others always delivers smiles!

## The Good Samaritan Law (IC 34-30-26-5)

Allows for certain actions on **vacant and abandoned properties**. This law allows people, other than the property owner, to perform certain actions on vacant and abandoned properties. Mowing and landscaping the yard and removing trash and debris are permitted.

## Organize a Neighborhood Cleanup!

We're happy to help you do this! Not only does it make neighborhoods sparkle, it introduces neighbors who may have otherwise never met.

## Contact Us!

If you see a suspected violation, or have a problem property in your neighborhood, please let us know. All calls are anonymous.

# Why It Matters

Permitting grass to grow taller than 9" can present many challenges:

- It's dangerous! Tall grass and weeds can block the line-of-sight for motorists and pedestrians.
- It encourages the presence of bugs and insects like ticks and mosquitoes.
- It provides a home for pests like mice, moles, raccoons and rodents.
- Tall grass and weeds can aggravate allergies.
- It provides cover for criminal activity.
- It collects trash and debris.
- Aesthetics - no one likes looking at it!

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## Contact Us!

227 W. Jefferson Blvd.

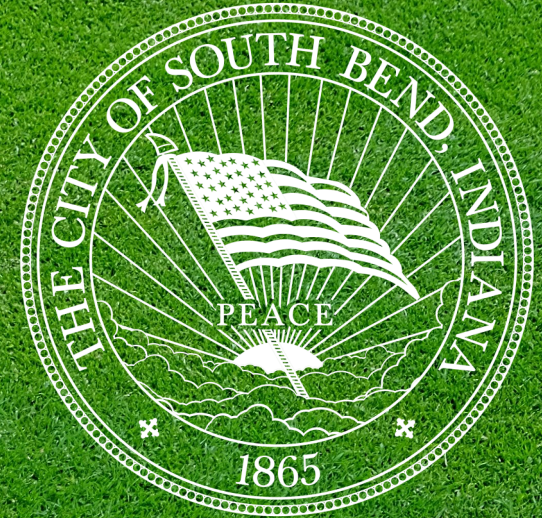
South Bend, IN 46601

Phone: 574-233-0311 (or dial 311)

Email: [Neighborhoods@southbendin.gov](mailto:Neighborhoods@southbendin.gov)

Website: <https://southbendin.gov/department/code-enforcement>

# Grass and Weeds



**Neighborhood  
Services &  
Enforcement**

**City of South Bend**



# Process

A grass and weed violation may be opened as a result of:

- a citizen complaint or
- an inspector's observation in the field

1. The inspector will verify whether the grass and weeds are nine (9) inches or taller.

- If the grass is not yet 9", the inspector will close out the case as "no violation."
- If the grass is 9" or taller, the inspector will mark it as "in violation" and a notice will be mailed to the property owner.

2. The property owner is asked to mow his/her property, ideally, within 48 hours per City Ordinance 16-59.

See [www.municode.com/library/in/south\\_bend/codes/code\\_of\\_ordinances](http://www.municode.com/library/in/south_bend/codes/code_of_ordinances) for full ordinances, additional ordinances, restrictions and information.

# Process (cont.)

3. The inspector will reinspect the property after 10 days per Indiana Code 36-1-6-2.
- If the grass has been mowed, the inspector will close out the case as "completed by owner."
  - If the grass is still taller than 9", the inspector will send the violation to Venues, Parks and Arts (VPA) for mowing.
4. After VPA has mowed the grass and weeds, Neighborhood Services & Enforcement will bill the owner for work performed and administrative costs PLUS issue an ordinance violation ticket.
5. If the owner fails to pay within 30 days, the invoice and/or ordinance violation ticket is referred to collections.

# Fine Issued

Under Sec. 19-35, for every abatement completed by VPA, a \$250 fine will be imposed. If the property is under Continuous Enforcement, a different fee structure applies.

# Ordinances & Codes

## Applicable City Ordinance (abbreviated):

### 16-53 Conditions Constituting Public Nuisances

(18) Trees, shrubbery, weeds, snow or other matter obstructing public ways, or causing visual barriers which create vehicular traffic or pedestrian safety hazards.

### 16-59 Removal of Vegetation

(a) *Definitions.* As used in this section, "weeds and rank vegetation" means grass and weeds over nine (9) inches high, but not including small trees and bushes.

(b) *Notice.* The Department of Code Enforcement shall give forty-eight (48) hours notice, in writing, to remove from any real or personal property within the City weeds and rank vegetation.

(c) *Failure to comply.* Upon a failure to comply with a notice issued pursuant to subsection (b), the Department of Code Enforcement or an entity acting on behalf of the Department of Code Enforcement may enter upon the property to abate the violation of this section by cutting the weeds and rank vegetation.

## Applicable Indiana Code (abbreviated):

### IC 36-1-6-2 Local Government

Sec. 2. (a) If a condition violating an ordinance of a municipal corporation exists on real property, employees or contractors of a municipal corporation may enter onto that property and take appropriate action to bring the property into compliance with the ordinance. However, before action to bring compliance may be taken, all persons holding a substantial interest in the property must be given a reasonable opportunity of at least ten (10) days but not more than sixty (60) days to bring the property into compliance. If the municipal corporation takes action to bring compliance, the expenses incurred by the municipal corporation to bring compliance constitute a lien against the property.