

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE,  
TEXAS AMENDING THE ORANGE CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 7  
“OFFENSES AND NUISANCES” BY ADDING ARTICLE 7.1700 “CAMPING  
ON PRIVATE PROPERTY”; REPEALING ALL ORDINANCES IN CONFLICT  
WITH THIS ORDINANCE TO THE EXTENT OF SUCH CONFLICT;  
PROVIDING A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE; PROVIDING A PENALTY  
CLAUSE; PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND OTHER MATTERS**

**WHEREAS**, the City Council of Orange seeks to provide for the health, safety and welfare of the citizens of Orange; and

**WHEREAS**, unauthorized camping is frequently the cause of public health nuisances, including the improper disposal of human excreta, wastewater and garbage, as defined by section 341.011 of the Texas Health and Safety Code; and

**WHEREAS**, unauthorized camping may provide harborage to rodents and other disease-carrying pests which may be innately harmful to people and property; and

**WHEREAS**, unauthorized camping may create a fire hazard to structures and nearby properties; and

**WHEREAS**, unauthorized camping may diminish property values and the appearance of a neighborhood, diminishing any incentive for others in the neighborhood to maintain their own property, thus creating a self-perpetuating cycle; and

**WHEREAS**, unauthorized camping more frequently occurs on unattended or vacant properties; and

**WHEREAS**, it is in the legitimate interest of the City of Orange to protect the health, safety, and welfare of its citizens by setting reasonable standards for the maintenance of private properties and by abating the nuisances related to unauthorized camping on private properties; now, therefore

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF ORANGE,  
TEXAS**

**Section 1.** The Orange Code of Ordinances Chapter 7 “Offenses & Nuisances” is hereby amended to add Article 7.1700 “Camping on Private Property” to read as follows:

(a) Definitions.

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this Article 7.1700, shall have the meanings ascribed to them as follows:

*Camp or camping* shall mean residing or dwelling temporarily on property, a lot or a parcel of land, using Transitory Shelter and including the following:

- Sleeping either with or without bedding, or making preparation to sleep, including laying down of bedding, sleeping bag, blanket, mattress, tent, hammock, or other similar protection or equipment for the purpose of sleeping;
- Storing personal belongings for a period longer than seventy-two (72) consecutive hours;
- Making a fire; or
- Performing cooking activities.

*Governmental Entity* shall mean a political subdivision of the State of Texas, including, but not limited to, a municipality, county, unit of state government, public school district, junior college district, community college district, or special purpose district.

*Non-residential* shall mean any property or area within the city limits of the City of Orange that is located in a commercial zoning district, industrial zoning district, or a mixed use zoning district as provided for in the Orange Code of Ordinance Chapter 12 “Planning and Zoning” Sections 12.603 “Commercial Zoning Districts”, Section 12.604 “Industrial Zoning District or Section 12.605 “MUZD-Mixed Use Zoning District”.

*Private property* shall mean property, lot, or parcel of land owned by anyone other than a governmental entity.

*Residential* shall mean any property or area within the city limits of the City of Orange that is located in a residential district as defined in the Orange Code of Ordinances Chapter 12 “Planning and Zoning” Section 12.602 “Residential Zoning Districts”.

*Reside or dwell* shall mean, without limitation, eating, sleeping or the storage of personal possessions for longer than seventy-two (72) hours on any property, lot, or parcel of land within the city limits.

*Transitory Shelter* shall mean, without limitation, any tent, tarpaulin, lean-to, sleeping bag, bedroll, mattress, blanket, cloth, clothing, cardboard, newspapers, or any form of cover or protection from the elements that is not manufactured or designed to be a permanent structure.

*Unauthorized camping* shall mean camping without obtaining permission from the property owner, tenant or owner’s agent; or, camping in violation of this ordinance.

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(b) Prohibition. It shall be unlawful for any person to camp upon any residential or non-residential private property for more than seventy-two (72) hours within a twelve (12) month period and only within the rear yard of the private property.

(c) Defenses. It is an affirmative defense to prosecution that the person charged with violation of this section was camping in a recreational vehicle park, camp or campground as provided for in the Orange Code of Ordinances Chapter 12 "Planning and Zoning" Article 12.2000 "Recreational Vehicle Parks, Camps and Campgrounds".

**Section 2.** That, all Ordinances in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance be repealed to the extent of such conflict and all other Ordinances of the City not in conflict with the provisions of this Ordinance shall remain in full force and effect.


**Section 3.** That, it is expressly ordained that if any section, subsection, clause, sentence or paragraph of this ordinance shall be found to be illegal, invalid or void by any court of competent jurisdiction, then such findings shall not affect the remaining portions of this ordinance, but the same shall be valid and in effect, it being the expressed intention of the City Council of the City of Orange, Texas, to pass each and every sentence, clause, paragraph, or section individually.

**Section 4.** That, any person who violates any provision of this Ordinance shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction shall be fined in an amount not to exceed the maximum amount allowed by the City of Orange Code of Ordinances Chapter 1 "General Provisions" Section 1.106 "General Penalty for Code Violations" of the City of Orange Code of Ordinances.


**Section 5.** That, this ordinance shall become effective upon second and final reading and publication as required by the City Charter and State law

**PASSED AND APPROVED** on first reading this the 28th day of October, 2025.


**PASSED, APPROVED AND ADOPTED** on final reading this the 18th day of November 2025.

  
Larry Spears Jr., Mayor

**ATTEST:**

  
Patricia Anderson, City Secretary

**APPROVED AS TO FORM:**

  
City Attorney

## MEMORANDUM

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**To:** Mike Kunst, City Manager  
**From:** Kelvin Knauf, Director of Planning and Community Development  
**Subject:** Consider and possible action on an ordinance regulating camping on private property  
**Date:** October 15, 2025

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Attached for your consideration is an ordinance that would regulate camping activities on private property. The purpose of the ordinance is to protect public health, safety, and neighborhood integrity by regulating unauthorized camping on private land within the city limits.

The ordinance establishes that unauthorized camping can lead to public health nuisances such as improper waste disposal, can harbor rodents and pests, increase fire risk, and reduce property values. Such camping often occurs on unattended or vacant lots, but the ordinance also regulates camping on developed lots.

The ordinance defines camping as residing or dwelling temporarily on property, a lot or a parcel of land, using transitory shelter<sup>1</sup> and including the following:

- Sleeping either with or without bedding, or making preparation to sleep, including laying down of bedding, sleeping bag, blanket, mattress, tent, hammock, or other similar protection or equipment for the purpose of sleeping;
- Storing personal belongings for a period longer than seventy-two (72) consecutive hours;
- Making a fire; or
- Performing cooking activities.

The ordinance restrict camping on residential or non-residential private property for more than 72 consecutive hours within a 12-month period, and only within the rear yard of the property. This limits both duration and location of permissible camping. An affirmative defense to enforcement of the ordinance is if the individual was camping in a recreational vehicle park, camp, or campground. The zoning ordinance restricts recreational vehicle parks, camps or campgrounds to properties that are adjacent to Highway 62.

Violations of the ordinance are punishable by a fine not exceeding the maximum amount allowed under Section 1.106 of the Orange Code of Ordinances. Each day of a continued violation may constitute a separate offense.

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<sup>1</sup> Transitory shelter is defined in the ordinance as any tent, tarpaulin, lean-to, sleeping bag, bedroll, mattress, blanket, cloth, clothing, cardboard, newspapers, or any form of cover or protection from the elements that is not manufactured or designed to be a permanent structure.