

ORDINANCE 2025-13

REGULATIONS REGARDING UNAUTHORIZED CAMPING LODGING, AND/OR SQUATTING, ON PUBLIC PROPERTY and to Provide for Other Matters regarding to the same.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL of the City of Baker, Parish of East Baton Rouge, Louisiana, in regular session assembled, a proper quorum being there and then assembled on August 12, **2025** declared as follows, to-wit:

Regarding unauthorized camping lodging, and/or squatting, on public property, the intent of this ordinance is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the residents, business owners and the public at large within the city, and to assure all public property is readily accessible, clean and sanity. There is no intent to interfere with otherwise lawful and ordinary uses of public property, this Ordinance is herein and hereby Enacted as follows:

SECTION 1:

Definitions:

- (a) Camping, lodging, and/or squatting means the use of public property as a temporary or permanent place of dwelling, lodging or residence, or as a living accommodation at any time. Indications of camping may include, but are not limited to, burning a fire, carrying on cooking activities, storing personal belongings, laying down bedding for sleeping, using tents or temporary structures for shelter, sleeping or storing of personal belongings. Such activities constitute camping when it reasonably appears under the circumstances that the participants are using the area as a living accommodation, no matter how temporary.
- (b) Public property means any public school, city park including gazebo, playground, street, sidewalk, right-of-way, highway, alleyway, bike path, city building, transit stop or facility or land whether improved or unimproved, or attraction, structure, facility, parking lot, or property open for public use.

SECTION 2:

Prohibited Acts and Regulations

No person shall camp, lodge and/or squat on any public property, unless it is an area specifically authorized for camping, lodging or squatting or the person possesses a permit allowing such activity in the area within the City of Baker.

This section does not apply to temporary structures or camps set up by a government agency or relief workers during a disaster or emergency situation.

Nothing in this article shall be construed to criminalize homelessness, target the homeless community, or otherwise criminalize an individual's status rather than conduct.

SECTION 3:

PENALTIES

Any person who violates this Ordinance shall be imprisoned no more than fourteen days or pay a fine up to Two Hundred Fifty (\$250.00) or both.

SECTION 4:

All Ordinances and parts of Ordinances in conflict herewith and the same are hereby Repealed.

All Ordinances not in conflict herewith and not affected by the amendment hereinabove set forth are hereby maintained in full force and effect as if re-enacted herein.

The Repeal of an Ordinance shall not affect any punishment or penalty incurred before the repeal took effect, or any suit, prosecution or proceedings pending at the time of the repeal, for an offense committed under the ordinance repealed.

SECTION 5: SEVERABILITY

It is hereby declared to be the intention of the City Council that the sections, paragraphs, sentences, clauses, and phrases of this ordinance are severable, and if any phrase, clause, sentence, paragraph or section of this ordinance shall be declared unconstitutional by any Court of competent jurisdiction, such unconstitutionality shall not affect any of the remaining phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, or sections of this ordinance, since the same would have been enacted by the City Council without the incorporation in this ordinance of any such unconstitutional phrases, clauses, sentence, paragraph or section. If the provisions of this ordinance, or the application thereof to any person, fact, situation or circumstance are held invalid, the remainder of this ordinance and the application of such provisions to the other persons, facts, situations or circumstances, shall not be affected thereby.

SECTION 6: INVALIDATION

If any provision of this Ordinance or the application thereof is held invalid, such invalidity shall not affect other provisions or applications of this ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid provisions or applications and, to that end, any and all provisions of this ordinance and applications thereof are declared to be severable.

This Ordinance having been submitted to a vote, the vote thereon was as follows:

YEAS: Collins, Dunn, Murphy, Vincent, Young

NAYS: None

ABSENT: None

ABSTAIN: None

And the Ordinance was presented July 22, 2025 at the regular meeting of the Baker City Council held at the City Hall Building in Baker, Louisiana.

And the Ordinance was declared adopted subject to legal review on this, the 12th day of August, 2025 at the regular meeting of the Baker City Council held at the Baker City Hall Building in Baker, Louisiana.

ATTEST:

/s/Angela Canady Wall, LCMC, Clerk of Council

/s/Darnell Waites, Mayor