



CITY OF WILMINGTON  
**DEPARTMENT OF LICENSES AND INSPECTIONS**  
800 N. FRENCH STREET  
WILMINGTON, DELAWARE 19801

Department of Licenses & Inspections  
Phone Number: 302-576-3030

**SUMMARY OF ANNUAL REGISTRATION OF VACANT BUILDINGS AND ASSOCIATED FEES**  
**Wilmington City Code Chapter 4, 4-27, 120.0 et seq.**

**Fee Schedule:**

Your registration fee for this year is based upon the total number of years the property has been vacant as of November 1<sup>st</sup>, regardless of varying ownership during the period of vacancy. The updated fee schedule is as follows:

Less than 1 year:	\$0
At least 1 year but less than 2 years:	\$500.00
At least 2 years but less than 3 years:	\$2,500.00
At least 3 years but less than 4 years:	\$5,000.00
At least 4 years but less than 5 years:	\$10,000.00
At least 5 years or more:	\$12,000.00

**PAST DUE FEES ARE NOT SUBJECTED TO REQUEST FOR A WAIVER.**

**All past due balances must be paid in order to receive a waiver of the current year's fee. Additionally, all properties must be registered to receive a waiver of registration fee.**

**DUTY TO AMEND REGISTRATION:** If the status of the registration information changes during the course of any calendar year, it is the responsibility of the owner, responsible party, or agent for the same to contact the Department of Licenses & Inspections within 30 days of the occurrence of such change and advise the department in writing of those changes.

**VIOLATIONS & PENALTIES:** The failure or refusal for any reason of any owner, or agent acting on behalf of the owner, to register a vacant building to pay any required fees pursuant to the provisions of this section, within 30 days after they become due, shall constitute a violation punishable upon conviction thereof by a fine in the amount of not less than \$100.00 nor more than \$500.00 for each failure or refusal to register, or for each failure or refusal to pay a required vacant building fee, as applicable. In such cases, whenever the minimum fine of \$100.00 is imposed, it shall not be subject to suspension or reduction for any reason.

**DELIQUENT REGISTRATION FEES AS A LIEN:** After the owner is given notice of the amount of the registration fee due, except for those owners who have properly perfected an appeal or received a waiver, and the owner fails to pay the amount due, said amount shall constitute a debt due and owing to the City, and the City may commence a civil action to collect the unpaid debt. The unpaid debt amount constitutes a lien on the property.

**NON-PROFIT INFORMATION:** Vacant registration fees billed to a qualifying non-profit housing provider who received its vacant property directly from the City or who received public funds for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or redevelopment of its vacant property shall be calculated from the time the non-profit housing provider received the building or funds.

**OCCUPANCY READY VACANT STRUCTURES:** Any building that is vacant but has been recently rehabilitated and received a **certificate of occupancy or certificate of completion**, or if the building has not been recently rehabilitated, it meets ALL minimum code requirements and may be occupied immediately, may be considered “**occupancy ready**”. If the building is actively listed for sale or rent, it shall be exempt from the assessment of Vacant Registration Fees for two consecutive billing cycles. To qualify as “occupancy ready”, the building must be inspected (and pass inspections) by the Department of Licenses & Inspections. Buildings qualifying as “occupancy ready” must still be registered with the Department of Licenses & Inspections.

If the Commissioner denies your request for a waiver, you may appeal the Commissioner’s decision to the Board of Licenses & Inspections Review by following the procedures specified below for an appeal. Your appeal request must be received within 15 days from the date of the Commissioner’s decision.

**APPEAL FROM THE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS:**

As the owner, you have the right to appeal the registration requirement and/or the registration fee imposed. To appeal the registration requirement and/or fee, please submit a \$50.00 non-refundable filing fee and a written request stating the reason you believe you are not subject to the registration requirement fee to:

**Vacant Registration Appeal – Board of Licenses & Inspections Review**  
**Department of Licenses & Inspections**  
**800 N. French Street 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**  
**Wilmington, DE 19801**

To be considered, your request must be received with the \$50.00 filing fee in the Department of Licenses & Inspections no later **than 30 days from the date of the billing statement**.

A hearing will be scheduled before the Board of Licenses & Inspections Review. At this hearing, you may introduce evidence and/or witnesses to support your appeal. An attorney may represent you, or you may choose to present your appeal on your own. On appeal, the owner bears the burden of proving the property was occupied during that period of time he or she was assessed a vacant registration fee or that he/she is not the owner of the property. The Board of Licenses & Inspections Review has the authority to affirm, modify, reverse, vacate, or revoke the action for which the appeal is being made. A written notice of the Board’s decision will follow the hearing.

**Vacant Property Contact Information:**

**Email:** [vacantproperty@wilmingtonde.gov](mailto:vacantproperty@wilmingtonde.gov)

**Phone Number:** 302-576-3096

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This document merely a summary of Wilmington City Code, Chapter 4, 4-27, 120.0, it is not intended to be a full recitation of the requirements of this ordinance. Persons affected by 4-27, 120.0 may obtain a copy of the full ordinance by contacting the Department of Licenses & Inspections at (302) 576-3030, or online through the City’s website [www.wilmingtonde.gov](http://www.wilmingtonde.gov).