

Chronic Nuisance Amendments

June 24, 2025

SEATTLE
CITY HALL

Background - History

The Chronic Nuisance Properties ordinance—first adopted in 2009—has been used 17 times.

- Seven motels, five nightclubs, three private residences, one apartment building, and one commercial event space.

A property may be declared a chronic nuisance:

- If three or more **nuisance activities** are documented in a 60-day period, OR seven or more occur in any 12-month period.

Background – Current Qualifying Offenses

- **“Most Serious Offense”** as defined in 9.94A RCW; these are generally Class A felonies.
- **“Drug Related Activity”** as defined in 59.18.130 RCW.
- **Assault, fighting, menacing, stalking, harassment, or reckless endangerment** as defined in Seattle Municipal Code Chapter 12A.06 or in RCW provisions adopted in SMC Chapter 12A.09.
- **Promoting, advancing, or profiting from prostitution** as defined in 9A.88 RCW.
- **Obstructing pedestrian or vehicular traffic** as defined in 12A.12.015.A.4.
- **Failure to disperse** as defined in 12A.12.020.
- **Weapons violations** as defined in Chapter 12A.14.
- **Gang-related activity** as defined in 59.18.030(13) RCW.

Background – Ordinance Application

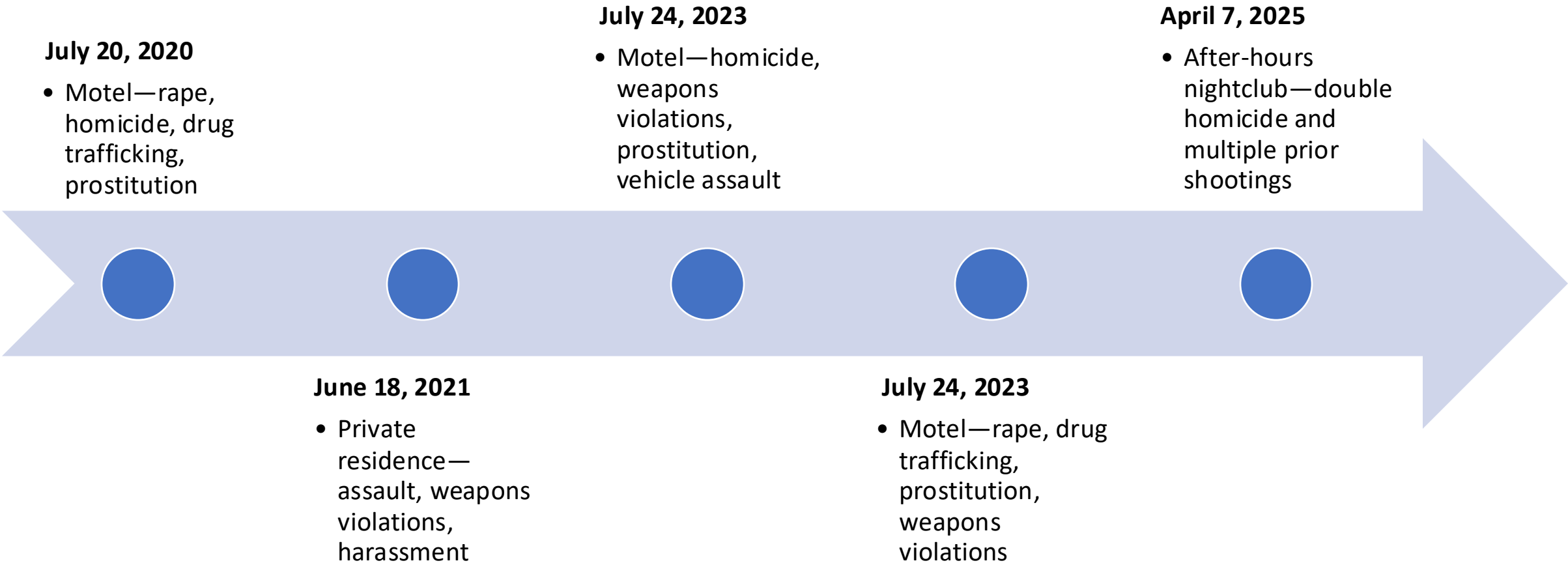
The Chief of Police, in coordination with the City Attorney, may declare a property a chronic nuisance and require a "corrections agreement."

Property owners must respond within seven days and work to abate or mitigate the nuisance.

Penalties for Non-Compliance

Civil fines of \$500 per day and a one-time penalty of \$25,000 may be imposed.

Five Most Recent Declarations of Chronic Nuisance



Proposed Amendment 1: Liquor Violations

- Adding **liquor violations** to the list of offenses considered when determining whether a property is a chronic nuisance.
- This change addresses after-hours venues and other establishments that continually violate liquor laws.

Proposed Amendment 2: Geographic Expansion

- Allowing **off-property nuisance activity** to be considered when determining that a property is a chronic nuisance.
- Requires meeting a **three-part test**.
 1. Occurs adjacent to or in proximity to the property,
 2. Involves a person associated with the property, including guests, *and*
 3. Facts and circumstances establish a nexus between the nuisance activity and the property.

Washington cities with similar off-property provisions—**Bremerton, Everett, Fife, Renton, Spokane, Sunnyside, and Tacoma.**

Stakeholder Outreach

- Washington Nightlife & Music Association
- Approximately 40 nightlife owners
- Teams Q&A Session for nightlife owners
- Business Improvement Areas
- Professional Sports Stadiums

Questions?