Sec. 310.05. - Hearing procedures.

(a) Adverse action; notice and hearing requirements. In any case where the council may or intends to consider any adverse action, including the revocation or suspension of a license, the imposition of conditions upon a license, or the denial of an application for the grant, issuance or renewal of a license, or the disapproval of a license issued by the State of Minnesota, the applicant or licensee shall be given notice and an opportunity to be heard as provided herein. The council may consider such adverse actions when recommended by the inspector, by the director, by the director of any executive department established pursuant to Chapter 9 of the Charter, by the city attorney or on its own initiative.

(b) Notice. In each such case where adverse action is or will be considered by the council, the applicant or licensee shall have been notified in writing that adverse action may be taken against the license or application, and that he or she is entitled to a hearing before action is taken by the council. The notice shall be served or mailed a reasonable time before the hearing date, and shall state the place, date and time of the hearing. The notice shall state the issues involved or grounds upon which the adverse action may be sought or based. The council may request that such written notice be prepared and served or mailed by the inspector or by the city attorney.

(c) Hearing. Where there is no dispute as to the facts underlying the violation or as to the facts establishing mitigating or aggravating circumstances, the hearing shall be held before the council. Otherwise the hearing shall be conducted before a hearing examiner appointed by the council or retained by contract with the city for that purpose. The applicant or the licensee shall be provided an opportunity to present evidence and argument as well as meet adverse testimony or evidence by reasonable cross-examination and rebuttal evidence. The hearing examiner may in its discretion permit other interested persons the opportunity to present testimony or evidence or otherwise participate in such hearing.

(c-1) Procedure; hearing examiner. The hearing examiner shall hear all evidence as may be presented on behalf of the city and the applicant or licensee, and shall present to the council written findings of fact and conclusions of law, together with a recommendation for adverse action.

The council shall consider the evidence contained in the record, the hearing examiner's recommended findings of fact and conclusions, and shall not consider any factual testimony not previously submitted to and considered by the hearing examiner. After receipt of the hearing examiner's findings, conclusions, and recommendations, the council shall provide the applicant or licensee an opportunity to present oral or written arguments alleging error on the part of the examiner in the application of the law or interpretation of the facts, and to present argument related to the recommended adverse action. Upon conclusion of that hearing, and after considering the record, the examiner's findings and recommendations, together with such additional arguments presented at the hearing, the council shall determine what, if any, adverse action shall be taken, which action shall be by resolution. The council may accept, reject or modify the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the hearing examiner.

(c-2) Ex-parte contacts. If a license matter has been scheduled for an adverse hearing, council members shall not discuss the license matter with each other or with any of the parties or interested persons involved in the matter unless such discussion occurs on the record during the hearings of the matter or during the council's final deliberations of the matter. No interested person shall, with knowledge that a license matter has been scheduled for adverse hearing, convey or attempt to convey, orally or in writing, any information, argument or opinion about the matter, or any issue in the matter, to a council member or his or her staff until the council has taken final action on the matter; provided, however, that nothing herein shall prevent an inquiry or communications regarding status, scheduling or procedures concerning a license matter. An interested person, for the purpose of this paragraph, shall mean and include a person who is an officer or employee of the licensee which is the subject of the scheduled adverse hearing, or a person who has a financial interest in such licensee.

(d) Licensee or applicant may be represented. The licensee or applicant may represent himself or choose to be represented by another.

(e) Record; evidence. The hearing examiner shall receive and keep a record of such proceedings, including testimony and exhibits, and shall receive and give weight to evidence, including hearsay evidence, which possesses probative value commonly accepted by reasonable and prudent persons in the conduct of their affairs.

(f) Council action, resolution to contain findings. Where the council takes adverse action with respect to a license, licensee or applicant for a license, the resolution by which such action is taken shall contain its findings and determination, including the imposition of conditions, if any. The council may adopt all or part of the findings, conclusions and recommendations of the hearing examiner, and incorporate the same in its resolution taking the adverse action.

(g) Additional procedures where required. Where the provisions of any statute or ordinance require additional notice or hearing procedures, such provisions shall be complied with and shall supersede inconsistent provisions of these chapters. This shall include, without limitation by reason of this specific reference, Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 364 and Minnesota Statutes, Section 340A.415.

(h) Discretion to hear notwithstanding withdrawal or surrender of application or license. The council may, at its discretion, conduct a hearing or direct that a hearing be held regarding revocation or denial of a license, notwithstanding that the applicant or licensee has attempted or purported to withdraw or surrender said license or application, if the attempted withdrawal or surrender took place after the applicant or licensee had been notified of the hearing and potential adverse action.

(i) Continuances. Where a hearing for the purpose of considering revocation or suspension of a license or other disciplinary action involving a license has been scheduled before the council, a continuation of the hearing may be granted by the council president or by the council at the request of the licensee, license applicant, an interested person or an attorney representing the foregoing, upon a showing of good cause by the party making the request.

(j) If the council imposes an adverse action as defined in section 310.01 above, a generic notice of such action shall be prepared by the license inspector and posted by the licensee so as to be visible to the public during the effective period of the adverse action. The licensee shall be responsible for taking reasonable steps to make sure the notice remains posted on the front door of the licensed premises, and failure to take such reasonable precautions may be grounds for further adverse action.

(k) Imposition of costs. The council may impose upon any licensee or license applicant some or all of the costs of a contested hearing before an independent hearing examiner. The costs of a contested hearing include, but are not limited to, the cost of the administrative law judge or independent hearing examiner, stenographic and recording costs, copying costs, city staff and attorney time for which adequate records have been kept, rental of rooms and equipment necessary for the hearing, and the cost of expert witnesses. The council may impose all or part of such costs in any given case if (i) the position, claim or defense of the licensee or applicant was frivolous, arbitrary or capricious, made in bad faith, or made for the purpose of delay or harassment; (ii) the nature of the violation was serious, or involved violence or the threat of violence by the licensee or employees thereof, or involved the sale of drugs by the licensee or employees thereof, and/or the circumstances under which the violation occurred were aggravated and serious; (iii) the violation created a serious danger to the public health, safety or welfare; (iv) the violation involved unreasonable risk of harm to vulnerable persons, or to persons for whose safety the licensee or applicant is or was responsible; (v) the applicant or licensee was sufficiently in control of the situation and therefore could have reasonably avoided the violation, such as but not limited to, the nonpayment of a required fee or the failure to renew required insurance policies; (vi) the violation is covered by the matrix in section 409.26 of the Legislative Code; or (vii) the violation involved the sale of cigarettes to a minor.

(l) Imposition of fines. The council may impose a fine upon any licensee or license applicant as an adverse license action. A fine may be in such amount as the council deems reasonable and appropriate, having in mind the regulatory and enforcement purposes embodied in the particular licensing ordinance. A fine may be in addition to or in lieu of other adverse action in the sole discretion of the council. To the extent any other provision of the Legislative Code provides for the imposition of a fine, both provisions shall be read together to the extent possible; provided, however, that in the case of any conflict or inconsistency, the other provision shall be controlling.

(m) Presumptive penalties for certain violations. The purpose of this section is to establish a standard by which the city council determines the amount of fines, the length of license suspensions and the propriety of revocations, and shall apply to all license types, except that in the case of a violation involving a liquor license § 409.26 shall apply where a specific violation is listed. In the case of an adverse action filed for a violation of chapter 331A, the licensee shall be given a fine for each individual violation of chapter 331A. The total fine amount for violations of chapter 331A may exceed the maximum fine outlined below due to multiple violations in one (1) appearance. All penalty recommendations for chapter 331A violations shall be based on the food penalty guideline referred to in chapter 331A. These penalties are presumed to be appropriate for every case; however the council may deviate therefrom in an individual case where the council finds and determines that there exist substantial and compelling reasons making it more appropriate to do so. When deviating from these standards, the council shall provide written reasons that specify why the penalty selected was more appropriate.

Type of Violation	Appearance			
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th
(1) Violations of conditions placed on the license	$500.00 fine	$1,000.00 fine	$2,000.00 fine and 10-day suspension	Revocation
(2) Violation of provisions of the legislative code relating to the licensed activity	$500.00 fine	$1,000.00 fine	$2,000.00 fine and 10-day suspension	Revocation
(3) Violation of provisions of the legislative code relating to the licensed activity, other than violations of the food code	$500.00 fine	$1,000.00 fine	$2,000.00 fine and 10-day suspension	Revocation
(4) Failure to permit entrance or inspection by DSI inspector or police	5-day suspension	10-day suspension	15-day suspension	Revocation
(5) Commission of a crime other than a felony on the premises by a licensee or employee	$700.00	$1,500.00	5-day suspension	Revocation
(6) Commission of a felony on the premises by a licensee or employee	$2,000.00	Revocation	n/a	n/a
(7) Death or great bodily harm in establishment related to violation of law or license conditions	30-day suspension	60-day suspension	Revocation	n/a

(8) Failure to pay license fees	Suspension	Revocation		
(9) Critical violations under 331A	$250.00	$500.00	$1,000.00, 5-day suspension	Revocation
(10) Non-critical violation under 331A	$150.00	$250.00	$500.00	$1,000.00
(11) Taxi fail to display driver's license as required by 376.16(f)	$100.00	$250.00	$500.00	Revocation
(12) Taxi fail to display number of information and complaint office as required by 376.11(v)	$100.00	$250.00	$500.00	Revocation
(13) Violation of restrictions upon sidewalk café license under 106.01(b)	$200.00	$400.00	$800.00	Revocation

(i) Fines payable without hearing.

A. Notwithstanding the provisions of section 310.05(c), a licensee who would be making a first or second appearance before the council may elect to pay the fine to the department of safety and inspections without a council hearing, unless the notice of violation has indicated that a hearing is required because of circumstances which may warrant deviation from the presumptive fine amount. Payment of the recommended fine will be considered to be a waiver of the hearing to which the licensee is entitled, and will be considered an "appearance" for the purpose of determining presumptive penalties for subsequent violations.

B. For adverse action initiated under chapter 331A of this Code, a fine may be paid without a hearing regardless of how many prior appearances that licensee has made before the council. The above council hearing requirement applies to violations under chapter 331A unless the fine recommended by the department of safety and inspections is equal to or less than the fine amount outlined in the above matrix. Payment of the recommended fine will be considered to be a waiver of the hearing to which the licensee is entitled, and will be considered an "appearance" for the purpose of determining presumptive penalties for subsequent violations. A non-critical violation under chapter 331A shall not be considered an "appearance" for purposes of determining presumptive penalties for non-331A violations. A council hearing is required if the department of safety and inspections recommends a fine that is an upward departure for the amount outlined above.

(ii) Multiple violations. At a licensee's first appearance before the city council, the council shall consider and act upon all the violations that have been alleged and/or incorporated in the notices sent to the licensee under the administrative procedures act up to and including the formal notice of hearing. The council in that case shall consider the presumptive penalty for each such violation under the "1st Appearance" column in paragraph (b) above. The occurrence of multiple violations shall be grounds for departure from such penalties in the council's discretion.

(iii) Violations occurring after the date of the notice of hearing. Violations occurring after the date of the notice of hearing that are brought to the attention of the city attorney prior to the hearing date before an administrative law judge (or before the council in an uncontested facts hearing) may be added to the notice(s) by stipulation if the licensee admits to the facts, and shall in that case be treated as though part of the "1st Appearance." In all other cases, violations occurring after the date of the formal notice of hearing shall be the subject of a separate proceeding and dealt with as a "2nd Appearance" before the council. The same procedures shall apply to a second, third or fourth appearance before the council.

(iv) Subsequent appearances. Upon a second, third or fourth appearance before the council by a particular licensee, the council shall impose the presumptive penalty for the violation or violations giving rise to the subsequent appearance without regard to the particular violation or violations that were the subject of the first or prior appearance. However, non-critical violations of chapter 331A shall not be counted as an "appearance" before the council in relation to any violation other than another violation of chapter 331A.

(v) Computation of time.

(1) Second appearance. A second violation within twelve (12) months shall be treated as a second appearance for the purpose of determining the presumptive penalty.

(2) Third appearance. A third violation within eighteen (18) months shall be treated as a third appearance for the purpose of determining the presumptive penalty.

(3) Fourth appearance. A fourth violation within twenty-four (24) months shall be treated as a fourth appearance for the purpose of determining the presumptive penalty.

(4) Any appearance not covered by subsections (1), (2) or (3) above shall be treated as a first appearance. Measurement of the twelve-, eighteen-, or twenty-four-month period shall be as follows: The beginning date shall be the earliest violation's date of appearance before the council, and the ending date shall be the date of the new violation. In case of multiple new violations, the ending date to be used shall be the date of the violation last in time.

(5) Notwithstanding subsections (iv)(1), (2), (3) or (4) above, a second appearance before the council regarding a death or great bodily harm in a licensed establishment that is related to a violation of the law or license conditions shall be counted as a second appearance, regardless of how much time has passed since the first appearance if the first appearance was also regarding a death or great bodily harm in a licensed establishment. A third appearance for the same shall be counted as a third appearance regardless of how much time has passed since the first or second appearance.

(6) For the purpose of a second, third or fourth appearance under this section, "violation" shall mean either one of those violations listed in paragraph (m) or a violation of section 409.26(b).

(Code 1956, § 510.05; Ord. No. 17551, § 2, 4-19-88; Ord. No. 17559, §§ 1, 2, 5-17-88; Ord. No. 17659, § 1, 6-13-89; Ord. No. 17911, § 1, 3-10-92; C.F. No. 94-46, § 7, 2-2-94; C.F. No. 94-898, §§ 2, 3, 7-13-94; C.F. No. 94-1340, § 2, 10-19-94; C.F. No. 95-473, § 4, 5-31-95; C.F. No. 05-180, § 1, 4-6-05; C.F. No. 06-954, § 1, 11-8-06; C.F. No. 06-1072, § 1, 12-27-06; C.F. No. 07-149, § 73, 3-28-07; C.F. No. 07-1053, § 1, 11-28-07; C.F. No. 08-1208, § 1, 12-17-08; C.F. No. 10-665, § 1, 7-28-10; Ord. No. 11-93, § 1, 9-28-11; Ord. No. 11-94, § 1, 10-12-11; Ord 12-42, § 1, 8-22-12; Ord 12-85, § 1, 1-23-13)