

Hocking County Noise Ordinance

Section 1: Purpose and Applicability.

- A. **Purpose.** The purpose of the Hocking County Noise Ordinance is to promote the public health, safety, and welfare by regulating excessive and unnecessary noise within the County. This Section is intended to protect residents, businesses, and visitors from noise disturbances that may interfere with the peaceful enjoyment of property, disrupt community life, or negatively impact environmental quality.
- B. **Applicability.** The noise requirements of this Ordinance shall apply to all unincorporated portions of Hocking County, OH.

Section 2: Definitions

1. **Consistent noise:** Any sound that occurs repeatedly or continuously over a period of time and originates from the same source or activity, such as machinery, music, animal vocalizations, or human behavior and that:
 - a. Persists for durations exceeding 10 minutes without significant interruption; or
 - b. Recurrs at regular intervals (e.g., hourly, daily, or weekly) in a manner that disrupts the reasonable quiet enjoyment of property;
2. **Receiving party:** A parcel of party other than where a sound originates that is impacted by high noise levels.
3. **Sound level meter:** A device which measures sound pressure levels and conforms to Type 1 or Type 2 as specified in the American National Standards Institute Specification S1.4-1971.

Section 3: Noise Standards.

A. Methods of Noise Measurement.

- [1.] For the purposes of enforcing the provisions of this Ordinance, noise shall be measured in dab using a sound level meter, with the measurements taken at the noisiest point within ~~the a~~ receiving property or right-of-way.
- [2.] ~~A dBAa is way to measure how loud a sound is, using a scale that mimics how human ears hear. It is measured with a special tool called a sound level meter, which adjusts for the fact that we, as human beings hear some frequencies better than others. The dBA formula uses a logarithm, which means the scale increases quickly. The higher the number the more intense the sound becomes. the sound pressure in decibels measured using the "A" weighting network on the sound level meter. The sound pressure level, in decibels, of a sound is twenty (20) times the logarithm to the base of ten (10) of the ratio of the pressure of the sound to a reference pressure of twenty (20) micropascals.~~
- [3.] ~~A sound level meter is a device which measures sound pressure levels and conforms to Type 1 or Type 2 as specified in the American National Standards Institute Specification S1.4 1971.~~

~~[4.] The receiving property is real property within which the maximum permissible noise levels specified herein shall not be exceeded from sources outside such property.~~

[B.] Exemptions from Noise Regulations.

1. *Exemptions During the Day.* The following shall be exempt from the provisions this Ordinance between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M. only:
 - a. Sounds created by the discharge of firearms on authorized shooting ranges.
 - b. Sounds created by blasting.
 - c. Sounds created by the installation of utility services.
 - d. Sounds originating from temporary construction sites as a result of construction activity.
 - e. Sounds created by firearms in the course of hunting and target practice that is not otherwise prohibited by a County ordinance.
 - f. Sounds created by lawn maintenance equipment such as a lawnmower or leaf blower that is typically used for the continuing maintenance of property.
2. *Exemptions at all times.* The following shall be exempt from the provisions of this Ordinance at all times:
 - a. Sounds created by motor vehicles operated on public roads and highways.
 - b. Sounds created by surface carriers engaged in interstate commerce by railroad.
 - c. Sounds created by warning devices not operating continuously for more than five minutes, or bells, chimes, and carillons.
 - d. Sounds created by safety and protective devices where noise suppression would defeat the intent of the device or is not economically feasible.
 - e. Sounds created by emergency equipment and work necessary in the interests of law enforcement or for health, safety or welfare of the community.
 - f. Sounds created by the repair of essential utility services.
 - g. Sounds originating from officially sanctioned parades and other public events.
 - ~~h.~~ Sounds emitted from venting at industrial process facilities during startup only, provided that the startup operation is performed during daytime hours whenever possible.

[C.] Maximum Permissible Noise Levels.

3.[1.] Maximum Daytime Noise Levels.

- a. *General Noise Limit.* Between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M., the maximum amount of consistent noise shall be 60 dBA (regardless of the location within Hocking County)
- b. *Prohibited High Noise Intervals.* Between the hours of 7:00 A.M. and 10:00 P.M., the general noise limit requirement of 60 dBA may be exceeded by no more than:

- (1) Five (5) dBA for any impulsive sound (such as sounds with a duration of less than one (1) second, such as from gunfire or punch presses);
- (2) Five (5) dBA for a total of fifteen (15) minutes in any one (1) hour period;
- (3) Ten (10) dBA for a total of five (5) minutes in any one (1) hour period; or
- (4) Fifteen (15) dBA for a total of thirty (30) seconds in any one (1) hour period.

4.[2.] *Maximum Nighttime Noise Levels.*

- a. *General Noise Limit.* Between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M., the maximum amount of consistent noise shall be 50 dBA (regardless of the location within Hocking County)
- b. *Prohibited High Noise Intervals.* Between the hours of 10:00 P.M. and 7:00 A.M., the general noise limit requirement of 50dBA may be exceeded by no more than:
 - (1) Five (5) dBA for any impulsive sound (such as sounds with a duration of less than one (1) second, such as from gunfire or punch presses);
 - (2) Five (5) dBA for a total of ten (10) minutes in any one (1) hour period;
 - (3) Ten (10) dBA for a total of three (3) minutes in any one (1) hour period.

Section 4: Enforcement and Penalties.