

Noise Ordinance FAQs
City of Alexandria, Virginia

1. Construction

a. Commercial/Professional: *What are the hours in which commercial construction is able to operate? What are the limits to the noise that they can generate?*

- Construction and use of construction devices and power equipment is prohibited between 6:00 pm and 7:00 am on Monday through Friday and 6:00 pm to 9:00 am on Saturday Sunday, and holidays. See Section 11-5-4(6) for additional information.

b. Residential DIY: *What are the limits to DIY construction?*

- Construction or repairing of a dwelling by a homeowner is prohibited between 9:00 pm and 7:00 am on Monday through Friday and 9:00 pm to 9:00 am on Saturday Sunday, and holidays. See Section 11-5-4(7) for additional information.

2. Barking Dogs: *How many times can a dog bark before it violates the noise ordinance?*

- Dog barking violates the noise ordinance between 10 p.m. and 7 a.m. when it is plainly audible in any other person's residence with the doors and windows closed and the source of the sound generation is discernible regardless of whether such doors or windows are closed
- Dog barking violates the noise ordinance between 7 a.m. and 10 p.m. when the sound is plainly audible and discernible across real property boundaries or through partitions common to residential dwellings and such sound can be heard for more than five consecutive or non-consecutive minutes in any ten-minute period of time.
- Dog barking that can be heard for less than five consecutive or non-consecutive minutes in any ten-minute period shall not be subject to this Section. Sec. 11-5-4(3)

3. Power Lawn Equipment: *What are the hours and limitations against using lawn equipment?*

- Use of power lawn equipment is prohibited from 9:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. on Mondays through Fridays and 9:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. on Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays. See Section 11-5-4(8).

4. Noise in public: *What are the limitations that this ordinance places upon individuals making noise on public property*

- Noise on public property (Section 11-5-4.1):
 - Between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 11:00 p.m., Monday through Sunday, no sound generation shall result in sound (1) exceeding a volume of 75

db(A) or more, at a distance greater than 10 feet from the place at which the sound is being generated or produced, or (2) being plainly audible above the background noise level at a distance greater than 50 feet from the place at which the sound is being generated or produced, for an aggregate duration of time greater than 60 seconds in any one hour period.

- Between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., no sound generation shall result in sound (1) exceeding a volume of 65 db(A) at a distance greater than 10 feet from the place at which the sound is being generated or produced, or (2) being plainly audible above the background noise level at a distance greater than 50 feet from the place at which the sound is being generated or produced, for an aggregate duration of 60 seconds between such hours.

- Sound reproduction device - The using or operating of any sound reproduction device in such manner as to be plainly audible across property boundaries at a distance of 50 feet from the building, structure or vehicle in which it is located. See Section 11-5-4(2)

5. Parties: *At what point does a party on private residential property violate the noise ordinance?*

- During the day time hours, the decibel limits applicable to residential property apply. Section 11-5-5
- From 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., it is a violation of the noise ordinance to create a sound in a residence that is plainly audible in any other person's residence with the doors and windows closed. Section 11-5-4(13)
- If the party is using a sound reproduction device, the provisions in Section 11-5-4(2) regarding noise from sound reproduction devices that are audible 50 feet away across property boundary lines would also apply.

6. Sound Reproduction devices between multi-unit residential building walls: *When does a sound reproduction device being operated in a residence violate the noise ordinance?*

- During the day time hours, the decibel limits applicable to residential property apply. Section 11-5-5
- From 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., it is a violation of the noise ordinance to create a sound in a residence that is plainly audible in any other person's residence with the doors and windows closed. Section 11-5-4(13)

7. HVAC units: *When do HVAC violate the noise ordinance?*

- The operation or permitting the operation of ventilation systems and air conditioning systems that exceeds the decibel noise levels in Table III. See Section 11-5-4(9)

8. **Track Work:** *What are the limitations to track and construction work?*
 - Regulated track work is exempt from the noise ordinance pursuant to federal law

9. **Airplanes:** *Does the noise ordinance apply to aircraft?*
 - Aircraft noise is exempt from the noise ordinance under federal law.

10. **Loading/Unloading delivery trucks:** *How does loading/unloading delivery trucks violate the noise ordinance?*
 - The creation of noise in connection with loading or unloading any vehicle that is plainly audible by persons in any other building with the doors and windows closed, across property boundaries at a distance of 50 feet from the source of the noise. The outdoor loading or unloading trucks within 200 feet of a residential dwelling between 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. is prohibited. See Section 11-5-4(5)