

2.437 NOISE VIOLATIONS

- A. Officers may enforce domestic noise violations consistent with **Baltimore County Code (BCC) Article 17, Title 3 – Noise** if it is determined that domestic noise is being created or permitted in such a manner as to unreasonably disturb the peace, quiet, and comfort of neighboring inhabitants. Domestic noise:
1. Is any noise related to human activity that is not created by machinery, tools, mechanical devices, or equipment used in connection with a business purpose;
 2. Includes, but is not limited to noise produced vocally, radio receivers, musical instruments, phonographs or other devices intended for the production or reproduction of sound, or any household tool or other equipment.
- B. Communications personnel, in addition to obtaining basic complainant information, are responsible for obtaining information that includes, but is not limited to:
1. Exact location where the noise is being generated;
 2. Number of participants; and
 3. Types of noise, e.g., stereo, band, argument, party, etc.
- C. Responding officers:
1. Should attempt to locate and personally contact complainants;
 2. Will consider the times of day, noise levels, noise sources, and those who are affected by the noise in determining whether the noise is unreasonably disturbing complainants' peace, quiet, and comfort;
 3. If sound measuring devices are available, may use sound thresholds, measured from the property line of the sound source location, of:
No greater than 65 dBA 0700-2200 hrs.
No greater than 55 dBA 2201-0659 hrs.
(COMAR 26.02.03.03)
 4. Should attempt to obtain voluntary compliance prior to taking enforcement actions;
 5. Will consult with a supervisor to determine what, if any, enforcement actions will be taken; and
 6. Will write agency reports for noise complaints that are categorized as:
 - a. Verified – excess noise was found and what actions were taken; or
 - b. Suspected – excess noise was not found, but officers develop reasonable suspicion to believe that excess noise had been occurring before their arrival;
 7. Will not write reports when noise complaints are unverified because officers do not find any indication that excess noise had been occurring before their arrival; and
 8. May combine multiple complaints of individual verified or suspected incidents in single, consolidated reports.
- D. Officers may use hand held devices to assist in measuring noise levels for most routine complaints, such as loud stereos, parties, PA systems, etc.
- E. EHS should be contacted and requested to respond with more sophisticated noise measuring and recording devices in those more complex cases that could result in action being taken by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), such as for concerts at the Towson Center.
- F. Persons responsible for noise violations:
1. May be referred to the Office of Student Conduct and Civility Education (OSCCE) if they are students;
 2. May be issued civil citations for initial violations for violations of **BCC 17-3-103**;
 3. Should be issued criminal citations for subsequent violations of **BCC 17-3-103**; and
 4. May also be in violation of trespass statutes under **ED §26-101**.
- G. See also **2.410 Criminal, Civil, Juvenile Citations** and **2.435 Trespassing**.