CITY COUNCIL
READ FILE COVER SHEET

Subject: **Ordinance 1243 concerning Amending Chapter 1 to Increase the Maximum Criminal and Civil Sanction Fines (Public Hearing)**

Date: **11/17/2026**

Notice: Any comments made after 5:00 p.m. on the Thursday before the Council Meeting will not be seen in the agenda packet.

Purpose:

- ☐ FYI
- ☑ **Read and Comment as Needed**
- ☑ **Action Required by December 7, 2026**
- ☐ In Confidential File Drawer

Approve:

Johnny Boker	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ No Comment
Comment: _____			
Casi Boyer	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ No Comment
Comment: _____			
Lizz Clarke	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ No Comment
Comment: _____			
Matthew Ellis	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ No Comment
Comment: _____			
David Glenn	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ No Comment
Comment: _____			
Vicki Jones	☐ Yes	☐ No	☐ No Comment
Comment: _____			

Note: Legislative summary attached.

City of Havre de Grace
Office of the Mayor

William T. Martin

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Council President Casi Boyer and
The Honorable Members of the City Council

FROM: Adam Rybczynski, Chief of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs

DATE: November 13, 2026

SUBJECT: Ordinance Amending City Code Chapter 1 (Maximum Criminal and Civil Sanction Fines & Citation Authority)

Administrative and Legal Review
The attached ordinance was written by the Chief of Policy and Intergovernmental Affairs and has been reviewed by the City Attorney for legal sufficiency.

Executive Summary
On behalf of Mayor Martin, the administration requests the introduction and passage of the attached ordinance amending Chapter 1 of the Havre de Grace City Code to increase maximum municipal fines and update departmental citation authority.

This ordinance raises the maximum fine for criminal misdemeanors and civil municipal infractions from $1,000 to $5,000, and updates the official title of the department head authorized to issue civil citations. It aligns the City's enforcement framework with updated Maryland state enabling law (2025 Md. Laws, Chapter 570) and modernizes penalty caps that have remained unchanged since 1993. Additionally, it implements key recommendations (R-003, R-004, and R-005) from the Pro-Citizen and Pro-Business Code Review Committee, established by Mayor Martin under Executive Order 2025-01.

CITY COUNCIL

OF

HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND

ORDINANCE NO. 1243

Introduced by Council President Boyer

AN ORDINANCE BY THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF HAVRE DE GRACE, MARYLAND, ADOPTED PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORITY OF ARTICLE XI-E OF THE MARYLAND CONSTITUTION, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARTICLE OF THE ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND, AND SECTIONS 33 AND 34 OF THE HAVRE DE GRACE CITY CHARTER TO AMEND CHAPTER 1 TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM CRIMINAL AND CIVIL SANCTION FINES

On: November 16, 2026

at: 7:00 p.m.

Ordinance introduced, read first time, ordered posted and public hearing scheduled.

PUBLIC HEARING

A Public Hearing is scheduled for December 7, 2026 at 7:00 p.m.

EXPLANATION

Underlining indicates matter added to existing law.

[Bold Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Amendments proposed prior to final adoption will be noted on a separate page with line references or by handwritten changes on the draft legislation.

Public Hearing

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2025, Mayor William T. Martin issued Executive Order 2025-01, establishing the Pro-Citizen and Pro-Business Code Review Committee ("the Committee"); and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Committee was, among other objectives, to provide the Mayor with recommendations to eliminate burdensome and redundant municipal code requirements, thereby increasing government efficiency; and

WHEREAS, between July 7, 2025, and July 2, 2026, the Committee met at regular and open meetings to receive public testimony, work with city staff, and review the City Code to develop a list of recommendations to the Mayor as required by Executive Order 2025-01; and

WHEREAS, on July 2, 2026, the Committee voted to approve a list of recommendations set forth in its final report titled "Final Report Pro-Business & Pro-Citizen Code Review Recommendations" ("the Report"); and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has accepted and approved the recommendations found in the Report and is referring them to the Council as the Mayor's list of recommended code amendments; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor is requesting that the recommendations which require legislation be passed by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, at the September 21, 2026, regularly scheduled meeting of the Mayor and City Council, the Committee and the Mayor's Office formally presented the Report and its findings to the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor has requested a working collaboration among the City Council, former members of the Committee, and the Administration to best address the recommendations found in the Report and implement those which are of the utmost importance; and

WHEREAS, on October 2, 2026, the City Council's Legislative Review Committee met and concurred that the Mayor's recommendations "R-003 strike "Director of Economic Development and Planning" and insert "Director of Planning", "R-004: Increase Criminal Sanctions Fine" and "R-005: Increase Civil Sanctions Fine" should be introduced and considered by the City Council; and

WHEREAS, the City Council has requested that the Administration guide the City Council in the drafting and review of an ordinance to implement recommendations "R-003 strike "Director of Economic Development and Planning" and insert "Director of Planning", "R-004: Increase Criminal Sanctions Fine" and "R-005: Increase Civil Sanctions Fine"; and

WHEREAS, it is the desire of the City Council to codify recommendations "R-003 strike "Director of Economic Development and Planning" and insert "Director of Planning", "R-004: Increase Criminal Sanctions Fine" and "R-005: Increase Civil Sanctions Fine" from the Mayor's list of recommended code amendments; and

WHEREAS, Article I of the City Code ("Fines, Penalties, and Imprisonment") establishes the maximum criminal and civil penalties applicable to violations of the City Code; and

WHEREAS, the current maximum fines of $1,000 for criminal sanctions and $1,000 for civil sanctions were established by Ordinance 776 (1993), based on the statutory authority available to municipalities at that time; and

WHEREAS, the Maryland General Assembly enacted 2025 Md. Laws, Chapter 570, amending the Local Government Article to authorize municipalities to impose fines of up to $5,000 for both criminal and civil violations; and

WHEREAS, the Committee's Report recommended updating §§ 1-1,1-2 and 1-3 to align with current State enabling law to ensure that the City's enforcement authority remains effective, modern, and legally compliant; and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and City Council find that increasing the maximum criminal and civil fines to $5,000 is necessary to strengthen enforcement and modernize the City's penalty structure.

NOW THEREFORE, it is determined, decided, and ordained by the City Council that Chapter 1 be amended as follows:

§ 1-1. Criminal sanctions.
Any person found guilty of a misdemeanor as provided in this Code shall be subject to a fine of up to **[$1,000]** $5,000 and imprisonment for up to six months.

§ 1-2. Civil sanctions.
Any person who commits any unlawful act designated as a municipal infraction and any person who commits any unlawful act the violation of which is not specifically declared to be a misdemeanor by this Code shall be deemed to have committed a municipal infraction and shall be subject to a fine of up to **[$1,000]** $5,000.

§ 1-3. Citations.
The Chief of Police, Director of **[Economic Development and]** Planning, Director of Public Works, and their agents and designees are hereby authorized to deliver a citation to any person whom they adjudge to be committing a municipal infraction

ADOPTED by the City Council of Havre de Grace, Maryland this __ day of _____, 2026.

SIGNED by the Mayor and attested by the Director of Administration this ____ day of _____, 2026.

ATTEST:

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL
OF HAVRE DE GRACE

_____
Christopher Ricci
Director of Administration

_____
William T. Martin
Mayor

Introduced/First Reading: 11/16/2026
Public Hearing:
Second Reading/Adopted:
Effective Date:

Public Hearing