

DECLARATION OF EMERGENCY

NO. 24-0001

CITY OF SHREVEPORT

PARISH OF CADDO

BY: MAYOR TOM ARCENEUX

STATE OF LOUISIANA

**MAYORAL DECLARATION OF STATE
OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY
EMERGENCY DUE TO PROPERTY CONDITIONS**

WHEREAS, La. R.S. 29:737 empowers the chief executive officer of a municipality to undertake immediate emergency response measures within the municipality whenever a situation develops within or outside the municipality and the chief executive officer of the municipality determines immediate action is required to preserve the public peace, property, health, or safety within the municipality; and

WHEREAS, as of June 5, 2024, the Mayor of the City of Shreveport has determined that certain apartment complexes in the City of Shreveport no longer lawfully house residents – the owners and managers of these complexes having ceased active management, and water and power services having been disconnected, except for water necessary for fire protection; and

WHEREAS, these certain apartment complexes lacking active management are as follows: the Jolie Apartments (1017 Quail Creek Road), Villa Norte Apartments (1620 Fullerton Street), and the Pines Apartments (8020 Line Avenue); and

WHEREAS, the City of Shreveport has made a good faith effort to assist lawful residents to relocate to alternate housing at other properties, and has determined that the vast majority of those persons remaining on the properties are occupying without authorization, with it being likely that more will come without effective action; and

WHEREAS, On May 26, 2024, a two-alarm fire at the Jolie Apartments resulted in three firefighters being injured, with another fire having occurred there on May 28, 2024. Without access to electricity or natural gas services, unauthorized occupiers are likely to start fires within or adjacent to the units, thus posing the danger of further fires causing damage to the properties, to the nonpermissive occupants, to the public, and to first responders; and

WHEREAS, criminal activity has been reported at the Jolie Apartments and at Villa Norte Apartments, and such activity is only encouraged by the conditions created by the absence of effective property management and the presence of unauthorized occupants and persons unlawfully removing things of value from the properties; and

WHEREAS, bulk trash dumping has been observed at the Pines Apartments, including a large number of tires. Trash generated by unauthorized occupiers, by legal residents who have evacuated the premises, and by persons unlawfully removing things of value has become a public health

hazard and a fire hazard. Sites like these are also targets of opportunity for outside persons wishing to dump illegally; and

WHEREAS, the proximity of these properties to residential and commercial areas is likely to create public health hazards for the residences and businesses in the adjacent area by increasing the possibility of vermin infestations and disease and to create public safety hazards caused by the likelihood that unauthorized occupants and persons unlawfully removing things of value will not confine their criminal activities to the apartment properties; and

WHEREAS, without running water or functioning toilets, any occupancy by unauthorized occupants is a hazard to public health without sanitary disposal of human waste, which hazard can only be eliminated if no one is permitted to occupy the properties; and

WHEREAS, because the owners of these complexes have ceased effective management, there is no responsible party to remove unauthorized occupants or persons unlawfully removing things of value or to ensure that buildings in the complexes do not become even more serious health and safety hazards; and

WHEREAS, a declaration of emergency pursuant to La. R.S. 29:737, will vest the City, most specifically the Shreveport Police Department and other emergency response personnel, with the authority to remove and/or arrest unauthorized occupiers and persons unlawfully removing things of value from the buildings on the properties named herein; and

WHEREAS, these measures are necessary to preserve and protect the health and safety of the people of the City of Shreveport.

NOW THEREFORE, I, TOM ARCENEUX, Mayor of the City of Shreveport, by virtue of the authority vested in me as the Mayor and Chief Executive Officer of the City of Shreveport by the Constitution and the laws of the State of Louisiana, do hereby undertake immediate emergency response measures and direct as follows:

SECTION 1: Pursuant to La. R.S. 29:737, declare that a State of Public Health and Safety Emergency exists for the buildings and premises on the following properties:

The Jolie Apartments (1017 Quail Creek Road),
Villa Norte Apartments (1620 Fullerton Street), and
The Pines Apartments (8020 Line Avenue).

SECTION 2: The Shreveport Police Department is hereby granted the authority to remove and, if necessary, to arrest any person found at the above listed apartments for whom there is probable cause to suspect of criminal activity; The Departments of Public Works and Property Standards are authorized to ameliorate health and safety hazards and remove illegally dumped trash and garbage; and all City departments and agencies are authorized to act to prevent or eliminate hazardous conditions affecting either public health, public safety, or both.

SECTION 3: Signage will be posted at the entrances to each property, advising all persons that their presence on the property for any reason constitutes trespass and that such presence may result in arrest.

SECTION 4: The provisions established herein shall be effective from 2:00 p.m. on June 5, 2024 through 11:59 PM on July 3, 2024, or earlier if all the buildings on the properties named herein have been totally demolished. It may be modified to remove the above City authority on any individual complex for which an owner or their representative takes responsibility to secure and operate properties, or to demolish the existing buildings and rebuild housing or any other permitted use.

The City Attorney is directed to file this declaration promptly in the Office of the Clerk of Court.

WITNESS my hand in Shreveport, Louisiana this 5th day of June 2024.

Tom Arceneaux, Mayor
City of Shreveport