

657A.2 Petition.

1. No sooner than the later of thirty days after the responsible building official's findings have been provided under [section 657A.1A](#) or six months after a building has become abandoned, a petition for abatement under [this chapter](#) may be filed in the district court of the county in which the property is located by the city in which the property is located, by the county if the property is located outside the limits of a city, by a neighboring landowner, or by a duly organized nonprofit corporation which has as one of its goals the improvement of housing conditions in the county or city in which the property in question is located. The petition shall not demand a personal judgment against any party, but shall concern only the interests in the property. A petition for abatement filed under [this chapter](#) shall include the legal description of the real property upon which the public nuisance is located unless the public nuisance is not situated on or confined to a parcel of real property, or is portable or capable of being removed from the real property. Service shall be made on all interested persons by personal service or, if personal service cannot be made, by certified mail and first class mail to the last known address of record of the interested person and by posting the notice in a conspicuous place on the building, or by publication. The last known address of record for the property owner shall be the address of record with the county treasurer of the county where the property is located. Service may also be made as provided in [section 654.4A](#).

2. If entering judgment, the court shall determine any issues at law, including issues relating to title, raised by the plaintiff or by a party in interest who has filed a motion or answer.

3. In any evidentiary hearing or motion in a proceeding under [this chapter](#), the written findings of the responsible building official relating to the condition of the building and other matters within the scope of [this chapter](#), if provided at least ten days before the hearing to all persons not in default, shall be accepted as evidence without prejudice to the right of any party to require the personal testimony of the responsible building official at the hearing.

4. If the court finds at a hearing pursuant to [this section](#) that the building is abandoned or is a public nuisance, the court may issue an injunction requiring the owner to correct any conditions that make such building a public nuisance, or issue another order that the court deems appropriate to address the public nuisance.

5. If the court finds at a hearing pursuant to [this section](#) that the building is abandoned, unless the court order establishes otherwise, the property shall be deemed continuously abandoned from the date the action is indexed pursuant to [section 617.10, subsection 1](#).

6. A property shall not be claimed as homestead pursuant to [chapter 561](#) on or after the date determined in [subsection 5](#).

7. In a proceeding under [this section](#), if the court determines the building is not abandoned, the court shall dismiss the petition and may require the petitioner to pay an interested party's reasonable attorney fees. An owner of the property who failed to appear for an inspection pursuant to [section 657A.1A](#) shall not be awarded attorney fees under [this section](#).

8. If a party to the action holds an interest in the property as a nominee, a fiduciary, or another representative capacity for a third party, or an underlying loan on the property is guaranteed by a third party, the party to the action may apply to the court for a stay of action, as it affects the party's interest, for a reasonable time to allow the party to obtain the appropriate authority, information, or instructions from or on behalf of the beneficiary or guarantor as related to the property interest or underlying loan.

[85 Acts, ch 222, §2; 87 Acts, ch 113, §1, 2; 96 Acts, ch 1204, §28; 2004 Acts, ch 1165, §9, 11; 2010 Acts, ch 1050, §10; 2019 Acts, ch 105, §6; 2020 Acts, ch 1063, §368](#)

Referred to in [§655A.6](#), [657A.1A](#), [657A.7](#), [657A.10A](#), [657A.10B](#), [657A.10C](#)