

Fines and fixed fines

Public order violation	Usual unit fine	Scale	Fixed fine
Disturbing public order and endangering public security (section 3 of the Public Order Act)	8	6–10	35 €
Using intoxicating substances (section 4)	6	4–10	20 €
Neglecting the obligation concerning building safety (section 5)	10	8–20	50 €
Actions related to lights, advertisements, announcements or notifications (section 6)	8	6–10	35 €
Buying sexual services and providing sexual services for a charge (section 7(1))	10	8–14	50 €
Defecating and urinating (section 7(2))	6	4–10	20 €
Organising a show (section 7(3))	8	6–10	35 €
Blocking the entrance to a building (section 8)	8	6–10	35 €
Possession of substances which may be used to paint graffiti (section 13)	6	4–10	20 €
Neglecting the obligation concerning animals (section 14(1))	6	4–10	20 €
Illegal driving or horseriding (section 15(1))	6	4–10	20 €
Minor objects and substances which may be used to hurt others (section 18)	10	6–25	35 €

Police officers can, for weighty reasons, make an exception from the scale.

Imprisonment

The maximum sentence for the possession of objects or substances which may be used to hurt others is six months' imprisonment. For the possession of prohibited dangerous objects the person can be sentenced to imprisonment for up to one year, and for the violation of other provisions the punishment can be two years' imprisonment.

For further information:

www.poliisi.fi/publicorderact and local police departments

Ministry of the Interior, Finland. Police Department 2003.

PUBLIC ORDER ACT

to replace local government ordinances



The new Public Order Act strives to promote order and security in public places. As of 1 October 2003, the public order ordinance will be the same throughout the country. Previously, no Public Order Act was in force in Finland. A wide variety of local government ordinances were observed.

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The Public Order Act applies to places designated for public use, regardless of the ownership. Such places are streets and roads, pavements, market squares, parks, beaches, sports fields, cemeteries, public buildings, means of public transport, government offices, other office premises and restaurants.

Harmonious coexistence

Under the Public Order Act, it is forbidden to disturb public order or to endanger public security by making noise or by behaving in a similar manner. Behaving in a threatening manner by verbal threats, threatening gestures or movements or by behaving in any other way which causes fear is forbidden.

It is forbidden to endanger public security by shooting or throwing objects. Furthermore, it is forbidden to carry objects or substances in a public place which could be used to cause serious harm to others. These include edged weapons, broken glass, chains and substances which can be used to cause serious harm to someone or to temporarily paralyse someone.

Possession of spray paints and other substances which can be used to vandalise property is forbidden in a public place without a valid reason.

No intoxicants

Using intoxicating substances in public places in built-up areas and on public transport is forbidden. The ban on drinking alcohol does not apply to places where alcohol can be served in accordance with a special licence or notification, or to the inside of a vehicle in private use.

Furthermore, the ban on drinking alcohol does not apply to drinking alcohol in a park or any other similar public place. However, drinking alcohol and related sojourn and behaviour may not unduly hamper other people's right to use the place for its actual purpose.



Eliminating the nuisance of urinating and sex trade

Disturbing public order or endangering health by urinating and defecating in public places is forbidden.

The Public Order Act bans buying sexual services or providing sexual services for a charge in public places. In this connection sexual services mean sexual intercourse and a comparable sexual act as referred to in the Penal Code of Finland.

Warnings of snow falling off a building

The owner or occupant of a building or his or her representative is obliged to see to it that ice, snow or any other possible objects or substances falling off the building do not pose a danger to people or property.

It is also banned to install blinding or misleading lights or advertisements resembling traffic control equipment or endangering traffic in some other way in the vicinity of roads and streets. Those who install these are obliged to remove them without delay on the request.

Dogs and cats on a leash

Dogs must be kept on a leash in built-up areas. A built-up area is a densely built area indicated by traffic signs. Within built-up areas there can, however, be areas which are not densely built.

Dog and cat owners must also see to it that their pets are not allowed on public beaches, in children's playgrounds, market squares when the market is open, sports fields or public ski tracks. Dogs and cats are allowed in running tracks if kept on a leash.

The dog owner or the person in whose possession the dog is must see to it that the dog's faeces are not left in well maintained places. Under the Act, these include places with mowed lawn, plants or paved roads.

It is forbidden to ride a horse and to drive a horse-drawn or a similar vehicle on footpaths and public ski tracks unless otherwise indicated.



Parking allowed in private areas only on permission

Parking in a private area without permission from the owner or occupant of the real estate is forbidden. Regulations on parking in private areas must be clearly indicated.

More assignments to order supervision personnel

Under the Public Order Act, order supervision personnel employed by a guarding services supplier can be appointed to carry out assignments at shopping centres, public transport stations and on public transport in order to assist the police in maintaining order and security. Under the previous legislation, order supervision personnel maintain order at restaurants, and on ships and camping sites. Appointing order supervision personnel in accordance with the Public Order Act always requires a licence issued by the local police.

Punishments

A person violating the provisions is usually sentenced to a fixed fine or fine. The police have a right to remove from the person any object or substance which may be dangerous. The police can remove a substance in an opened or open container from a person using intoxicants and destroy the substance.

