



**BELIZE**

**DANGEROUS BUILDINGS (DEMOLITION) ACT  
CHAPTER 133**

**REVISED EDITION 2011  
SHOWING THE SUBSTANTIVE LAWS AS AT 31<sup>ST</sup>  
DECEMBER, 2011**

This is a revised edition of the Substantive Laws, prepared by the Law Revision Commissioner under the authority of the Law Revision Act, Chapter 3 of the Substantive Laws of Belize, Revised Edition 2011.



**CHAPTER 133**

**DANGEROUS BUILDINGS (DEMOLITION)**

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CHAPTER 133

DANGEROUS BUILDINGS (DEMOLITION)

Ch. 67,  
R.L.1958,  
CAP. 104,  
R.E. 1980-1990.

*[25th September, 1899]*

Short title.

**1.** This Act may be cited as the Dangerous Buildings (Demolition) Act.

Interpretation.

**2.**-(1) In this Act, “building” includes any building, wall or other structure, and anything affixed to or projecting from any building, wall or other structure.

(2) The expression “local authority” as used in this Act refers to a City Council, Town Council or Village Council.

Demolition of dangerous buildings.

**3.**-(1) The Commissioner of Police or any other superior officer of police may either alone or with such other persons as he may think fit, visit and examine any building.

(2) The magistrate for the district in which the building is situate may, upon the sworn information of the Commissioner or any other superior officer of police, and in places where there may be no superior officer of police, the non-commissioned officer of police in charge at such place, that any building is in a dangerous state, issue a summons calling upon the owner of such building or his agent, or if such owner or agent cannot be found, then upon the occupier of such building, to show cause why such building should not be pulled down.

(3) If at the hearing of such summons the magistrate is satisfied by the evidence of at least two witnesses, of whom in the case of buildings situate in Belize City the Chief Engineer shall be one, that the said building is in a dangerous state, he may make an order under his hand that unless such building is pulled down, and the materials removed by or on behalf of the owner or occupier thereof within, in the case of buildings situate in Belize City, six days from the making of the order, or, in the case of buildings situate beyond the limits of Belize City, fourteen days from

the making of the order, then such building shall be pulled down and the material removed by, in the case of buildings situated in Belize City, the Chief Engineer, or in the case of buildings situate beyond the limits of Belize City, some person, local authority or officer specified in the order.

(4) In any order under subsection (3) of this section, the magistrate may direct how the materials of the building so pulled down and removed shall be disposed of, and by whom the expenses of such pulling down and removal shall be paid, and if any such expenses are not paid in accordance with any such order they shall be recoverable on summary conviction by the person, local authority or officer by whom the building is pulled down and removed.

4.-(1) If the building in respect of which any information is laid or summons issued or order made under section 3 of this Act is unoccupied, and if after reasonable inquiry it cannot be ascertained who is the owner or the agent of the owner of the building, or if the building is unoccupied and the owner of the building is absent from Belize leaving no agent in Belize to represent him in respect of the building, it shall not be necessary in any such information, summons or order to insert the name of the owner of the building or of the agent of the owner of the building, but instead of the name of the owner of the building may be inserted the words “the owner of”, followed by a reasonable description of the building.

Procedure where the owner cannot be found.

(2) Every summons issued under subsection (1) of this section shall be served by,

- (a) affixing and leaving affixed a copy of the said summons upon the building specified in such summons;
- (b) affixing and leaving affixed a copy of the said summons upon some prominent place either within or without the building in which the information specified in such summons is intended to be heard; and
- (c) publishing a copy of the said summons three times in the *Gazette*.

(3) At the time and place appointed in and by any such summons for the hearing of the information therein specified any person having or claiming any estate or interest in the building may appear in the same manner as if the summons had been directed to him by name, but if no such person shall appear then upon proof that the summons has been served as provided in subsection (2) of this section, and also that the reasonable inquiry mentioned in subsection (1) of this section has been made, the information specified in such summons may be heard *ex parte*, and if the magistrate is fully satisfied as provided in subsection (2) of this section, an order may be made by him on such information as provided in section 3 of this Act.

Limitation of liability.

**5.** No action shall lie against the Crown or any other person or local authority for anything lawfully done in pursuance of and in accordance with this Act.

Procedure as on summary conviction.

**6.** The procedure in respect of any information sworn under this Act and all subsequent proceedings thereon shall be the same as in the case of an offence punishable on summary conviction, and the magistrate shall with reference to such information and all subsequent proceedings thereon have all the powers of a court of summary jurisdiction.

Power of adjournment.

**7.** The hearing of any information sworn under this Act may be adjourned from time to time by the magistrate, if he thinks fit, to enable the building specified in the information to be pulled down or repaired by or on behalf of the owner or occupier thereof.

Pulling down part of a building.

**8.**—(1) The preceding provisions of this Act shall apply in the case of a part of a building in the same manner as they apply in the case of a building.

(2) Where any part of a building is pulled down by virtue of any order made under and in accordance with this Act no action shall lie in respect of any injury done in the course of such pulling down to any other part of the same building if such injury could not have been avoided by the exercise of reasonable care and skill.