

## **PARKS, SQUATTING AND TRESPASSING**

All property belongs to someone. Owners can make rules about who can use their property and what can be done on it.

### **Parks**

- you can get a ticket for swearing, throwing things, creating a nuisance, injuring trees, setting up a tent or make-shift shelter without a permit, dwelling, camping or lodging without a permit, drinking alcohol, being drunk or having an open bottle of liquor, or doing anything violent, threatening or illegal
- sleeping in a park is legal
- any police or by-law officer or municipal employee can order you to stop a prohibited activity or to leave. If you do not, you could get a trespassing ticket

### **Trespassing**

- the City can issue trespass order to people who illegally occupy its property (e.g. parks, Nathan Phillips Square, Metro Hall)
- trespassing means **1)** entering someone else's property **2)** doing prohibited activities there or **3)** not leaving after being told to do so by the occupier
- you will not be found guilty of trespassing if you can persuade the court that you reasonably believed you had permission to be there
- a police officer or the legal occupier can arrest you without a warrant while you are still on the premises if they have reason to believe you are trespassing. Once off the property, you can only be arrested without a warrant if a police officer believes you were trespassing and you refuse to give your true name and address
- usual fine is \$70 (first offence); max. fine is \$2000
- you can ask a court to reduce the fine to something you can afford

### **Squatting**

You can be criminally charged if you:

- squat or trespass in or near a dwelling house
- loiter or prowls near a dwelling at night while on someone else's property
- intentionally damage property, make it useless or dangerous, interfere with its lawful use or interfere with anyone else's lawful use of property

**Lawyer referral service: GTA (416) 947-3330**  
**Elsewhere in Ontario: 1-800-268-8326**

**Justice for Children & Youth: GTA (416) 920-1633**  
**Elsewhere in Ontario: 1-866-999-JFCY (5329)**  
**[www.jfcy.org](http://www.jfcy.org)**