

Short-Term Rental: Fact Sheet



The [ordinance](#) to permit short-term rentals (Ordinance No. 2019-343) was adopted by City Council on June 22, 2020. The effective date of the ordinance is July 1, 2020. The ordinance permits short-term rentals as an accessory use to a dwelling unit or permitted accessory dwelling unit in all zoning districts which permit residential uses under the following conditions:

Who can operate a short-term rental: The short-term rental operator shall be the property owner. The short-term rental shall be on the lot of the operator's primary residence with the operator occupying the lot at least 185 days each year.

Approval Process: Certificate of Zoning Compliance (CZC) for Short-term Rental (Short-Term Rental Permit) is to be obtained on a biennial basis. The Biennial Fee for CZC is to be \$300 which is intended to cover administration and monitoring costs. Each CZC shall be effective from January 1 of the year in which such certificate is obtained to December 31 of the following year, regardless of the date on which the owner obtains the certificate.

Advertising: The Certificate of Zoning Compliance approval number shall be posted on all advertisements for the property.

Number of nights a short-term rental can operate: The number of nights a short-term rental can operate is not limited.

Number of persons who can rent per night: The total number of adult renters allowed in a short-term rental shall be limited to two adults per available sleeping room. Double booking which consists of more than one booking transaction occurring at the same time is not allowed. The number of children per rental is not limited. Occupancy may be further limited under the Building Code.

Number of sleeping rooms available for rental: The total number of sleeping rooms available for rental is limited to a maximum of 5 sleeping rooms.

Unhosted vs. Hosted Stays: This legislation does not distinguish between hosted and unhosted stays; whole house rentals (unhosted stays) are permitted in all zones as the operator is not required to be on site during the stay

Signage: The short-term rental within the R-1, R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, R-8, R-43 and R-48 zoning districts is permitted to have signage consistent with the signage allowed for home occupations which consists of one non-illuminated wall sign not to exceed two square feet. Short-term rentals in other zoning districts are permitted to have signage as permitted by the district.

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Safety Requirements: Smoke detectors shall be present in compliance with the current edition of the Virginia Residential Construction Code. A fire extinguisher shall be present and be accessible at all times. Carbon monoxide detectors shall be present in any room used for sleeping or cooking.

Parking: No additional parking is required for the short-term rental use.

Events: Events and gatherings of persons other than the authorized lodgers are prohibited from occurring at the short-term rental.

Short-Term Rental Zoning Definitions:

Booking transaction means any transaction in which there is a charge to one or more short-term renters by a short-term rental operator in exchange for the occupancy of a short-term rental.

Short-term rental means a room or group of rooms, all within a single dwelling unit of a dwelling use permitted in the district in which such dwelling use is located, used or intended for use as lodging for at least one but fewer than 30 consecutive nights by the traveling public and similar transient guests in return for compensation on a daily basis. The term "short-term rental" is intended to be distinguished from hotels, motels, tourist homes and lodginghouses, shelters, group homes, and similar forms of housing.

Short-term rental operator means an individual who is the owner of a dwelling unit used as a short-term rental.

Short-term renter means any person who contracts with a short-term rental operator to occupy a short-term rental in exchange for a charge for such occupancy, and any companions or guests of such person.

Input on the Implementation of Short-Term Rental Regulations:

Ordinance No. 2019-343 requires City Planning Commission to review the implementation of the ordinance after one year to determine if amendments to the ordinance are needed. If you would like to provide comments on the implementation of the ordinance to be shared with City Planning Commission, please contact Marianne Pitts at Marianne.pitts@richmondgov.com or (804)646-5207.

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Applying for a Short-Term Rental Permit:

Beginning July 1, 2020, applicants can apply for a Short-Term Rental Permit through the City's [Online Permit Portal](https://energov.richmondgov.com/EnerGov_Prod/selfservice#/home) (https://energov.richmondgov.com/EnerGov_Prod/selfservice#/home).

Required documentation to apply includes the following:

- [Short-Term Rental Owner Affidavit](#) acknowledging compliance with the rules for operating a short-term rental (See Supporting Documentation in the Online Permit Portal for a copy of the Short-Term Rental Owner Affidavit)
- A dimensioned floor plan of the layout of the dwelling unit, on which the following are labeled:
 1. the use of each room;
 2. the occupancy level of sleeping rooms;
 3. the cooking facilities, if applicable;
 4. the location and size of emergency egress and rescue openings; and
 5. the location of fire extinguishers and smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
- Proof of Primary Residency: See the Owner Affidavit for required documentation.

Prior to issuance of the Certificate of Zoning Compliance for the Short-Term Rental Permit, an inspection of the building, structure or premises shall be required in order to verify conformance with applicable regulations (Sec. 30-1020.3 of City Code).

Reporting a Zoning Violation regarding a Short-Term Rental:

If you are aware of a property operating a Short-Term Rental without a Short-Term Rental Permit or in violation of the rules for operating a short-term rental, contact the Zoning Administration office via telephone at 804-646-6340 or send an email to: PDRZoningAdministration@richmondgov.com. Additionally, complaints can be submitted via [RVA311](#)

Please provide a detailed description of the violation and an accurate property address. Once an alleged violation is reported to our office, it is assigned to enforcement staff for investigation by researching records and, if necessary, performing an on-site inspection. If our office determines that a property violates a zoning requirement, a Violation Notice & Correction Order is sent to the owner and/or occupant of the property. The violator is normally given thirty (30) days to abate the violation, as Virginia law requires a 30-day appeal period. If a violation is not abated or an appeal filed, a summons may be issued for criminal court. Violation of the Zoning Ordinance is a Class I misdemeanor, subject up to a \$2,500 fine and/or up to a year in jail.