

ORDINANCE TO REGULATE THE OPERATION OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS
Town of Londonderry, Vermont

ARTICLE 1. AUTHORITY. Under authority granted in 24 V.S.A. § 2291(29) and 24 V.S.A. § 1971 *et seq.*, and other such general enactments as may be material hereto, it is hereby ordained by the Selectboard of the Town of Londonderry that the following civil ordinance requiring the annual registration of all short-term rentals operating within the town (which may also be referred to as the "Short-Term Rental Ordinance") is adopted for the Town of Londonderry, Vermont.

ARTICLE 2. PURPOSE. The purpose of this Ordinance is to promote and protect the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience of the town, to preserve residents' rights to quiet enjoyment of homes and properties, and to ensure the safety of occupants of short-term rentals. The Londonderry Selectboard hereby find that unregulated short term (i.e., less than 30 day) transient occupancy of dwelling units in residential neighborhoods presents a threat to the public welfare relating to compatibility with residential uses and preservation of the character of the neighborhoods in which they are located, and to the availability of housing stock in the town. Unregulated short term rentals have negative secondary effects on residential areas, with such areas experiencing heightened adverse impacts from parking, garbage, noise and outdoor/nighttime activities. These negative effects, when left unchecked, injure and degrade the community as a whole and constitute a public nuisance. The purposes of this Ordinance are: (a) to balance the desire of property owners to rent their residential properties to short term rental guests for compensation against the desire of residents to preserve the traditional peace and quiet of their residential neighborhoods; (b) to preserve and protect residential neighborhood character and livability from the nuisance impacts that are often associated with short term rentals; (c) to limit or prevent long term rentals from being replaced with short term rentals; (d) to ensure the safety of occupants of short term rentals and the well-being of the community; and (e) to promote the public health, safety and welfare of the Town, its residents and visitors.

ARTICLE 3. DEFINITIONS

- A. "Operator" means a person who operates or manages a short-term rental. The operator may be the property owner, a tenant or a designated agent identified by a host pursuant to Article 4.C.4, below.
- B. "Short-term rental" or "STR" means a dwelling unit rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days and for more than 14 days per calendar year, and is either:
1. "Hosted " meaning a room or group of rooms located within an Operator's primary residence or an accessory dwelling or cabin on the premises of the Operator's primary residence; ~~or~~ or a by a tenant with a lease agreement for a period of not less than 12 months;

~~1.~~ 2.

~~2.3.~~ “Unhosted” meaning a furnished house, condominium, apartment, or an accessory dwelling or cabin that is not the Operator’s primary residence or located on the premises or property of the Operator’s primary residence.

~~“Tourist Lodging” as defined and permitted under the Chester Unified Development Bylaws is not a short term rental and is not regulated under this Ordinance.~~

C. “Dwelling unit” means a furnished house, condominium, apartment, room or group of rooms, or accessory building or cabin used as living quarters.

D. “STR Administrator” means a person or persons designated by the Selectboard of the Town of Londonderry to administer and enforce this Ordinance.

~~D.E.~~ “Bed and Breakfast” and “Boarding House” and “Inn” shall have the same definitions as contained in the Town of Londonderry Zoning Bylaw as amended from time to time. This Short Term Rental Ordinance shall not apply to Bed and Breakfasts, Boarding Houses and Inns which have zoning permits issued pursuant to the Town of Londonderry Zoning Bylaw and Ordinance.

ARTICLE 4. SHORT TERM RENTAL REGISTRATION.

A. The short-term rental of a dwelling unit requires the annual issuance of a Short-Term Rental Registration from the STR Administrator. A person shall not commence the use of a dwelling unit as a short-term rental unless and until the STR Administrator issues the requisite Short-Term Rental Registration.

B. The dwelling unit capacity of a short-term rental shall be a maximum of two occupants for every bedroom plus an additional two occupants. For example, a three-bedroom dwelling unit shall have a dwelling unit capacity of eight persons ((3 bedrooms X 2) + 2) when used as a short-term rental. An owner shall not advertise or permit occupancy by more than the capacity set forth in this section.

~~C.~~

D. The short-term rental use will be limited to a maximum of 150 days in any calendar year.

~~B.~~

~~C.E.~~ An operator shall provide the following information in an application for Short-Term Rental Registration for dwelling units with an occupancy of 8 or less, on a form provided by the town:

1. The number of bedrooms to be rented and the requested dwelling unit capacity to be approved in the Short-Term Rental Registration.
2. The Operator’s name, mailing address, email, and a cell phone number or other number (such as a property management company) that will be answered 24 hours a day during the time that the short-term rental unit is being rented.

3. The property owner's and, if applicable, tenant's name, address, phone number, email, date of birth, driver's license and license state, and military status (active or not), and if the owner is a corporation, the registered corporate agent and president of the corporation and their name and address, and if the owner is a partnership, the registered partnership agent and the names and addresses of the general partners (information that is needed to enforce a municipal complaint before the Judicial Bureau).
4. Property owners who do not live within Windsor, Bennington or Windham County shall designate and provide the name and contact information of a designated agent located in Windsor, Bennington or Windham Counties who shall be responsible for responding to emergency situations occurring at the Short-term rental dwelling unit.
5. The Posting of Contact Information required by 18 V.S.A. § 4467 within the Short - term rental dwelling unit.
6. The education materials required by 18 V.S.A. § 4468(a), including without limitation the self-certification form pertaining to health and safety precautions that Operators must take into consideration prior to renting a dwelling unit required by 18 V.S.A. § 4468(b).
7. Confirmation of liability insurance of not less than \$1,000,000 to cover each short-term rental, unless such short-term rental is offered through a hosting platform that maintains equal or greater coverage, and that the liability insurance policy that covers the dwelling unit extends bodily injury and property damage insurance coverage that occurs during or as a result of the use of the dwelling unit as a short-term rental.

8. Proof, satisfactory to the Town, that the Operator has obtained and performed all necessary licensing and registrations with the State of Vermont Department of Health, Division of Fire Safety and Department of Taxes necessary to operate a Short-term rental. A short-term rental is a "public building" as defined by 20 V.S.A. § 2730, subject to inspection and regulation by the Vermont Division of Fire Safety. An owner shall provide to the STR Administrator proof of satisfactory inspection results for the most recent inspection required by the Vermont Division of Fire Safety prior to the first occupancy by an occupant as defined in this Ordinance, and with each annual registration of the short-term rental.]

~~8.9.~~ Annually, beginning with the first renewal of said registration, the Operator shall file with the Town an accounting/printout of the total number of days the property was rented on a short term basis during the previous year. Failure to submit said accounting/printout will result in the renewal registration being denied.

~~D.F.~~ An application for Short-Term Rental Registration, for dwelling units with a capacity of greater than 8 occupants, shall require compliance with subsection C above, plus the following:

1. Confirmation that the septic capacity is at least equal to the requested short-term rental dwelling unit capacity. This shall be evidenced by a) a valid as approved on a State of Vermont Wastewater and Water Supply Permit for the property for dwelling units or wastewater and water supply systems constructed, modified or occupied after June 30, 2007, OR, b) a the local zoning or septic permit for dwelling units constructed before July 1, 2007 indicating the number of bedrooms permitted, OR, c) by the number of bedrooms indicated in the listers property database if a local zoning or septic permit does not exist for dwelling units constructed before July 1, 2007.

2. An inspection report with occupancy approved from the State of Vermont Division of Fire Safety for the requested short-term rental dwelling unit capacity.

~~F.G.~~ No registration for the short-term rental of a dwelling unit shall be issued unless the applicant has complied with subsection C above (for dwelling units with an occupancy of 8 or less) or has complied with subsection D above (for dwelling units with a capacity of greater than 8 occupants).

~~F.H.~~ Short-Term Rental Registrations shall expire on ~~April-June~~ 30 of each year and require renewal to continue use of a dwelling unit as a short-term rental.

~~G.I.~~ The number of lessees, guests, or other persons using a dwelling unit pursuant to the short-term rental lease or other agreement with the Operator shall not exceed the approved dwelling unit capacity on the Short-Term Rental Registration.

~~H.J.~~ The use of a dwelling unit by a number of lessees, guests, or other persons in excess of the approved dwelling unit capacity on the Short-Term Rental Registration shall constitute a violation of this Ordinance.

ARTICLE 5. FEES. A fee shall be paid to the Town of Londonderry with the submission of any Short-Term Rental Registration application or annual renewal. The fee shall be in the amount of \$150 per year (~~April-July 1 to March-June 30~~) for Hosted short-term rentals and \$300 per year (~~April-July 1 to March-June 31~~) for Unhosted short-term rentals regardless of date of registration. The Selectboard may, from time to time, modify this fee and may establish and adopt other fees related to the administration and enforcement of this Ordinance, and may incorporate all such fees into a duly adopted fee schedule.

ARTICLE 6. ENFORCEMENT. A short term-rental shall be made available by the owner for inspection within one week of a request by the STR Administrator. Any person who violates a provision of this Ordinance shall be subject to a civil penalty of up to \$800 per day for each day that a violation continues. Each day the violation continues shall constitute a separate offense. The STR Administrator and the Londonderry Zoning Administrator, along with the Selectboard and Town Administrator, shall all be designated and authorized to act as Issuing Municipal Officials to issue and pursue complaints before the Judicial Bureau, or other court having jurisdiction.

ARTICLE 7. WAIVER FEES. An Issuing Municipal Official is authorized to recover waiver fees, in lieu of a civil penalty, in the following amount, for any person who declines to contest a municipal complaint and pays the waiver fee:

	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Waiver fee for advertising a property for short-term rent (online or offline) without first having obtained a permit or complying with local listing requirements.	\$125 per day	\$250 per day	\$500 per day	\$650 per day plus revocation for twelve months before a new Short-Term Rental Registration application may be submitted. The revocation can be appealed.
Waiver fee for all other violations.	\$150 per day	\$350 per day	\$600 per day	

Offenses for the purpose of calculating waiver fees shall be counted on a twelve-month basis, beginning on ~~May~~ July 1 and ending on ~~April~~ June 30 of each year. An Issuing Municipal Official shall have authority to issue a written warning, without recovering a waiver fee, for any First Offense violation. In such instance, the written warning shall be counted as a First Offense for calculating annual offenses.

ARTICLE 8. PENALTIES. An Issuing Municipal Official is authorized to recover civil penalties in the following amounts for each violation:

	1 st Offense	2 nd Offense	3 rd Offense	4 th Offense
Fine for advertising a property for short-term rent (online or offline) without first having obtained a permit or complying with local listing requirements.	\$200 per day	\$400 per day	\$650 per day	\$800 per day plus revocation for twelve months before a new Short-Term Rental Registration application may be submitted. The revocation can be appealed.
Fine for all other violations.	\$250 per day	\$500 per day	\$750 per day	

Offenses for the purpose of calculating penalties shall be counted on a twelve-month basis, beginning on May 1 and ending on April 30 of each year. An Issuing Municipal Official shall have authority to issue a written warning, without recovering a civil penalty, for any First Offense violation. In such instance, the written warning shall be counted as a First Offense for calculating annual offenses. Failure to timely pay a penalty upon entry of judgment under 24 V.S.A. § 1981 shall result in the automatic suspension until paid of any approved Short-term

rental registration(s) registered to the person against whom the civil judgment has been entered including registrations for any other Short-term dwelling units owned or operated by the person and located within Londonderry.

ARTICLE 9. OTHER RELIEF. In addition to the enforcement procedures available under Chapter 59 of Title 24, the Londonderry Town Administrator is authorized to commence civil action in the ~~Criminal~~Civil Division of the Vermont Superior Court to obtain injunctive and other appropriate relief, to request revocation or suspension of any Short-Term Rental Registration on behalf of the Londonderry Selectboard, or to pursue any other remedy authorized by law.

ARTICLE 10. OTHER AUTHORITIES NOT PREEMPTED. This Ordinance is not intended to preempt or be exclusive with regard to any other permitting or regulatory law or authorities that pertain to the ownership, operation, management or use of property or dwelling units engaged in Short-term rentals.

ARTICLE 11. SEVERABILITY. The provisions of this ordinance are declared to be severable and if any provisions hereof be adjudged invalid such judgment shall not affect the validity of any other provisions.

ARTICLE 12. DESIGNATION. This ordinance is hereby designated as a civil ordinance pursuant to Title 24, Vermont Statutes Annotated Section 1971(b), and may be referred to as the ~~Road Naming and Structure Numbering~~Short-Term Rental Ordinance and in a prosecution hereunder a copy of such ordinance, certified by the Londonderry Town Clerk shall be prima facie evidence thereof. An allegation that the act constituting the offense charged is contrary to a specified provision of this ordinance shall be a sufficient reference hereto.

ARTICLE 13. PUBLICATION AND POSTING. This ordinance, or a concise summary thereof, shall be published in the Vermont Journal within fourteen (14) days of its adoption, and shall be filed with the Town Clerk and posted at five (5) conspicuous places within the community.

ARTICLE 14. RIGHT OF PETITION. Notice is hereby given of the right to petition for a permissive referendum vote on this ordinance at an annual or special meeting as provided for in 24 V.S.A. § 1973. Such petition for a permissive referendum must be signed by not less than five (5) percent of the qualified voters of the Town of Londonderry and shall be presented to the Selectboard or the Town Clerk within forty-four (44) days following the date of adoption.

ARTICLE 15. EFFECTIVE DATE. Unless a petition is filed in accordance with 24 V.S.A. § 1973, the Ordinance shall become effective sixty (60) days after its adoption.

Adopted by the Town of Londonderry Selectboard at its meeting held on the XX day of January, 2023.

Town of Londonderry, Selectboard

Thomas Cavanagh, Chair

James Fleming, Vice Chair

Taylor Prouty

Melissa Brown

Georgianne Mora

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