

CHAPTER 19 - SHORT-TERM RENTALS
ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN OF VERMONT, DANE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

SECTION 1 - PURPOSES

The purposes of this Chapter are to: (i) ensure that the quality of short-term rentals operating within the Town is adequate for protecting public health, safety and general welfare, including establishing minimum standards of space for human occupancy and parking and for an adequate level of maintenance; (ii) determine the responsibilities of owners and property managers operating or managing these rental properties for tourists or transient occupants, including, but not limited to, the responsibility to expeditiously and personally respond to, stop, mitigate, or prevent the recurrence of unreasonable activities on, or conditions, uses or misuses of, these rental properties which adversely impact or substantially annoy, disturb, threaten, harm, offend or interfere with the residential uses, nature or values of other properties in the neighborhoods in which these rental properties operate, or with the comfort, health, enjoyment, security, life, health, or safety of others, or which substantially interfere with, obstruct, or tend to obstruct or render dangerous for passage any lane, street, road, bridge or other public or private way used by emergency vehicles or protective service personnel to gain access to property or a navigable body of water to provide services, (i.e., public nuisances); (iii) protect the character and stability of all areas, especially residential areas, within the Town of Vermont; (iv) provide minimum standards necessary for the health and safety of persons occupying or using buildings, structures or premises; (v) require the provision of liability insurance in connection with the operation of short-term rentals so that persons on these properties, and the owners and occupants of adjacent properties, who suffer bodily injury or property damage arising from the condition or operation of the short-term rental, or from acts or omissions occurring thereon, are afforded a potential source of recovery to pay such damage claims; and (vi) provide for the administration and enforcement hereof.

SECTION II - DEFINITIONS

A. As used in this chapter, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

CLERK - The Town Clerk of the Town of Vermont or designee.

TOWN BOARD - The Board of Supervisors of the Town of Vermont.

PLAN COMMISSION - a commission that advises the Town of Vermont on comprehensive planning and land use issues and may make related decisions that are delegated by the governing body. A primary role of the commission is to prepare and administer a comprehensive plan, providing leadership and insight into opportunities and challenges that confront the community.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT - An issued permit granting a land use that has been deemed a conditional use for a zoning district in accordance with the Dane County Chapter 10 Zoning Ordinance.

DWELLING UNIT - One (1) or more rooms with provisions for living, cooking, sanitary and sleeping facilities and a bathroom arranged for exclusive use by one (1) or more persons maintaining a common household. Dwelling units include residential, tourist rooming house, seasonal employee housing and dormitory units.

ENTITY - A corporation, investment company, limited partnership, limited liability partnership, limited liability company, cooperative association, unincorporated cooperative association, common law trust, or any other group or organization licensed to do business in this state.

GUEST REGISTER – The official record provided and kept by a Property Owner or Property Manager in which short-term rental guests are required to list their true names and addresses before being assigned sleeping quarters, pursuant to Wis. Admin. Code § ATCP 72.16.

LICENSE - The Short-Term Rental License issued under § 19-4.

LICENSE YEAR – The period from July 1st of each year to June 30th of the following year.

OCCUPANT – Any person, over one (1) year of age, living, sleeping, cooking or eating in, or having actual possession of, a dwelling unit.

PERSON – An individual, group of individuals, or an entity.

PROPERTY MANAGER - Any person who is not the Property Owner and is authorized by the property owner, expressly or implied, to act as agent and as the local contact person on behalf of the property owner for one or more short-term rental, and to take remedial action and promptly respond to any violation of this chapter or the Town Code relating to the licensed premises.

PROPERTY OWNER – The owner of a short-term rental.

RENEWAL LICENSE – Any license issued under this chapter 19 which will be or is in effect for the License Year immediately following a License Year for which the Town Clerk issued a license under this chapter for the same short-term rental property.

SHORT-TERM RENTAL - A residential dwelling that is offered for rent for a fee and for fewer than thirty (30) consecutive days, as defined in Wis. Stat. § 66.0615(1)(dk).

SECTION III - OPERATION OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS

- A. No person may maintain, manage or operate a short-term rental more than ten (10) nights each License Year without a short-term rental license. Every short-term rental shall be operated by a Property Owner or Property Manager.
- B. Each short-term rental Property Owner is required to have the following licenses and permits, per rental property:
 - (1) A state of Wisconsin Tourist Rooming House license.
 - (2) License and inspections as required by Public Health Madison & Dane County (hereinafter referred to as PHMDC) .
 - (3) A Seller's Permit issued by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, unless all rentals of the property are exempt from such permit requirements per state regulations.
 - (4) A license from the Town of Vermont issued pursuant to this chapter.
 - (5) A conditional use permit on file with Dane County Planning and Development
- C. Each short-term rental shall comply with all of the following:
 - (1) No residential dwelling unit may be rented for a period of six (6) or fewer consecutive

days. However, after a short-term rental license has been issued for a residential dwelling unit under § 19-4, then any subsequent rental of that dwelling unit during the license term may be for a period of six (6) or fewer consecutive days.

- (2) Public Peace and Order shall be maintained pursuant to Dane County Code of Ordinances Chapter 34, Public Peace and Order. This includes but is not limited to noise, glare, vibration or trespass onto neighboring properties.
- (3) Discharge of firearms is prohibited except as allowed for in season hunting and must be expressly allowed by the property owner
- (4) Name plates or other signage related to the short-term rental property shall not exceed one square foot. No other signage advertising the short-term rental is permitted on site.
- (5) The number of occupants in any dwelling unit shall not exceed the limits set forth in Wis.Admin. Code § ATCP 72.14 for hotels, motels, tourist rooming houses, or as limited by the sanitary system as specified by PHMDC , whichever is less
- (6) No recreational vehicles (RVs), campers, tents or other temporary lodging arrangements shall be permitted on site as a means of providing additional accommodations for paying guests or other invitees.
- (7) Compliance with all applicable state, county and local codes and regulations is required.
- (8) A local Property Manager who resides within thirty-five (35) miles of the short-term rental property must be available at all times the property is rented. The Property Owner may act as the local Property Manager, or may designate someone else to fill that role. The Property Owner must notify the Town Clerk within three (3) business days of any change in the Property Manager's contact information for the short-term rental and submit the revised contact information to the Town Clerk within the same time period.
- (9) The Property Owner shall have and maintain homeowner's liability or business liability insurance for the premises that are used for short-term rental and shall provide written evidence of such insurance with the license application and renewal application forms.
- (10) The Property Owner or Property Manager of each short-term rental shall provide a guest register and require all guests to register their true names and addresses and rental time period(s) before being assigned sleeping quarters. The guest register shall be kept by the Property Owner or Property Manager and available for inspection for at least one (1) year, as part of license renewal and as required by the Wisconsin Administrative Code. If the Property Owner or Property Manager does not consent to inspection of the guest register, the register shall be subject to disclosure to an authorized official pursuant only to a proper search warrant, administrative subpoena, judicial subpoena, or other lawful procedure to compel the production of records that affords the Property Owner or Property Manager an opportunity for pre-compliance review by a neutral decision maker.
- (11) Upon probable cause to believe that a violation of this chapter, or of a law, code, rule or regulation relating to buildings, housing, electrical, plumbing, heating, gas, fire, health, safety, environmental pollution, water quality, food or zoning has occurred or is occurring, the Town Building Inspector, a Dane County Zoning or PHMDC official may request that the Property Owner or Property Manager allow him or her, upon presenting proper identification, access to the short-term rental premises at any reasonable time for any of the following purposes: (a) to determine if there has been a violation of this chapter, or of a law, code, rule or regulation related to the short-term rental or its operation; (b) to determine compliance with previously written violation orders; (c) to

examine and copy relevant documents and records related to the operation of the short-term rental; or (d) to obtain photographic or other evidence needed to enforce this chapter. As used in this subsection, “probable cause” means facts and circumstances within an officer’s knowledge and of which he or she has reasonably trustworthy information that are sufficient to warrant a reasonable officer in believing that a violation has been or is being committed. If consent is refused, the Building Inspector or health officer may apply for a special inspection warrant issued under Wis. Stat. § 66.0119, or other warrant, subpoena or order as may be necessary or appropriate.

SECTION IV - SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSE

- A. The Town Clerk shall issue a short-term rental license if an applicant demonstrates compliance with the provisions of Chapter 19 of the Town Code. A short-term rental license is issued for one (1) License Year and may be renewed annually as provided in § 19-6. The license shall contain the following information:
- (1) The name of the Property Owner, with contact information including mailing address and a telephone number at which the Property Owner is available. If the Property Owner is also acting as the Property Manager, then the requirements of subsec. A.(2) shall apply to the Property Owner.
 - (2) The name of the Property Manager, with contact information including mailing address, physical address (if different from mailing address) and a telephone number at which the Property Manager is available at all times the property is rented.
 - (3) The license term.
 - (4) The state of Wisconsin Tourist Rooming House license number.
 - (5) A conditional use permit on file with Dane County Planning and Development
 - (6) The PHMDC license number.

SECTION V - SHORT-TERM RENTAL LICENSE PROCEDURE

- A. All applications for a short-term rental license shall be filed with the Town Clerk on forms provided by the Clerk. Applications must be filed by the Property Owner or the Property Manager. No license shall be issued unless the completed application form is accompanied by payment of the required application fee, which fee shall be non-refundable.
- B. Each application shall include the following information and documentation for each short-term rental unit in order to demonstrate compliance with all requirements of this chapter, including, but not limited to, § 19-3:
- (1) The name of the Property Owner, with contact information including mailing address and a telephone number at which the Property Owner is available. If the Property Owner is also acting as the Property Manager, then the application shall include mailing address, physical address (if different from mailing address) and a telephone number at which the Property Owner is available at all times the property is rented.
 - (2) A copy of the state of Wisconsin Tourist Rooming House license issued under Wis. Stat. § 97.605; or proof that such license has been applied for, in which event a provisional short-term rental license may be issued under this chapter for a period of thirty (30) days but shall be conditioned upon the Town Clerk’s receipt of a copy of such state license from the applicant within said thirty (30) day period, and if a copy of such state license is not received by the Clerk within said period, then such provisional license shall expire

and be void at and after the end of said thirty (30) day period.

- (3) A copy of the most recent Lodging Inspection Report for a Tourist Rooming House issued by the state of Wisconsin which should be dated within one (1) year of the date of the license application to the Town.
 - (4) A copy of the PHMDC Short Term Rentals license
 - (5) Written evidence of liability insurance as required by § 19-3.C.(8).
 - (6) A copy of a current Seller's Permit issued by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, unless all rentals of the property are exempt from such permit requirement per state regulations.
 - (7) A diagram drawn to scale showing the location of buildings plus acceptable parking area(s).
 - (8) Designation of a Property Manager, unless the Property Owner is acting as the Property Manager, with contact information including mailing address, physical address (if different from mailing address) and a telephone number at which the Property Manager is available at all times the property is rented, and an affirmative statement that the Property Manager is authorized to act as agent and as the local contact person for the Property Owner with respect to operation of the short-term rental, including taking remedial action and promptly responding to any violation of this chapter or the Town Code relating to the licensed premises, and receiving service of notice of violation of this chapter's provisions.
 - (9) Written certification by the Property Owner that the short-term rental meets the requirements of this chapter and applicable state and county laws, ordinances and regulations.
 - (10) An employer identification number issued by the Internal Revenue Service, if applicable.
 - (11) For renewal licenses only, written certification that a guest register has been kept as required by the Wisconsin Administrative Code and a brief recap of the last years dates the property has been rented.
 - (12) Site specific rules and regulations.
- C. Unless earlier revoked, each license shall run from July 1st of one year to June 30th of the following year and may be renewed for additional one (1)-year periods. The application fee shall be paid upon filing of the application. Any application that does not include all of the information and supporting documentation required by this chapter shall not be considered as complete.
- D. When the Town Clerk determines that an application is complete and meets the requirements of this chapter, the Clerk shall approve the application and issue a short-term rental license (or, if applicable, a provisional short-term rental license) to the applicant. If the Clerk determines that the application is incomplete or does not meet the requirements of this chapter, the Clerk shall deny the application and inform the applicant, in writing, of the reason(s) why the application was denied and what action is needed to obtain approval of the application.
- E. No short-term rental license (or, if applicable, a provisional short-term rental license) shall be issued or renewed if the applicant or short-term rental property has outstanding fees, taxes, special charges or forfeitures owed to the Town.
- F. No short-term rental license (or, if applicable, a provisional short-term rental ordinance) shall be issued if the applicant or short-term rental property is found to be subject to one of the grounds for revocation as provided in § 19 C-D.

SECTION VI - RENEWAL

- A. Each application for renewal of a short-term rental license shall include updated information for the documentation on file with the Town Clerk, and payment of the renewal fee. A renewal application must be filed with, and a nonrefundable renewal fee must be paid to, the Clerk at least ninety (90) days prior to the license expiration date to allow the Town Clerk adequate time to review the application. The Clerk shall determine whether the information provided in the renewal application is complete and meets the requirements of this chapter. The Clerk may also request reports from the Town Building Inspector, Dane County Zoning Administrator, the Sheriff's Department and other law enforcement agencies regarding any enforcement actions taken with respect to the short-term rental properties and operations, and their owners, tenants, occupants or visitors. The Clerk shall review the renewal application, considering the number, frequency and/or severity of law violations relating to the short-term rental property and operations, and its owner(s), tenant(s), occupant(s) or visitor(s), and whether such violations substantially harm or adversely impact the predominantly residential uses and nature of the surrounding neighborhood. If after such consideration the Clerk determines not to renew the license, the Clerk shall notify the applicant in writing of the reason(s) for such decision, and the applicant's right to appeal the decision to the Town Board as provided in **§ 19.9.B**
- B. No license shall be renewed if the short-term rental property is under an order issued by the Building Inspector or a local health officer, or his or her designee, to bring the premises into compliance with state, county or local laws, codes, rules or regulations.

SECTION VII - STANDARDS FOR SHORT-TERM RENTALS

- A. Each short-term rental shall comply with this chapter's requirements and any other applicable state, county or local laws, codes, rules or regulations. Each short-term rental shall comply with the following standards:
 - (1) The number of occupants may not be more than allowed under Wis. Admin. Code Ch.ATCP 72 or any other state regulation, state statute, or as limited by the sanitary system as specified by PHMDC, whichever is less .
 - (2) Not less than one (1) on-site parking space shall be provided for every four (4) occupants, based upon maximum occupancy. There shall be no off-site parking on Town or county roadways.
 - (3) The maximum number of rental days per license year is 180, or as specifically approved by the Town Board at the time of license renewal. Any variance to 180 days will be based on an assessment of impacts/nuisances/etc, which could also result in reductions back to 180 days if they had been increased.
 - (4) The short-term rental premises shall have functioning smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors pursuant to the requirements of Wis. Admin. Code Ch. SPS 321.
 - (5) Certification of compliance: As a condition of issuance of a license under Chapter 19 of the Town Code, the Property Owner or Property Manager shall certify in writing in each initial application and renewal application form that the short-term term rental property is in compliance with the terms and conditions of the license and this chapter.

SECTION VIII - DISPLAY OF PERMIT

Each license shall be displayed on the inside of the main entrance door of each short-term rental.

SECTION IX - APPEAL OF LICENSING DECISIONS; LICENSE REVOCATION; APPEAL PROCEDURE; JUDICIAL

REVIEW

- A. The Town Clerk's decision to deny an initial short-term rental license or to deny renewal of a short-term rental license shall specify the reason(s) for such denial, in writing. Prior to the time for the renewal of the license, the Town Clerk shall notify the licensee in writing of the Town's intention not to renew the license and notify the licensee of his/her/their right to an appeal hearing as provided in § 19.9.B
- B. The Town Clerk's decision to deny an initial license or to deny renewal of a license may be appealed to the Town Board by filing a written appeal with the Clerk within twenty-one (21) calendar days (excluding legal holidays) after the date of mailing of the written notice of the Town Clerk's decision denying such license or renewal license. The Town Board shall conduct a due process hearing and issue a written decision on the appeal within thirty (30) calendar days of the Town's receipt of the written appeal, or the license shall be deemed granted. If the appellant appears at the hearing he/she/they may produce and cross-examine witnesses, present relevant evidence, and be represented by counsel of his/her/their choosing, at his or her expense. If the Town Board finds the Town Clerk's reason(s) for his/her/their decision sufficient, the decision shall be affirmed. If the Town Board finds the Town Clerk's reason(s) for his/her/their decision insufficient, the decision shall be reversed, and the license shall be granted and issued. If the appellant does not appear at the hearing and the Town Board finds the Town Clerk's reason(s) for his/her/their decision sufficient, the decision shall be affirmed. The Town Board's written decision on the appeal must specify the reason(s) for its determination. The Town Clerk shall give written notice of the Town Board's decision to the applicant or licensee.
- C. A license may be revoked by the Town Board during the term of a License Year and following a due process hearing for one or more of the following reasons:
 - (1) Failure by the licensee to make payment of delinquent fees, taxes, special charges, forfeitures or other debt owed to the Town.
 - (2) Failure to maintain all required local, county and state licensing requirements.
 - (3) Any violation of local, county or state laws or regulations which, based upon their number, frequency and/or severity, and their relation to the short-term rental property, its owner(s), tenant(s), occupant(s) or visitor(s), substantially harm or adversely impact the predominantly residential uses and nature of the surrounding neighborhood.
- D. Revocation / Violation. Any person or agent of a governmental authority may file a sworn written complaint with the Town Clerk alleging one or more of the reasons set forth in §19.9.C. as grounds for revocation of a short-term rental license issued under this chapter. Upon the filing of the complaint, the Town Clerk shall review and determine whether the facts noted support a violation. If so the Town Clerk shall notify the licensee of the complaint by certified mail – return receipt requested and provide the licensee with a copy of the complaint. The notice shall direct the licensee to appear before the Town Board on a day, time and place included in the notice, not less than ten (10) days and not more than forty-five (45) days from the date of the notice, and show cause why his/her/their license should not be revoked. The hearing shall be conducted as provided in § 19.9.B. If a license is suspended or revoked, the Town Clerk shall give notice of revocation to the licensee by certified mail – return receipt requested. No part of the fee paid for any license so suspended or revoked may be refunded.
- E. Judicial Review. The action of the Town Board in granting or renewing, refusing to grant or renew, or revoking a license under this chapter will be forwarded to the Dane County Zoning Division with referral to the County Board for consideration of revocation of the County Conditional Use

Permit.

SECTION X - FEES

Any person applying for an initial short-term rental license or renewing a license pursuant to this chapter shall be subject to the fees as established in Chapter 20 General Provisions Ordinance of the Town of Vermont.

SECTION XI - SEVERABILITY

Should any portion of this ordinance be declared invalid or unconstitutional by a court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of any other provisions of this ordinance.