

# Short-Term Rentals (“STRs”) in Norfolk

## WHAT IS A SHORT-TERM RENTAL?

Renting all or a portion of a dwelling unit to a guest for less than 30 consecutive days.

## TWO TYPES OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS

1. HOMESTAY: where the STR is located in an owner-occupied dwelling unit.
2. VACATION RENTAL: where the STR is located in a dwelling unit not occupied by an owner.

## TWO TYPES OF REGISTRATION

All STRs are required to register with the city. There are two methods of registration, determined by the location and characteristics of the operation.

1. ADMINISTRATIVE APPROVAL: If the application meets the requirements, staff must issue the permit.
  - Most homestays can be approved using this method.
  - Many vacation rentals can be approved using this method, depending on zoning district and unit characteristics.
    - Large-lot single-family zoning districts (SF-2, SF-4, SF-6)
    - Ocean View zoning districts (R-C), where units have 1-3 bedrooms
    - Downtown zoning districts (D), where buildings have 1-9 units
2. CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT (CUP) APPROVAL: The permit cannot be issued until a CUP is approved by City Council.
  - Many vacation rentals require this approval.
    - Small-lot single-family zoning districts (SF-10, SF-T)
    - Ocean View zoning districts (R-C), where units have 4+ bedrooms
    - Multifamily zoning districts (MF-NS)
    - Commercial zoning districts (C)

## NON-REGISTERED SHORT-TERM RENTALS

There are many short-term rentals that are operating in Norfolk without a valid registration. Generally, these are the source of most STR complaints. City staff actively enforces these non-registered units, which are subject to the following enforcement actions:

1. NOTICE OF ZONING VIOLATION: operator is given 30 days to register or cease use.
2. CIVIL PENALTY: operator is issued a warrant in debt (fine) for \$200, increasing up to \$5,000 for repeat violators.

## SHORT-TERM RENTAL STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS

The Zoning Ordinance establishes a set of performance standards applicable to every short-term rental, whether approved administratively or via conditional use permit. For those that require a CUP, additional conditions are generally added. These standards and conditions are summarized below:

1. STR PERFORMANCE STANDARDS: The following standards apply to all short-term rentals, regardless of method of approval.
  - The maximum term of approval is two years.
  - Maximum occupancy is two persons per bedroom, with a maximum of five bedrooms.
  - The operator must acquire a business license and pay the applicable transient occupancy taxes.
  - All online listings for a unit must be consistent across platforms.
  - The operator must post signs inside and outside the unit with 24-hour contact information and Norfolk call center information.
  - Where homes share driveways and/or parking areas, permission from all owners is required.
  - In a multi-family setting:
    - All owners must be a party to the operation (affects condominium ownership).
    - Any existing tenants must be notified of the change.
    - Any new tenants must be notified of the operation.
2. STR STANDARD CUP CONDITIONS: The following standards are generally added to conditional use permits for short-term rentals.
  - The operator must install remote entry mechanisms and provide each guest with a different access code.
  - The operator must install a remotely accessible video surveillance system with cameras facing the parking area and all common areas. Recordings must be stored for 30 days and made available to city staff.
  - The operator must install remote noise monitoring devices that notify the operator of excess noise levels.
  - The designated emergency contact person must respond on-site to complaints within 20 minutes.
  - The operator must ensure that waste containers are placed in their enclosures after collection.
  - In a multi-family setting, the operator must either:
    - Provide a common waste container (dumpster), screen it, and ensure it is emptied at least weekly.
    - Contract with a private waste collection service, provide each STR unit with its own container, and ensure it is emptied at least weekly.