

GUIDE TO

Short-Term Vacation Rental Certification Program

For Walton County, Florida



Department of Planning & Development Services



Visit Our Website at <https://bit.ly/STVRCP>
or Scan the QR Code Below



Definition

Short-Term Vacation Rental: A public lodging establishment consisting of any unit, group of units, dwelling, building, or group of buildings within a single complex of buildings, which is rented to guests more than three times in a calendar year for periods of less than 30 days or one calendar month, whichever is less, or which is advertised or held out to the public as a place regularly rented to guests.

Certificate Classifications

Short-Term Vacation Rental certificates are issued in two (2) different classifications:

- **Single** : Each property owner shall obtain an annual certificate for each dwelling unit used as a Short-Term Vacation Rental.
- **Community**: Covers all units within a building or group of buildings in a single complex covered under Cooperative and or Homeowners Association as defined in Chapters 719 & 720 F.S. to convey special requirements to Walton County Planning & Development Services Department.

Licensed Agent

A licensed agent is someone that the property owner has authorized, through a rental agreement or contract, to hold out the property for rent on a transient basis. The licensed agent does not have to hold a license from the Division of Real Estate.

As part of the application packet, the licensed agent will be required to provide a signed and submit a notarized affidavit acknowledging the property being registered is in compliance with all state, county and local requirements.

Zoning Requirements

New construction and converted neighborhood scale short term vacation rental unit uses are permissible in every zoning district allowing *single family residential detached, single family residential attached, and multi-family residential land uses including the Residential Preservation zoning district* provided that such units are compatible with the neighborhood and surrounding residential land use.

Only properties zoned for "Limited Lodging", "Bed and Breakfast", "Room and Boarding", or "Hotel Motel" can rent to more than one family or lessee group within the same structure. i.e. one house with two separate rooms with separate renters. Similarly, meeting rentals, event venues or other spaces used for large gatherings must be located within a zoning district that allows such uses.

Walton County FL Certificate Exclusions

The following units **DO NOT** require a certificate but must still comply with state and local tax, and other registration requirements.

- Single Family attached or detached dwelling units occupied on a full-time basis by the owner as an on-premises, permanent resident and that has been declared and continues to be declared as homestead by the Property Appraiser.
- Condominiums as defined in Chapter 718, F.S.
- Multi-family residential developments under common management.

How to Apply for Walton County Certificate

- Register with FL Department of Revenue to remit Sales Tax
- Obtain FL Department of Business & Professional Regulation License
- Complete Certificate of Balcony Inspections (if required)
- Register with Walton County Clerk of Courts for remittance of Tourism Development Tax

ALL SHORT-TERM RENTALS MUST REGISTER!

- Identify Local Responsible Party
 - Can be owner of Property
 - Available by land-line or mobile telephone twenty-four (24) hours a day, seven (7) days a week
 - Capable of handling any issues arising from Short-Term Vacation Rental use
 - Able to travel to Short-Term Vacation Rental within one (1) hour of notification
 - Authorized to act on behalf of the owner
 - Otherwise monitor the Short-Term Vacation Rental unit at least once weekly to assure continued compliance
- Ensure solid waste receptacles are available
 - Minimum 35 gallons of capacity per four (4) guests
- Notarized affidavit of compliance –
 - Stating that owner or licensed agent of the Short-Term Vacation Rental is in compliance with all Florida State, and Walton County statutes, regulations, codes, and ordinances
- Completion of Application Packet and Fee
 - Packet can be found at <https://bit.ly/STVRCP>
 - \$125 Application Fee required for each Short-Term Vacation Rental

Required Posted Materials Inside Unit

- Local Responsible Party Contact Information
- Address of Short-Term Rental
- Maximum Gross Occupancy with following wording:

“Maximum Occupancy is (X) by order of the State Fire Marshal. In accordance with Florida Administrative Code 69A-43.018 the maximum occupancy load permitted for one and two family dwellings licensed as public lodging establishments shall be computed at 150 square feet gross floor area per person.”

- Trash Storage and Pickup Information
- Maximum On-Site Parking with Sketch of Location with Notice of No Parking Areas
- Notice of County Sound Ordinance
- Walton County Wildlife Protection Zone, Sea Turtle Nesting Season Restrictions and Sea Turtle Lighting Usage
- Location of Nearest Hospital
- Beach Safety Information Specifically Flag Notification System
- If three (3) or more occupied floors, on third and higher floors above ground level shall be posted, next to the interior door of each bedroom, a legible copy of the building evacuation map - Minimum 8½" by 11" in size
- Evacuation Routes with Flood Zone Information for the property
- Sanitation and Safety Postings
- Short-Term Vacation Rental Certification Sign
 - Name and Contact Number of Local Responsible Party or Hotline Number
 - Certification Number

General Information

- Certificate must be current and renewed annually
- Certificate is not transferable from one place or individual to another
- Certificate Number and Local Responsible Party Contact or Hotline information shall be displayed on the house or in the yard; in such a manner to be easily viewed from the street but not in the public right-of-way with a clearly distinguishable sign no larger than 18 inches by 11 inches
- **ALL** Advertising shall include Certificate Number, Tourism Development Tax Registration, Maximum Occupancy, and Parking Limitations
- Individualized Digital Certification Badge will be provided for use by the owner or licensed agent for one (1) calendar year from issuance.

State Sanitization Requirements

- If dishes and glassware are provided, you must sanitize them between guests.

Requires a three-compartment sink or commercial dishmachine; OR operator must post a notice that the dishes and glassware have not been sanitized according to public food service establishment standards.

Required specific language on the notice available at

<http://www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR/hotels-restaurants/forms-publications/>

- Halls, entrances, hall/stair runners and stairways (unless common) shall be clean, ventilated, and well-lighted day and night.
- Kitchen appliances and refrigeration equipment shall be kept clean, free from odors and in good repair.
- Toxic items must be properly stored and labeled.
- Potable water shall be supplied and adequate sanitary facilities for guests. E.g., showers, handwash sinks and toilets that are connected to approved plumbing.
- Water from a nonpublic system (e.g., well) shall be sampled / tested at least annually and as required by state water quality regulations and said report shall be available upon request.
- The kitchen sink is required to have hot and cold running water under pressure.
- Ice making machines must use water from an approved source and shall be constructed, located, installed, operated, and maintained to prevent contamination of the ice as well as automatically dispensed.
- Units must be kept free of vermin.
- If provided:
 - Bedding and linens, sheets and pillow cases, and bedding items (e.g., mattresses, comforters and pillows) must be kept clean and in good condition.
 - Soap must be available either individually wrapped or from a dispenser.
 - Ice buckets shall be cleaned and sanitized between each guest or be provided with a sanitary single-service food-grade liner that is changed daily.

State Safety Requirements

- A current Certificate of Balcony Inspection (DBPR HR7020) must be filed with DBPR and Walton County every three (3) years.

Balcony certificate is available from the Division of Hotels and Restaurants website at <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/>; by e-mail request submitted at <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/contactus/>; or by phone **850.487.1395**.

- Railings shall be installed on all stairways and around all porches and steps.
- Heating and ventilation must be kept in good repair or installed to maintain a minimum of 68 degrees Fahrenheit throughout the building.
- Boiler Certificate required, if needed. (Not required if boiler is located in common area.) A water heating device is considered a boiler if it exceeds any one of the following limits: maximum heat input of 400,000BTUH; water temperature of 210 degrees Fahrenheit; water capacity of 120 gallons.
- High hazard areas like boiler rooms and laundry rooms shall be kept clean and free of debris and flammables.
- At least one(1) approved locking device is required that cannot be opened by a non-master guest room key on all outside and connecting doors. (Cannot be a sliding chain or hook and eye type of locking device.)
- Automatic Smoke Detection/Alarms must be installed in every living unit, checked weekly, and annotated in a log per Chapter 69A-43, F.A.C.
- Electrical wiring must be in good repair.
- A fire extinguisher which meets or exceeds NFPA 10 standards must be present, properly charged and accessible on each level/floor.
- If present, fire alarm panel must have power and be maintained.
- Battery powered automatic emergency lighting of primary emergency exit must provide lighting for not less than one (1) hour.
- Specialized smoke alarms for the hearing impaired shall be available upon request without charge.
- Must meet all local fire authority and building code requirements.