

TOWN OF MENDON
ORDINANCE REGULATING SHORT-TERM RENTALS

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY

This Ordinance is adopted by the Town of Mendon (hereinafter “Town”) pursuant to the authority set forth in Chapters 59 and 61 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, including but not limited to 24 VSA §§ 1971 and 2291(15) and (29). This Ordinance shall be designated as a civil ordinance under 24 V.S.A. § 1971(b).

SECTION 2. PURPOSE

The Town recognizes the significant economic impact that tourism and our own outdoor recreational assets have on our community. The purpose of this Ordinance is to balance the Town’s interest in preserving the character of our residential neighborhoods with the growing interest in renting residential units in the short-term to the traveling and visiting public and to protect the public health, safety, welfare, and convenience of both visitors and residents. This ordinance is intended to establish basic requirements for the operation of Short-Term Rentals, including their identification through registration, certification of compliance with basic health and safety measures, and disclosure of key contact information.

SECTION 3. DEFINITIONS

The following words, terms, and phrases, when used in this Ordinance, shall have the meaning ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

“Designated Manager” means the person who shall be locally available at all times to perform the duties described in Section 7(b).

“Guest” means any individual who is renting a Short-Term Rental. This term includes both the individual paying for the rental as well as all individuals on whose behalf the Short-Term Rental is rented.

“Enforcement Officer” means any law enforcement officer certified by the Vermont Criminal Justice Training Council, the Short-Term Rental Officer, or any other person designated as an Enforcement Officer by the Selectboard.

“Owner” means each individual or entity with an ownership interest in the building or property where the Short-Term Rental is located.

“Short-Term Rental” means a furnished house, condominium, or other dwelling room or self-contained 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, but excludes the following:

- A primitive camp rented for less than three weeks annually during hunting season as designated by Vermont’s Fish and Wildlife Department;
- A lodging establishment, as the term is defined in 18 V.S.A. § 4301, which holds a current license to operate a food and lodging establishment with the Vermont Department of Health;
- Two or fewer individual bedrooms or other portions of dwelling units rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public in a resident-occupied dwelling unit; and
- A dwelling room or self-contained dwelling unit rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public for a period of fewer than 14 days per calendar year.

“STRO” means the Short-Term Rental Officer serving pursuant to Section 4 of this Ordinance

SECTION 4. SHORT-TERM RENTAL OFFICER

The Short-Term Rental Officer (“STRO”) shall act as Enforcement officer for this Ordinance. The STRO shall be appointed by the selectboard and may be removed at-will by action of the selectboard at any time, with or without cause. The selectboard may make temporary appointments of another STRO who may serve in the event of unavailability or the permanent STRO. The zoning administrator shall serve as the STRO absent appointment of another person.

SECTION 5. RULES FOR SHORT-TERM RENTALS

a) Owner Obligations. The Owner of the Short-Term Rental shall do all of the following:

1. Obtain the educational information packet regarding Short-Term Rentals provided by the Vermont Division of Fire Safety, per 18 V.S.A. 4468(a),
2. Comply with all applicable building, health, and fire safety codes, ordinances, policies, regulations and laws adopted by the Town and the State including but not limited to the Vermont Department of Public Safety’s Residential Rental Housing Health & Safety Code, as applicable,
3. Provide accurate Occupancy Limits in all Short-Term Rental advertisements, and
4. Annually register their Short-Term Rental according to this ordinance.

b) Notice. The following information shall be displayed in plain sight within a Short-Term Rental:

1. Contact information for the Designated Manager,
2. Contact Information required by 18 V.S.A. 4467; and
3. Vermont Meals and Room Tax license.

- c) **Occupancy Limits.** An Owner shall not advertise or permit occupancy of a Short-Term Rental except as permitted by this ordinance. A Short-Term Rental shall not exceed an occupancy limit of two-people per bedroom, plus an additional two people. For example, a three-bedroom dwelling unit shall have no more than eight people (3 bedrooms x 2) + 2). The number of bedrooms shall be determined by a Wastewater Permit, Lister Card, or Act 250 permit. Where a Wastewater Permit, Lister Card, and/or an Act 250 permit list conflicting number of bedrooms, whichever shows the fewest number of bedrooms shall apply. For Occupancy Limit purposes, the number of people shall exclude children under 2 years old.
- d) **Designated Manager.** The Designated Manager shall be within a 30-minute drive of the Short-Term Rental property and shall be available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to respond in the event of an incident whenever there is an active Short-Term Rental; and inform, in writing, all abutting property owners of expected Short-Term Rental use prior to the operation of the Short-Term Rental, indicate the approved occupancy limit for each unit in operation, and provide the phone number and email for the Designated Manager so that they may be contacted in the event that an issue arises. maintain a clean, safe, and sanitary Short-Term Rental.
- e) **Parking.** All vehicles associated with the Short-Term Rental, including guests of the short-term renter(s), shall have designated off-street parking and not use shared private driveways, private roads, or public highways.
- f) **Noise.** All Short-Term Rental guests shall adhere to the Town of Mendon Objectionable Noise Ordinance and the Owner of the Short-Term Rental shall be considered responsible for compliance with this Town Ordinance. All Short-Term Rentals shall have designated quiet hours which, at minimum, shall designate the hours after 10:30 PM and before 6:00 AM as quiet hours.

SECTION 6. REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS

- a) Registrations shall be submitted on an application form developed by the Town and must include payment of the fee.

- b)** Every Short-Term Rental shall be registered by its Owner with the STRO on or before the later of April 1, 2026; or (ii) 10 days before the first day the Short-Term Rental is advertised for rent. Thereafter, the Owner shall register the Short-Term Rental annually, no later than April 1 in every calendar year in which the property is occupied as a short-term rental.
- c)** For Short-Term Rentals that are bedrooms or portions of dwelling units, only one registration per dwelling unit which contains a Short-Term Rental shall be required. For example, if three bedrooms in the same dwelling unit are rented separately, only one registration is needed for all three bedrooms.
- d)** Registration shall expire upon a change in ownership of the Short-Term Rental. A new application for registration must be submitted for continued operation.

SECTION 7. APPLICATION AND FEES

- a)** A Short-Term Rental Registration application shall not be complete until all fees have been paid, and the following information and materials have been submitted to the STRO:
 - 1. Property Owner(s) name(s), mailing address, phone number and email address.
 - 2. Designated Manager's name(s), mailing address, phone number and email address.
 - 3. The following information about the Short-Term Rental:
 - i. E-911 address and parcel tax id of the property.
 - ii. Type of structure (i.e. single-family home, duplex, ADU, apartment, camp, etc.)
 - iii. Number of bedrooms and bathrooms.
 - iv. Number of designated off-street parking spaces.
 - v. Wastewater disposal type used by the property (e.g. septic, municipal, etc.).
 - vi. The maximum number of guests the unit will be rented to.
- b)** Certification by Owner that they have adequate property and general liability insurance policy that expressly covers damages arising from use as a Short-Term Rental.
- c)** The Short-Term Rental's Meals and Rooms Tax ID Number from the Vermont Department of Taxes, per 32 V.S.A. 9282 or proof that rental transactions will be conducted through a hosting platform that pays all applicable rooms & meals and/or sale taxes on behalf of the registrant.

- d) Certification by Owner that the Short-Term Rental complies with fire and safety requirements, using the Vermont Division of Fire Safety's "Fire Safety Considerations for Short-Term Rental Operators" code information sheet.
- e) For Short-Term Rentals with an Occupancy Limit of eight (8) or fewer occupants, certification by Owner that the Short-Term Rental complies with fire and safety requirements, using the Vermont Division of Fire Safety's "Fire Safety Considerations for Short-Term Rental Operators" code information sheet. For Short-Term Rentals with an Occupancy Limit greater than eight (8) occupants, the registration shall require an inspection report with occupancy approval from the State of Vermont Division of Fire Safety."
- f) Providing false or materially misleading information on an application shall be considered a violation of this Ordinance.
- g) The initial fee for registration shall be \$100, provided that the fee may be increased from time to time by the Selectboard. Subsequent annual registration fees for the same unit will be at one-half (50%) of the initial fee currently in place. The fee shall not be prorated.
- h) Owners shall provide an update to the STRO of any changes to the information provided in an application within 15 calendar days of the change.
- i) Owners wishing to make a material change to the manner in which the Short-Term Rental is operated shall submit a new registration application and shall not alter the operation of the Short-Term Rental until it has been registered.
- j) A Short-Term Rental shall be deemed temporarily registered as the submission of a complete application. The STRO shall confirm registration within 30 days and may temporarily suspend its registration status if, upon review of the application, it is deemed incomplete. Registration status shall be restored when the STRO deems the application complete.

SECTION 8. ENFORCEMENT

- a) A violation of this Ordinance is a civil matter which may be enforced in the Vermont Judicial Bureau or in the Rutland County Superior Court, at the election of the selectboard.

- b) Violations enforced in the Judicial Bureau will be in accordance with the provisions of 24 V.S.A. §§ 1974a and 1977 et seq. For purposes of enforcement in the Judicial Bureau, any Enforcement Officer has the authority to issue tickets and represent the Town at any hearing.
- c) Violations enforced in the Superior Court will be in accordance with the Vermont Rules of Civil Procedure. The Town may pursue all appropriate injunctive relief.

SECTION 9. PENALTIES AND COSTS

- a) An Enforcement Officer is authorized to recover civil penalties for violations of this Ordinance in the following amounts for each violation:
 - First offense: Warning or \$100 full penalty / \$50 waiver penalty
 - Second offense: \$200 full penalty / \$100 waiver penalty
 - Third offense: \$400 full penalty / \$200 waiver penalty
 - Subsequent offense(s): \$800 full penalty / \$400 waiver penalty
- b) An Enforcement Officer is authorized to recover a waiver fee in lieu of a civil penalty, in the stated amount, from any person who declines to contest a municipal complaint and voluntarily pays the waiver fee.
- c) Determining the sequences of offenses for violations of this Ordinance will be as follows: a subsequent violation that is identical to, and that occurs within two months of, a previous violation will be considered a higher offense (i.e., second, third, or subsequent offense). Any subsequent identical violation that occurs after one month of a previous identical violation will be considered a new, first offense.
- d) A warning will not be counted towards the calculation of the number of offenses under this Ordinance.

Any violation of this Ordinance committed by an designated manager, renter, occupant, or guest of a Short-Term Rental will be considered a violation committed by the Owner and any penalty associated with it to be paid by the Owner to the Town.

SECTION 10. OTHER LAWS

This Ordinance is in addition to all other ordinances of the Town of Mendon and all applicable laws of the State of Vermont. All Ordinances or parts of ordinances, resolutions, regulations, or other

documents inconsistent with the provisions of this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 11. SEVERABILITY

If any section of this Ordinance is held by a court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, unconstitutional, or unenforceable, such finding shall not invalidate any other part of this Ordinance.

SECTION 12. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall become effective 60 days after its adoption by the Selectboard. If a petition is filed under 24 V.S.A. § 1973, that statute shall govern the taking effect of this ordinance.

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Adopted on this 15th day of December, 2025.

Mendon Selectboard:

Megan Smith

Seth Bridge

Sarah Buxton