

SHORT-TERM RENTALS (STRS)

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why did the City of Lufkin pass an Ordinance regulating short-term rental properties?

The City of Lufkin has seen an increase of 44% in the number of STRs in the last year. Regulation was needed to preserve the neighborhoods, recover hotel/motel tax for these properties, and protect the public's safety by ensuring these properties complied with local building codes.

2. When did the City pass an ordinance regulating short-term rental properties?

September 5, 2023

3. Why did I receive a Notice letter from the City?

The City has partnered with a host compliance service that identifies owners of short-term rental properties. If you received a notice letter, your property has been listed online on a host platform and/or identified as a short-term rental property subject to the ordinance.

4. What must I do first to comply with the ordinance?

The first step is to apply for a short-term rental registration permit with the City of Lufkin Planning Department at City Hall, 300 E. Shepherd, Lufkin, Texas 75901, and pay the permit fee of \$100.00 (renewed every two years). The City will have this option to apply online in the coming months.

Also, please add the City of Lufkin as the taxing authority in your short-term rental account (e.g. Airbnb, VRBO). Most host platforms will remit the 7% taxes directly to the City. Confirm with the platform to ensure taxes are up-to-date. Non-payment of taxes will result in penalties and interest.

5. What is the next step after I apply for a short-term rental permit?

The City's Chief Building Inspector will contact you within 2-4 business days to arrange a walk-through inspection of the property. The inspection will focus on safety and fire regulations, such as smoke detectors.

6. What information must be displayed inside the short-term rental property for guests?

The owner must display a letter or brochure with the following information:

- Short-term rental permit number given by the City of Lufkin;
- Owner or operator's name and contact phone number;
- Local contact person's 24-hour telephone number of the local responsible party if the property owner does not reside on the same property;
- Neighborhood information such as trash collection schedules and available parking;
- Instructions regarding disposal of trash;

- Information to assist guests in an emergency, such as 911 and nonemergency numbers for police and fire; and
- Notification that all guests must comply with local and state laws.

7. Are short-term rentals allowed in accessory dwelling units such as garage apartments?

Yes. However, the property must comply with all local ordinances and state laws. The accessory dwelling unit may not have separate addresses or utilities from the primary home.

8. What is the maximum number of guests allowed in a short-term rental?

Two persons per bedroom, plus two additional persons in the unit, regardless of age. However, no more than 12 guests total, regardless of the property size.

9. What are the fines/penalties for not complying with the ordinance?

Violating the ordinance could result in a citation for a Class C misdemeanor: \$200 for the first offense, \$400 for the second violation, and \$500 for the third and subsequent violations. Upon the third violation in 24 months, the City may suspend or revoke the short-term rental permit.

10. What if I have a short-term rental property in my neighborhood and have a complaint?

We are working on a 24/7 hotline number for complaints to connect you directly with the property owners. However, in the meantime, please contact the City of Lufkin Code Compliance or the Lufkin Police Department with any suspected law violations.

11. Other questions?

For any other questions, please first review the online ordinance in its entirety.

If you still have questions, contact the City of Lufkin Planning Department at 936-633-0247 or srayburn@cityoflufkin.com.