



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES TREASURER AND TAX COLLECTOR



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PROPOSED SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE Frequently Asked Questions

On March 19, 2019, the County of Los Angeles (County) Board of Supervisors adopted a Motion directing County departments to report back with a set of County ordinances comprehensively regulating Short-Term Rentals (STR) in the unincorporated area of the County. The proposed regulations aim to strike a balance between the economic benefits of STRs and the potential impacts to housing stock, neighborhood character, and quality of life for residents. The proposed regulations would only apply to STRs in the unincorporated area of the County. To determine if a STR is located in the unincorporated area of the County, please visit <http://gis.lacounty.gov/districtlocator/> and enter the residence address to confirm it is in an "unincorporated" area.

The following is a list of frequently asked questions (FAQ) received by the County. For purposes of answering these FAQs, the following abbreviated definitions for key ordinance terms are used. Citations from the Los Angeles County Code (LACC) for the full definitions are provided where applicable.

Key Ordinance Terms

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

A dwelling unit located on the same lot as a single-family residence with independent exterior access, whether attached or detached, as further defined by Section 22.14.010.A of the County Code.

Children

Minors at or under the age of twelve (12).

Host

A person occupying a home, apartment, or condominium who rents their Primary Residence as a STR.

Hosting Platform

A marketplace facilitating STR activity by advertising or matchmaking Hosts with prospective STR guests.

Hosted Stay

A STR where the Host resides overnight at their primary residence being used for STR simultaneously with their STR guests. A Host staying overnight in an ADU or in another separate structure located on the property does not qualify as an on-site Hosted Stay.

Unhosted Stay

A STR where the Host is not on-site with STR guests.

Primary Residence

A Host's permanent residence documented by at least two forms of identification in the Host's name (motor vehicle license, utility bill, tax document, and/or lease/rental agreement). A person may have only one Primary Residence and must reside there for at least 9 months per year.

Short-Term Rental

An accessory use of a Primary Residence for the purposes of providing temporary lodging for compensation for periods of thirty (30) consecutive calendar days or less.

Vacation Rental

A dwelling unit that is not a Primary Residence that is available for temporary lodging for compensation.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is this ordinance being proposed?

In recent years, there has been a large increase in the number of STRs in the unincorporated areas of the County. Each of the five Supervisorial Districts is home to a community on the top ten list of most STRs. The proliferation of unregulated STRs has the potential to impact affordable housing stock by reducing the overall available number of rental units. Additionally, STRs have a tendency to negatively impact neighboring residents' quality of life and erode neighborhood character. Complaints about loud parties and a general disregard for community hospitality are common. In very high fire severity zones, STRs may pose real safety concerns with guests unfamiliar with fire risks and evacuation routes. Therefore, the STR Ordinance is designed to strike a balance between the economic benefits of STRs and potential impacts to housing stock and quality of life for neighborhood residents.

2. Is the proposed ordinance currently in effect? If not, when will it become the law?

No. The proposed ordinance is not yet part of the LACC. The Chief Executive Office, County Counsel, and the Treasurer and Tax Collector (TTC) are expected to present the ordinance to the County Board of Supervisors for approval in this Fiscal Year 2020-2021 with implementation in the next Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

3. Will the proposed ordinance be placed on the ballot to be voted on?

No. The proposed ordinance will not be on a ballot for public vote. The ordinance will be presented to the County Board of Supervisors for consideration at a public hearing where any and all interested constituents may share their comments on the proposed ordinance.

4. Will hosts be required to register their STR?

Yes. All Hosts who wish to utilize their Primary Residence for STR will be required to register with the TTC through an online registration portal that is currently in development. It is anticipated that online registration will begin in Summer 2021.

5. Will a host be required to be the owner of the STR property?

No. Renters or tenants of single-family homes, apartments, and condominiums may also use their Primary Residences as STRs as long as any applicable homeowner's association, condominium, lease or rental agreement does not prohibit STR activity, and the unit is not otherwise prohibited from STR activity by the ordinance (i.e., not an ADU or other accessory habitable structure; not subject to a rental cap increase under the County's Rent Stabilization Ordinance; not income covenant restricted affordable housing; not Section 8 low income housing). Tenants will have to provide written permission from the property owner in order to register their Primary Residence for STR.

6. Can a single Host have multiple, different STRs listed on a hosting platform?

No. The County's proposed STR Ordinance restricts STRs to a Host's Primary Residence, of which a Host can have only one. However, a Host is free to list their Primary Residence for STR across multiple Hosting Platforms. Additionally, a Host may not rent their Primary Residence to more than one group of guests or under more than one booking at any given time.

7. How much will the registration fee cost?

The County is conducting a cost recovery fee study to determine the amount of the registration fee. The fee will cover staffing and administration of the registration program. The County will not profit from the registration fee.

8. Why will there be a 90-night limit on Unhosted stays?

The County recognizes that there are times when an entire Primary Residence is vacant, such as when Hosts are on vacation, on leave for work, or other reasons.

The proposed ordinance therefore permits Unhosted STR Stays up to 90 nights per calendar year. This balance affords Hosts to continue to benefit economically from their Primary Residence when they are away, while maintaining the County's goals of preserving available housing stock and minimizing the negative impact on neighborhoods when whole-house STRs are permitted.

9. Will there be limit to the number of guests allowed per stay?

Yes, not including children aged 12 and under. STRs may not permit more than two guests per bedroom with a maximum permitted occupancy of four guests during any given stay. There will be no exceptions to this guest limit and it will also apply to large properties that have many bedrooms. The Host and other permanent residents of the Primary Residence are not included in the guest limit restriction.

10. Will month-to-month rentals or other long-term residential rentals be affected by this proposed ordinance?

No. Only residential rentals for 30 consecutive calendar days or less constitute a STR governed by the proposed ordinance.

11. Can ADUs be used for STR?

No. State and local laws have recently made it much easier to construct and or permit ADUs as a means to assist with the significant shortage in housing both in the State and the County. In furtherance thereof, the proposed ordinance will prohibit the use of ADUs as STRs.

12. Will Hosts be required to provide on-site parking?

A Host that has on-site parking at their Primary Residence must make the on-site parking available to their STR guests.

13. Will Vacation Rentals be allowed for STR use?

No. The ordinance restricts STRs to Primary Residences only.

14. How will the proposed ordinance address fire safety and risk?

The proposed ordinance requires the STR Hosts to maintain fire extinguishers, smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and to post a notice in the unit containing emergency contact information for police, fire, and emergency services. Each STR Host must also provide an evacuation plan showing

emergency exit routes and fire extinguisher locations. STRs in very high fire hazard severity zones will also have additional restrictions related to smoking and open flames.

15. What types of units do not qualify for STR use?

- 1) Motorhomes, cars, or other types of recreational vehicles;
- 2) Boats;
- 3) ADUs or any other type of habitable accessory structures;
- 4) Temporary or semi-permanent structures such as tents or yurts;
- 5) Units subject to a cap on rental increases pursuant to the County's Rent Stabilization Ordinance;
- 6) Affordable housing units that are income covenant restricted; and
- 7) Section 8 low-income housing.

16. Will a host be able to use a property management company?

Yes. A Host may use a property management company to manage their STR. However, the proposed ordinance restricts STRs to Primary Residences only.

17. Who will be enforcing this ordinance?

The TTC, in coordination with other County Departments, will enforce this ordinance.

18. How will complaints be handled?

The Host, or another individual designated by the Host, must be available at all times during a STR stay. Additionally, the County plans to set up a 24-hour telephonic complaint hotline, as well as an online portal where complaintants may submit documentary evidence (e.g. photos, videos). County staff will refer complaints to the TTC and/or other County departments for enforcement.

19. What will be the fines for STR violations?

Violators of the STR Ordinance may be subject to administrative fines and noncompliance fees pursuant to the proposed ordinance and Chapter 1.25 of the LACC. Fines will vary but may be up to \$2,000 per violation per day for more egregious violations. Repeat offenders may also have their STR Registration Certificate suspended or revoked, thereby rendering such offenders ineligible from participating in STR activity.

20. Will this ordinance address “party house rentals”?

The ordinance attempts to alleviate the “party house” issue by limiting STRs to Primary Residences and prohibiting Vacation Rentals that do not serve as anyone’s private home. For Hosted Stays, the Host will be present overnight in the STR unit, which will decrease the likelihood of a loud party at the STR. For Unhosted Stays, a minimum 2-night stay will be required, which should also dissuade single night party house rentals. Additionally, all STRs must have a designated local contact person available at all times to respond to complaints, which will be easier to lodge with the 24/7 toll-free telephonic hotline that is proposed as part of the STR program. Finally, the ordinance will incorporate noise standards and other pertinent parts of the LACC as part of a comprehensive enforcement structure to assist with party houses.

21. What are “coastal zones” and how will the proposed ordinance affect such areas?

Coastal zone areas in the unincorporated area of the County are located in portions of Supervisorial Districts 3, 4, and 5. The California Coastal Commission will have to review and certify the proposed ordinance for inclusion in the County’s respective Local Coastal Plans before it will be effective in those coastal zone areas. Therefore, the proposed ordinance will be effective in all other parts of the unincorporated area of the County before it is effective in said coastal zones, if the County Board of Supervisors adopts the ordinance.

22. Will the County enter into agreements with hosting platforms to collect the Transient Occupancy Tax?

No. The County is not planning to enter into agreements with Hosting Platforms to collect Transient Occupancy Tax.

23. Does the STR Ordinance give me the right to operate an STR?

No. If a rental or lease agreement, or a homeowner’s association or condominium agreement, prohibits STR activity, the proposed ordinance will not supersede such restriction or otherwise grant any right to operate a STR.

24. How can I receive updates on the proposed ordinance development process?

If you are interested in updates about the ordinance, please periodically check the “News and Announcements” tab of the TTC website for news on potential upcoming outreach events.

25. Where can I go if I have more questions?

The Business License Section of the TTC is available to answer questions regarding the proposed STR regulations. For general questions regarding the STR Ordinance or STR complaints, please email the TTC at businesslicense@ttc.lacounty.gov.