



Frequently Asked Questions: Short-Term Rentals of Residential Dwelling

Thinking of renting out your property for overnight stays? Here is some basic information and answers to your questions.

What is a Short-Term Rental? A residential dwelling that is offered for rent for a fee to guests for more than one (1) night each year and for less than twenty-nine (29) consecutive days is considered a short-term rental (STR). It is sometimes referred to as a vacation rental or tourist rooming house. If you are advertising on Airbnb, VRBO or other similar marketing websites, you are likely operating a tourist rooming house for short-term rental purposes.

Why do I need a license? The purpose of the enacted STR Ordinance is to protect the character and stability of neighborhoods and to establish the minimum standards and responsibilities for STR owners and guests. The Village has the best interests in mind for owners, renters and neighbors.

What do I need to apply for a STR license? Complete the STR license application and provide all supporting information. The Village requires the following:


- Short-Term Rental License Application
- License fee of \$500
- Copy of Wisconsin Tourist Rooming House License (DATCP) with license number.
Visit: https://datcp.wi.gov/Pages/Programs_Services/TouristRoomingHouses.aspx
- Copy of Door County Tourism Zone permit with permit number.
Visit: www.doorcountytourismzone.com
- Copy of Property Rules
- Diagram of property identifying property lines and off-street parking location.
Visit: <http://map.co.door.wi.us/map/index.html>

How long is the license good for? The annual license term begins July 1 and ends June 30th of the following year. Renewal applications must be filed with the Village Clerk at least 45 days prior to license expiration.

What happens if I don't get a license? The Village wishes to be proactive and avoid unpleasantness. However, if you fail to receive a license and/or continue to operate in violation of the Village's ordinance, you may be subject to penalties, forfeitures, and costs.

Why are there limits on occupancy if I'm on a septic system (POWTS)? A septic system is designed for occupancy based on number of bedrooms. With Door County's fragile karst topography, overloading the system is a concern for maintaining groundwater quality. You can find your sanitary permit information at <http://map.co.door.wi.us/map/index.html>. Click the Sanitary tab.

Do I need a survey or building blueprints for the diagram I need to submit with my application? No. Use the Door County Land Use GIS maps to obtain an overhead picture of your property. Many properties also have a survey on file. Use the County website at <http://map.co.door.wi.us/map/index.html>. Enter your parcel number or house number to find your property. The plans do not need to be scale, but they should accurately reflect the property boundary lines and allowable parking spots, including off-street parking spaces. Parking spaces must be 9' x 20' per the Village's Municipal Code.

How do I find my neighboring property owners within 300 feet of my property? Again, using the Door County Land Use GIS website, you can easily click on the blue Identify button  to find neighboring parcels, owner, and address. It is required that neighbors be notified of the residential dwelling being used for short-term rentals and provided with your emergency contact information. Village staff will assist in this process. A notice coming from the property owner can go a long way in maintaining neighborly relations and show your good faith effort to be a good neighbor.

What do I need to include in the Property Rules that are posted on my property and include with my application? Page 2 of the STR License application states the minimum information that needs to be included as follows:

- Emergency contact information
- Contact information for designated Agent or Property Owner
- Where to park and maximum off-street parking spaces
- Quiet hours of 10 PM to 10 AM
- Pet control policy – leash requirements, barking
- Outdoor burn regulations
- What to do with garbage
- Public access/boating regulations for parks and bodies of water
- Prohibition on fireworks
- Property Rules shall be included with online/advertising listing

What if I have a complaint regarding a STR? Contact the property owner using the information provided to you with notice of the short-term rental dwelling. You can also report a complaint to Wisconsin DATCP by emailing datcpfoodcomplaintsemergencyresponse@wi.gov or call (608) 224-2714. Complaints made to the Village of Sister Bay must be in writing (email heidi.teich@sisterbaywi.gov). This will allow the village to keep an accurate record of neighbor concerns. **In an emergency, dial 911.**