

**DRAFT**  
**TOWN OF WARREN SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE**  
**December 10, 2024**

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**§ 1. Authority.**

This ordinance is adopted pursuant to the authority set forth in Chapters 59 and 61 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated, including specifically 24 VSA § 2291(29). This Ordinance is a civil ordinance under 24 V.S.A. § 1971(b).

**§ 2. Purpose.**

The Town of Warren values a sense of community that is derived from being a good neighbor, respecting the surrounding environment and demonstrating regard for health and safety. The purpose of this ordinance is to:

1. Gather data on Short Term rental activity in Warren
2. Analyze that data to help us better understand the impact of such activity on the availability of attainable housing
3. Communicate clearly our expectations for behavior that supports the first sentence of this Purpose Statement
4. Allow The Town to act in situations where the owner of a STR property demonstrates that they are not respecting these values.

**§ 3 Definitions.**

(1) “Short-Term Rental (STR)” means a furnished residence rented for fewer than 30 consecutive days and for more than 14 days per calendar year, excluding commercial lodging establishments (e.g., hotels, motels, inns and bed and breakfasts).

(2) “Property Owner” means the individual(s) or entity/entities that hold legal title to the STR property.

(3) “Local Host” means an individual designated by the property owner who can respond on site to the STR property within one hour (by automobile) in case of emergencies.

(4) “Zoning Administrator” means the Town official responsible for administering and enforcing this ordinance.

#### **§ 4 Regulations.**

Property owners must obtain a permit whenever a dwelling unit is to be used as a short-term rental.

1. A short-term rental permit shall be obtained prior to using the unit as a short-term rental. **(Include grace period language. 30-90 days after adoption.)**
2. The Zoning Administrator may inspect the short-term rental for compliance with this Ordinance. The short-term rental shall not operate unless it is in full compliance with Town and state codes.
3. A short-term rental permit shall be valid for one calendar year, shall expire on October 31, and must be renewed upon expiration as long as the unit is to be continued to be used as a short-term rental.
4. The short-term rental permit is transferable to a new owner, so long as the new owner registers with the Town, updates the short-term rental permit application and agrees in writing to comply with the requirements of the short-term rental permit and these regulations within 30 days of sale.

#### **§ 5. Permit application requirements.**

Registration of a STR should be completed online through the Town of Warren Website. It must be accompanied by payment of a permit fee, as determined by the Town Select Board. If relevant information on the property change or for any reason the permit is or becomes inaccurate, the application must be updated within 30 days.

The application shall provide the following information:

1. List of all the property owners of the short-term rental including names, residential addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. Each property owner must also provide the address of their principal residence if it is different from that of the short term rental. (In the event the property is owned by an entity such a trust or LLC, the ultimate owners and/or beneficiaries of shall provide the information required by this paragraph.)
2. Property owners must provide the following:
  - a. The number of sleeping rooms within the short-term rental, as defined in the standards
  - b. The maximum occupancy of the STR.
  - c. Confirm compliance with the following standards:
    - i. The Short-Term Rental Safety, Health and Financial Obligations of the Vermont Departments of Health and Fire Safety [See the Vermont Division of Fire Safety at: [Safety Consideration short term rentals.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](#). For units with an occupancy of greater than eight guests, a State Division of Fire Safety inspection may be required by the State of Vermont. The Waterbury Regional Office of Fire safety can be reached at 802-479-4434. **(Ask Fire Marshall if this is a reasonable provision)**
    - ii. All exterior doors shall be operational and all passageways to exterior doors shall be clear and unobstructed.

- iii. Electrical systems shall be serviceable with no visual defects or unsafe conditions.
  - iv. Town of Warren Solid Fuel Burning Ordinance (<https://www.warrenvt.org/wpcontent/uploads/2018/03/Solid-Fuel-Burning-Ordinance.pdf>)
- d. For owner-occupied short-term rentals (i.e., the owner is present during the entire rental period), the owner must provide their name, address, telephone number and email address. For non-owner-occupied short-term rentals, the owner must designate one or more local (i.e., within 60 minutes by automobile) host(s) and provide the name, address, telephone number and email address of the local host, who shall be responsible, and authorized, to act on the owner's behalf to promptly remedy any violation of these standards or the permit. The host may be the owner, ora local host or agent designated by the owner to serve as a contact person.
  - e. Insurance coverage specific to the renting of short-term vacation rentals is required.
  - f. Payment of a fee which has been set by the Town Selectboard.

## **§ 6. Standards.**

All short-term rentals must meet the following standards:

1. All bedrooms must have a secondary means of egress in accordance with the fire safety considerations for short term rental operators (link).
2. The property must have sufficient off-street parking spaces for all guests and they must be used.
3. A house number visible from the street or road shall be maintained.
4. Garbage must be dealt with responsibly, with consideration of pests and wildlife, and in a timely manner. (attach bear awareness link) .
5. Advertisements for the short-term rental must conform to what is allowed under these regulations and the short-term rental permit.
6. In the event of a federal, state or local disaster declaration, all owners and guests must comply with federal, state and/or local disaster orders.
7. A Knox-Box (i.e., for emergency keys) is required for all short-term rental properties in which an alarm system is active., The Knox-Box must be registered with the Warren Fire Department. [To order the Knox-Box, see this form:]
8. For all short-term rental properties for which the owner is not present during the entire rental period, the property must contain, in a visually prominent location for guests to access:
  - a. a list of emergency contact numbers; and
  - b. detailed instructions for guests on how to respond in the event of an emergency and/or should an alarm sound.

## **§ 7. Procedure upon filing application.**

Upon filing with the Town (permit application, permit fee, and all documents and information required by this ordinance) the Town shall have up to 45 days to review the application and then

either issue the permit, with or without conditions, or notify the applicant in writing that the application has been denied along with the reason or reasons for denial.

The Town may decline an application for any of the following reasons:

1. If the application is incomplete, the documentation required by this ordinance was not included with the application, or the full permit fee, in payment form acceptable to the Town Treasurer, was not included with the application.
2. If the Town of Warren issued a short-term rental permit to any of the owners needing to sign the short-term rental permit application and any of such owners had a short-term rental permit revoked within the previous year.

Short-term rental permits issued pursuant to this section shall state the following:

1. The names, addresses and phone numbers of every person or entity who has an ownership interest in the short-term rental property and the host who shall be available during the entire time the short-term rental property is being occupied.
2. The maximum occupancy and vehicle limits for the short-term rental unit.
3. A statement that no outdoor fires are allowed, except as permitted by local and state law. Outdoor barbecues and supervised fires in fire pits are permitted.
4. A statement that no noise beyond normal levels shall emanate after 10:00 p.m.as pursuant to the Town noise ordinance.
5. A statement that the short-term rental permit may be revoked for violations.

### **§ 8. Inspection**

The Zoning Administrator may inspect any property before issuing a permit, or at any time thereafter. The Town reserves the right to validate via inspection or otherwise any information contained in the permit application.

### **§ 9. Compliance, hearings and penalties.**

Owners of short-term rental units must obey all applicable laws, ordinances and regulations of the Town of Warren, Washington County, Vermont, and the United States of America, and shall be subject to the enforcement and penalty proceedings contained in this ordinance.

If the Town Zoning Administrator determines a violation of the permit or of this Ordinance or the Town's Land Use and Development Regulations, the Zoning Administrator may do any of the following depending on the circumstances, starting with the issuance of (1) a Notice to Remedy and followed by:

- (2) Impose a fine or suspension pursuant to the Schedule below;
- (3) Initiate a hearing before the Selectboard; and/or
- (4) Attach reasonable conditions to the existing short-term rental permit.

### **Fine Schedule**

	1 <sup>st</sup> violation	2 <sup>nd</sup> violation	3 <sup>rd</sup> violation	
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Fine for advertising a property for short-term rent (online or offline) without first having obtained a permit or complying with local listing requirements	\$300	\$600	\$900	Upon the fourth or subsequent violation in any twenty- four-month period, the Town may suspend or revoke any permit. The suspension or revocation can be appealed
Fine for violating any other requirements of this short-term rental regulation	\$100	\$200	\$400	

**Notes:**

- a. Any unpaid fine will be subject to interest from the date on which the fine became due and payable to the Town until the date of payment.
- b. The remedies provided for in this fine schedule are in addition to, and not in lieu of, all other legal remedies, criminal or civil, which may be pursued by the Town to address any violation or other public nuisance.
- c. Right to appeal pursuant to Chapter 59 Title 24 of the VSA.

**§10. Expiration**

This ordinance will expire in two years after its initial adoption to allow for a period of data gathering and analysis. Upon expiration of this ordinance, the Selectboard will revisit the issue of STRs and may adopt a new ordinance to replace this one.