

TOWN OF WARREN SHORT-TERM RENTAL (STR) ORDINANCE

AUGUST 12, 2025

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§ 1. Authority:

This Ordinance is adopted by the Selectboard of the Town of Warren ("Selectboard") under authority of 24 V.S.A. § 2291(15) and (29), and 24 V.S.A. Chapter 59.

§ 2. Purpose:

The Town of Warren ("Town") 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 promote the public health, safety, and welfare of the Town and to effectively mitigate secondary impacts from Short Term Rental ("STR") operations including, but not limited to, adversely impacting the availability of long-term housing while simultaneously preserving the residential character and livability of the community. This Ordinance regulates STRs in furtherance of these purposes by:

1. Requiring disclosure and licensing of STRs to support the responsible operation of STRs and to provide data on their activity in the Town Warren; and
2. Carrying out the objectives of the Town Plan in a manner that balances both the shared and individual rights of Town property owners, residents, and transient visitors;

§ 3 Definitions:

For purposes of this Ordinance, the following words and phrases will apply:

1. "Short-Term Rental (STR)" 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 3- consecutive days and for more than 14 days per calendar year.
2. "Property Owner" means the individual(s) or entity/entities that hold legal title to a building, structure, or land or a part thereof where the STR is located.
3. "STR Administrator" means the zoning administrator (administrative officer) or other person or persons designated by the Selectboard to administer and enforce compliance with this Ordinance and to represent the Town in any associated proceedings, legal or otherwise.

§ 4. Permit application requirements:

1. An application for a STR License must include the following to be deemed complete and processed:
2. The address of the STR, the STR owner name(s), address(es) telephone number(s) and email address(es). If the Owner is a corporation, LLC, partnership, trust, association, or company, the name of the majority or controlling member is required on all applications. Where applicable, the owner's agent or property manager contact information will be required.
3. The number of sleeping rooms within the short-term rental, as defined in the standards located in Section 5.2.
4. The maximum occupancy of the STR and the number of off-street parking spots available.
5. Attestation that the STR is in compliance with the following:
 - a. All exterior doors must be operational and all passageways to exterior doors must be clear and unobstructed.
 - b. Electrical systems must be serviceable with no visual defects or unsafe conditions.
 - c. Town of Warren Solid Fuel Burning Ordinance
(<https://www.warrenvt.org/documents/wood-fuel-ordinance/>)
6. The owner of a STR must post within the unit a telephone number for the person responsible for the unit and the contact information for the Department of Health and the Department of Public Safety's Division of Fire Safety.
7. A copy of the Certificate of Insurance showing commercial liability coverage.
8. Payment of all applicable STR fees as established by the Town Selectboard.

§ 5. General Requirements:

1. Licensing & Approvals
 - a. A STR license must be renewed annually by the 31st of October.
 - b. A STR license is NOT transferable.
 - c. No STR license will be approved unless the applicant has submitted all required documents to the STR Administrator.
2. Standards

All STRs must meet the following standards:

 - a. The property must have a house number visible from the street or road that it abuts.
 - b. Trash shall be stored in a secure place from animals and not in public view. Trash shall be stored in a secure place from animals and not in public view.
 - c. 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:

<https://www.knoxbox.com/Products> (click buy in upper right hand corner, location VT Dept is Warren Fire)

- d. The property must contain in a visually prominent location for guests to access:
 - i. a list of emergency contact numbers;
 - ii. detailed instructions for guests on how to respond in the event of an emergency and/or should an alarm sound; and
 - iii. A copy of, or link to the Town of Warren Solid Fuel Burning Ordinance.

§ 6. License Processing:

1. The STR Administrator must either approve or deny a complete license application in a reasonable timeframe. Any denial will be in writing and provide the reasoning and cite any applicable section of the Ordinance as the basis of the denial.
2. Short-term rental permits issued pursuant to this section must include the following:
 - a. The name and telephone number for the person responsible for the unit;
 - b. The maximum occupancy and parking limitations for the short-term rental unit;
 - c. A statement that no outdoor fires are allowed, except as permitted by local and state law;
 - d. A statement that the short-term rental permit may be revoked for violations.

§ 7. Violations:

1. A violation of this ordinance shall be a civil matter which may be enforced in the Vermont Judicial Bureau or in the Washington County Superior Court, at the election of the STR Administrator.
2. 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, an STR Administrator will have authority to issue tickets and represent the Town at any hearing.
3. 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.

§ 8 Enforcement & Fines:

1. Enforcement
 - a. Inspection: May be carried out for accuracy of bedroom counts, ensuring posting requirements are met, and investigating complaints.
 - b. Notice: If the STR Administrator determines there is a violation of this Ordinance, the STR Administrator must first issue a 14-day Notice to Remedy.
2. Fines:
 - a. If the violation has not been substantially cured within 14 days. Each day a violation exists after the date set for remedy shall be subject to a separate fine until the violation is cured.
 - b. Repeated violations of the same provision(s) of this Ordinance shall not be given time to remedy the violation before additional fines accrue.
 - c. A subsequent violation that is identical to, and that occurs within six months of a previous violation shall be considered a higher offense (i.e., second, or third offense). Any subsequent identical violation that occurs after twelve months of a previous identical violation shall be considered a new first offense.

- d. The STR Administrator is authorized to recover a waiver fee in lieu of a civil penalty, for any person who declines to contest a municipal complaint and pays the waiver fee in the following amounts for each violation:

First violation \$100

Second violation \$200

Third violation \$300

Fourth and Subsequent Violations \$400

- e. An Enforcement Officer is authorized to recover civil penalties for violations of this Ordinance in the following amounts for each violation:

First violation \$200

Second violation \$400

Third violation \$600

Fourth and Subsequent Violations \$800

§ 9. Expiration:

1. 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.

§ 10. Suspension or Revocation of License:

1. In addition to the penalties available for enforcement of a violation(s), the license may also be subject to suspension, revocation, or non-renewal per the terms of this ordinance. Determination of these additional penalties will be made, in writing to the licensee, by the STR Administrator.
2. If a licensee commits three (3) violations within 12 months, their license will be revoked.
3. A Licensee who has had their License revoked may not re-apply for a period of one (1) year from the time their revoked License was due to expire.

§ 11. Other Laws:

1. This Ordinance is in addition to all other ordinances of the Town of Warren 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.

§ 12. Severability:

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

§ 13. Effective Date:

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

Adopted this 12th day of August, 2025.

SIGNATURES:
