



Holiday Hours

The State of Rhode Island will be observing *Independence Day* on Monday, July 6, 2026 and our office will be closed. Normal business hours will resume on Tuesday, July 7th at 8:30 AM.

[Home](#) » [Real Estate and Commercial Licensing](#) » [Short-Term Rentals](#) »

Short-Term Rentals Frequently Asked Questions

Short-Term Rentals Frequently Asked Questions

Registration Requirements



When is registration required?

Pursuant to R.I. Gen. Laws **§ 42-63.1-14(b)**, registration is required if you offer your property for rent 30 nights or less **and** you're listing on a third-party hosting site (e.g., Air BnB, Vrbo, Real Estate Brokers, et cetera).



What is a short-term rental?

R.I. General Law § 42-63.1-14(b) defines short-term rental as "a person, firm, or corporation's utilization, for transient lodging accommodations, not to exceed thirty (30) nights at a time."



What is a third-party hosting platform?

R.I. General Law § 42-63.1-2(5) defines a hosting platform as "any electronic or operating system in which a person or entity provides a means through which an owner may offer a residential unit for "tourist or transient" use. This service is usually, though not necessarily, provided through an online or web-based system which generally allows an owner to advertise the residential unit through a hosted website and provides a means for a person or entity to arrange tourist or transient use in exchange for payment, whether the person or entity pays rent directly to the owner or to the hosting platform." This includes websites like AirBnB and Vrbo as well as real estate brokerage websites.

If a website operated by a property manager, real estate licensee or rental agent falls within this definition and the firm is listing properties that it does not own on the website, then the properties must be registered with the Department by the property owner or lessee.

— Why is registration required?

R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14, enacted by the Legislature, required the Department to implement a statewide registration for short term rentals.

— Do I need to register with the municipality and the state?

R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14, enacted by the Legislature, required the Department to implement a statewide registration for short term rentals. This statute does not address whether the municipalities will continue to have their own registration systems. If the municipality in which the short-term rental is located has its own registration requirement, then you must register both with the state and the municipality.

— What are the fire code requirements for short-term rentals?

These questions are to be directed to the local fire department of the municipality in which the rental property is located.

— Does my Timeshare need to be registered a Short-Term Rental?

If you advertise your timeshare for rent for 30 nights or less on a third-party hosting site, then you must register your timeshare as a short-term rental with the Department.

— Does my Houseboat need to be registered a Short-Term Rental?

If you advertise your houseboat for rent for 30 nights or less on a third-party hosting site, then you must register your houseboat as a short-term rental with the Department.

— Can I use my ADU (Accessory Dwelling Unit) as a Short-Term Rental?

Effective June 25, 2024, R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-24-73 was amended, including the addition of paragraph (b)(8), which states: “ADUs shall not be offered or rented for tourist or transient use or through a hosting platform, as such terms are defined in § 42-63.1-2.” You can view the full public law [here](#) .

(**Note:** Any statutory changes made during the 2024 legislative session will not appear in the General Laws on the General Assembly’s website until the end of 2024.)

— How much does the registration cost?

The cost to register your short-term rental with the Department of Business Regulation is \$25.

How long will the registration last?

The registration will be good for one (1) calendar years upon issuance or renewal.

For example, a registration issued on Jan. 1, 2023, will expire on Dec. 31, 2024.

How many registrations do I need?

- Owner-occupied short-term rentals of rooms or shared spaces within the same owner-occupied unit only require one registration per unit.
 - Example – owner occupied single-family house renting individual rooms on separate listings – one registration is required.
- Rentals of entire spaces require one registration per unit.
 - Three-family house with three apartments being advertised and entire spaces for short-term rental – each apartment in the building advertised for short-term rental needs its own registration.

What if I list on a third-party site and don't register as a short-term rental? Are there penalties for failing to register?

Pursuant to R.I. General Law § 42-63.1-14(i), you will be subject to civil penalties in the following amounts:

1. Two hundred fifty dollars (\$250) for the first thirty (30) days of non-compliance;
2. Five hundred dollars (\$500) for between thirty-one (31) and sixty (60) days of non-compliance; and
3. One thousand dollars (\$1,000) for more than sixty (60) days of non-compliance.

Can a registration be transferred to another owner or property?

No. Registrations are per property based upon the address and the person registering the property with the Department as a short-term rental. Any change in registrant and/or property location would require the termination of the first registration and the application for a new registration for the new registrant/location.

What information will the application require?

The application will require the information listed in the statute at R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14(d). Statutory provisions are not repeated in the regulation. Here is a quotation of those statutory requirements for the registration.

1. *The principal place of business of the owner, or if outside the state, the agent for service of process or property manager for the owner;*
2. *The phone number of the owner of the property and/or property manager;*
3. *The email address of the property owner and/or property manager;*
4. *The address of the rental property;*
5. *The number of rooms for rent at the property;*
6. *Whether the registrant rents or owns; and*
7. *Intended use (entire space, private room or shared space).*

 Will commercial entities be required to show proof of liability insurance or other insurance as part of the registration process?

No. Neither R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14 nor the regulation contain any insurance requirement.

 Except for an incomplete application, are there any instances where an applicant would be denied?

No. Applicants who fill out all required fields and pay the fee will be issued a registration.

 I am having family use my house while I am away, do I need to register my property as a short-term rental?

Only properties that are both rented for 30 nights or less **and** advertised on websites like Airbnb, Vrbo, Expedia, etc. and/or real estate brokerage websites need to register as a short-term rental.

 Can a long-term tenant/lessee rent out their property as a short-term rental?

R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14 requires all short-term rentals to be registered. The long-term tenant/lessee or the property owner advertising the property is required to register the property with the Department. Whether or not a property owner allows its long-term tenant/lessee to sublet a property as a short-term rental is a private matter between the property owner and the lessee.

 In the case of traditional real estate brokerages, who is considered the registrant, broker/office or the homeowner?

The property owner or lessee is responsible for the registration.

— Are there any exceptions to the registration requirements for owner-occupied properties or for seasonal/summer-only rentals?

No. R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14 does not provide for any exceptions or exemptions to the registration requirement. Any property falling under the definition of short-term rental (any period up to and including 30 nights) advertised on a 3rd party hosting platform must register with the Department. Should the legislature hereafter adopt exceptions those exceptions will be implemented by the Department.

— Is the property manager, rental agent or another third party responsible for registering a short-term rental with the Department?

“Registrant” is defined as the Owner registering a property with the Department as required by R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14. The Act defines “owner” as property owner or lessee. Therefore, the property manager, rental agent or third party is not required to register the property. However, third-party hosting platforms and real estate licensees should notify their clients about the state’s short-term rental registration requirements.

Problems with a Short-Term Rental

— Whom do I contact if I have an issue with the rental?

Please refer to your reservation completed with the third-party hosting platform/real estate brokerage to inquire as to how to lodge a complaint or resolve a problem.

— I have a noise complaint; whom do I contact?

Contact the local police department’s non-emergency line to lodge a noise complaint.

For a list of cities and towns, including their websites, please visit this website:
<https://www.ri.gov/towns/>

Information about a Particular Property

— Will the Short-Term Rentals Registration Database be accessible to the public?

Yes. In accordance with the statutory requirement in R.I. Gen. Laws § 42-63.1-14(h), the Department will provide access to the registration database on its website. Only the property address and registration status will be available in the public database.

— How do I find the property owner of a Short-Term Rental?

Please visit the tax assessor's website of the municipality in which the rental is located.

For a list of cities and towns, including their websites, please visit this website:

<https://www.ri.gov/towns/>

Municipal Regulation and Registration Requirements

— Will short-term rental hosts need to be registered first with their municipality?

The state registration requirement is independent of any municipal short-term rental registration requirements. State registration is required irrespective of whether a municipality requires short-term rental registration or fees.

— Do I still need to register my short-term rental with the municipality now that I have registered with the Department?

Yes, if the municipality in which the short-term rental is located has its own registration requirement.

— Who can I contact at the state level if our town is not following their own ordinances and/or state law regarding short-term rentals?

The Department does not have jurisdiction over this. If you have questions or concerns regarding a municipality's enforcement or application of its short-term rental ordinances or state laws you should reach out to your municipal officials, including but not limited to the City/Town Solicitor, the Clerk's Office, or the Office of the Mayor or Town Manager.

— Will the State's registration have built into its code each municipality's zoning ordinances? Or does this supersede municipalities?

The state registration requirement is independent of any municipal short-term rental registration requirements. Municipalities may still require registration and impose short-term rental requirements as may be permitted by law.

— Do the municipalities receive the registration fees?

No. The registration fees will be deposited into the state general fund.

- **Will this legislation legitimize short-term rentals and require all municipalities to allow them by default?**

This registration requirement does not affect whether short-term rentals are allowed or disallowed in any municipality, rather it simply requires them to be registered with the state.

- **Will municipalities be notified of entities that are in violation of this regulation? Will violations be posted to the public for each locality?**

The Department will handle potential violations in accordance with § 4.6 of the regulation and the Administrative Procedures Act.

- **How will this registration information be shared with municipalities?**

Municipalities can access the Department's database on its website at any time.

Taxation of Short-Term Rentals

- **Do I need to pay sales and hotel taxes on short-term residential rentals?**

Please refer to the Division of Taxation's FAQs, available [here](#) .