

Chapter 12. Part 6. Short Term Rentals (STR)

12.6.1 Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this division is to establish regulations for the protection of the health, safety, and welfare of city residents and citizens, to protect the integrity of the neighborhoods in which short term rental properties operate, and to ensure to promote and maintain health and sanitary conditions in all single- and two-family rental dwellings located in the City.

12.6.2 Scope

- a. The provisions of this Code shall apply to owners of one-and two-family rental dwellings, including any accessory buildings or structures, and the land upon which such rental dwelling is located. This also includes any standalone accessory structures used as one or two-family rental dwellings located on otherwise non-residential property. Short Term Rentals are not allowed in tents, vehicles, manufactured homes. or other non-permanent structures.
- b. This does not grant the owner of residential property the right or privilege to violate any private conditions, covenants, and/or restrictions applicable to the owner's property that may prohibit the use of said residential property for short term rental purposed as defined herein.
- c. No person renting a short-term rental property may sublease the property to another person as defined in the Ordinance.

12.6.3 Registration Required

- A It is unlawful to conduct or operate, offer, or enter into an agreement for a short-term rental within the city without first registering the business with the City of Natchez. A registration and privilege fee of two hundred dollars (\$200) per unit is required for the first year of operation. Annual renewal registrations and privilege license fees are (\$100) per unit. Short-term rental registrations and privilege licenses shall expire one (1) year from the date of issuance. Failure to renew the registration within 30 days of the expiration date shall result in a late fee of twice the established fee.
- b. Short-term rental establishments are permitted only in VR, R-3, and R-3HD, residential zoning districts. Short-term rental units in R-3 and R-3 HD shall be limited to two units per lot when there is an existing structure or outbuilding separate from the primary, single-family structure. This restriction is to control and maintain the density, traffic flow and integrity of residential neighborhoods. Homeowner Associations (HOA) may have covenants that prohibit short-term rentals, even if permitted by city zoning, the HOA shall govern.
- c. Short-term rentals are permitted in B-1, B-2, B-2HD, B-3HD, WD-1 commercial zoning districts in a mixed-use building or live/work unit. The residential area in a mixed-use building or live/work unit shall be located on the second floor and/or third floors. In a live/work unit, the residential area may be located on the ground floor at the rear of the structure leaving the front of the building for commercial usage.
- d. Short-term rental establishments shall comply with all applicable building codes, zoning restrictions, overlay districts and any other such regulations. Homeowner Associations (HOA) may have covenants that prohibit short-term rentals, even if permitted by city zoning, the HOA shall govern.

12.6.4 STR Registration Application

- a. **Application Requirements.** A complete application for a Special Use Permit shall be submitted to the Planning Department.

The application shall include the following information and documents:

1. The name, address, email address, and telephone number of the operator of the subject STR;
2. The name, address, email address, and telephone number that is answered twenty-four hours a day the local property manager of the subject STR;
3. The name and address of the proposed STR;
4. The number of sleeping areas and the applicable overnight and daytime occupancy limit of the proposed STR;
5. A floor plan of the subject STR that identify the sleeping areas and location of fire extinguishers;
6. On-site parking for two units is required in residentially zoned areas. A site plan of the property showing all buildings and structures and the location of parking spaces. Parking may not be tandem. Landscaped areas and yards may not be utilized to provide the required parking.
7. A copy of the rules of the rental property;
8. Signatures of all owners of record of the subject property. If the property is owned by a Limited Liability Company, any person who has the authority to do business for the company must be listed with the City.
9. Proof of payments of all applicable taxes, fees, and other charges, including taxes approved by Chapter 954, Local and Private Laws of 2008;
10. Execution of a written statement acknowledging that a violation of the ordinances of the City of Natchez, as it related to short-term rentals, may result in a one-year suspension or revocation of an existing permit.
11. Other information the City deems reasonably necessary to administer this division.

12.6.5 Fire and Safety Regulations

a. Emergency Illumination

Illumination shall be provided in sleeping areas as well as along the path of travel for the exit access, exit discharge from each exit to the public way. Battery powered emergency lighting shall be provided for a period of not less than 90 minutes to illuminate the primary exit. The emergency lighting shall provide illumination automatically in the event of any interruption of normal lighting.

b. Door Hardware.

Door handles, pulls, latches, locks, and other operating devices on doors required to be accessible per the International Building Code shall not require tight grasping, tight pinching or twisting of the wrist to operate.

c. Portable Fire Extinguishers

Minimum acceptable portable fire extinguisher requirements shall conform to: A minimum of one portable fire extinguisher, with a minimum rating of 2-A:10-B:C should be provided

per floor level of a living unit, with a maximum of 40 ft of travel distance to the extinguisher.

Portable fire extinguishers should be installed as follows:

1. In an accessible spot, free from blocking by storage and equipment, and near room exits that provide an escape route.
2. On hangers or in the brackets supplied by the manufacturer, mounted in cabinets, or placed on shelves.
3. Placed so that the operating instructions on the extinguisher face outward.
4. All fire extinguishers shall be tagged by a fire equipment professional, indicating operational readiness. Extinguishers shall be inspected and tagged on an annual basis for operational readiness and every 12 years for hydrostatic test.

d. Smoke Alarms

Smoke alarms shall be installed as follows:

- 1 One- and two-family dwellings or accessory structure shall have an approved single station or multiple station smoke alarms continuously powered 10-year battery sealed smoke alarm.
- 2 **EXCEPTION TO 1.** One- and two-family dwellings or accessory structure shall have an approved single station or multiple station smoke alarms continuously powered by dwellings electrical system and monitor by a third-party alarm provider. When the dwelling is new construction and or a wall has been breached for additions or renovations.
- 3 Under exception to 1, the smoke alarms must be hardwired in series by a licensed electrician.

e. Smoke Alarm Locations

Smoke alarms must be provided in the following locations:

1. In each sleeping room
2. Outside each separate sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms.
3. On each additional story of the dwelling, including basements and habitable attics. In dwellings or dwelling units with split levels and without an intervening door between the adjacent levels, a smoke alarm installed on the upper level shall suffice for the adjacent lower level provided that the lower level is less than one full story below the upper level.

f. Carbon Monoxide Protection

Every existing building or an addition to an existing building for which a permit for new construction is issued and having a fossil-fuel-burning heater or appliance, a fireplace, an attached garage, or other feature, fixture, or element that emits carbon monoxide as byproduct of combustion shall have an operational carbon monoxide alarm installed within 10 feet of each room used for sleeping purposes.

g. Means of Egress

- 1 All one- and two-family dwellings or accessory structures licensed as a STR establishment shall have a minimum of one primary exit and one secondary means of escape.
2. The primary means of exit shall be a door, stairway, or ramp providing a means of unobstructed exit travel to the outside of the dwelling, at street or ground level.
- 3 The secondary means of escape shall be one of the following:
 - i. A door, stairway or ramp providing a way of unobstructed exit travel to the outside of the dwelling, at street or ground level that is independent of and remote from the primary means of exit.
 - ii. EXCEPTION: An outside window or door operable from the inside, without the use of tools or special equipment, that provides a clear opening having a minimum of 5.7 square feet of area with no dimension less than 20 inches in width or 24 inches in height. The bottom of the opening shall not be more than 44 inches off the floor.
 - iii. All existing multi-story buildings with only one exit installed, at the time of construction, shall be equipped with a 3-story fire escape ladder minimum 25ft and weight limit of 300 lbs.
 - iv. The secondary means of exit and sleeping room smoke alarms are not required if the dwelling is protected throughout by an approved automatic sprinkler system.

h. General Information

- a. A floor diagram reflecting the actual floor arrangement, primary exit location, secondary exit location and room identification shall be posted in a conspicuous location.
- b. A fire safety information pamphlet describing evacuation of the dwelling or vehicle, smoke alarm information, procedures for reporting a fire or other emergency shall be provided to guests.

12.6.6 Additional Information

- a. The maximum occupancy of each unit is 2 people per bedroom plus an additional 2 people. Persons to be counted for occupancy are all adults and children 1 year and older. Examples: A one-bedroom unit is limited to 4 people. A two-bedroom unit is limited to 6 people. A three-bedroom unit is limited to 8 people.
- b. Even though the City does not require proof of insurance, it shall be the duty of the applicant to ensure that a homeowner's fire, hazard, and liability insurance coverage does not exclude short-term rentals from coverage.
- c. Registration of a short-term rental does not legalize any nonpermitted uses or structure. Short-term rental units are not to be used to distribute retail products or personal services to invitees for marketing or similar purposes. The outdoor display of goods and merchandise for sale is prohibited.
- d. Short-term rental registration/renewals in residential zoning districts are not transferable. Upon sale or at the time of transfer of the property, any permit issued pursuant to the terms set forth herein shall automatically expire. Any new owner(s) or transferee(s) shall be required to apply

for a new registration and privilege license in accordance with this ordinance. The new owner of the short-term rental is responsible for notifying the Planning Department of a change in local property managers and/or ownership within 15 days of the change.

Local property managers must live in Adams County, the City of Natchez, Mississippi, or the City of Vidalia, Louisiana. Documentation of ownership and residence must be provided (driver's license or state issued ID and if owner, deed, property taxes, or utility bills.

- e. Any structure or unit that is deed restricted for affordable housing shall not be eligible for a short-term rental permit.
- f. Each separate unit or listing shall require an individual permit regardless if multiple listings are located at the same address or location or owned by the same owner. Documentation and/or proof of permit issuance shall be included in the listing on all short-term rental postings.
- g. Registration if state tax is required.
- h. The owner of the property and the operator of the STR shall be responsible for compliance with all applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to the use and occupancy of the subject STR, including public nuisances and unreasonable noise.
- i. Short-term rental owners/local property managers shall be responsible for informing their occupants by the posting of house rules, all relevant city codes, and the occupant's liability for violation of the same. The Area Information Guide shall be filled out and be posted conspicuously in each unit.
- j. Only one sign is allowed on the property. The sign shall not exceed 4 square feet in area or a height of six (6) feet including the post/sign support.
- k. No short-term rental shall be located within 300 linear feet from the property line of another short-term rental property and 300 linear feet from the property line of any approved Bed & Breakfast facility in R-3 and R-3 HD. Measurement shall be from property line to property line. Variances to this measurement are allowed. There are no distance requirements for STRs in B-1, B-2, B-2HD, and B-3HD zoning districts. There are no distance requirements if the property is located in the Maple Street, Briel, or Gastrelll Overlay Districts.
- l. Each unit must have kitchen facilities and a full bathroom.
- m. Noise is regulated by the Noise Ordinance.
- n. No parties or events are allowed in short-term rentals.
- o. On-site parking for two (2) or more units is required, one space for each unit to be rented plus one space if the owner or manager lives on site.
- p. Grandfather Status for a Short-term Rental is granted for the following:
 - 1. Current Owner with Special Exception approved for a Guest House by the Natchez Planning Commission, from 2015 through June 15, 2023, and active Privilege License. No annual registration fee is due.
 - 2. Current Owner with Special Exception approved for a Guest House by the Natchez Planning Commission, from 2015 through June 15, 2023, but has not applied for a

Privilege License. Current owner must apply for Privilege License. No annual registration fee is due.

3. Current Owner of Short-term rental was established between January 2020 through May 23, 2023, with no Special Exception and/or Privilege License. Must pay Registration and Privilege License fees.
 4. Documentation of ownership and residence during the above time periods must be provided (driver's license, state issued ID, such as deed, payment of property taxes or utilities, etc.).
- q. Grandfather status is not applicable for:

Owner(s) of currently operating short-term rentals established prior to January 2020 that have not had Special Exception approved by the Natchez Planning Commission and does not have a Privilege License.

12.6.7 Revocation of Registration to Operate

A renewal registration may be subject to revocation of the registration to operate a short-term rental for, but not be limited to, the following:

- a. Failure by the applicant to conform to the criteria set for the herein for the current or previous year.
- b. Guests and/or users of the property were issued citations for violating the noise ordinance or disturbing the peace during the previous or current year.
- c. Any other reasonable or rational factors as determined by the Planning Commission.
- d. The Planning Commission is authorized to revoke permits. The permit owner shall be provided with written notice of the reason(s) the permit is subject to revocation. The applicant shall be allowed thirty days from the date written notice is issued to correct the defective conditions. If the condition is not corrected within thirty days to the satisfaction of the Planning or Inspection Department, the permit shall be revoked. Upon receipt of the revocation order by the owner or property manager, the unit shall cease operation as a short-term rental.
- e. The owner may appeal any denial or revocation order as outlined in Section 7.2.3 of the Natchez Development Code. The owner's appeal must be in writing and filed with the Planning Department no later than ten days after the date the decision is made by the Planning Commission. The revocation shall remain in full effect for the duration of the appeal. The owner shall be provided a notice of the meeting for the opportunity to be heard.

12.6.8 Complaints

A concerned party should contact the Inspection Department regarding complaints and violations of this Ordinance that cannot otherwise be resolved through contact with the local property manager and/or property owner. If the issue is related to public safety and/or nuisance violation, the Police Department shall be contacted. The Police Department shall be provided with an updated list of all contact persons for short-term rentals. Verified complaints concerning noncompliance with the terms of this Ordinance may be considered in determining if a permit should be revoked.

12.6.9 Violations

- a. Any person or user who allows the use of a property for short-term rentals in violation of this Ordinance shall be guilty of a misdemeanor.
- b. For purpose of prosecution of violations of this chapter, each day that any violation occurs is deemed to constitute a separate violation. Those found guilty of such violation shall, upon conviction, be fined for each violation, not to exceed an amount of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) for the first offense within a calendar year; not to exceed an amount of two-thousand dollars (\$2,000) for the second offense within a calendar year; and not to exceed more than five thousand dollars (\$5,000) within a calendar year, in addition to all court related fines.

12.6.10 Conflicts

It is hereby provided that the provisions of these regulations shall not be construed as being in conflict with the provisions of any of the laws or regulations in the City of Natchez, Mississippi. In any case where the provisions in these laws or regulations and provisions of the other regulations both apply, the provisions of this Ordinance shall govern for the purpose of short-term rentals.

ADD THE FOLLOWING DEFINITIONS TO SECTION VII APPENDIX – DEFINITIONS:

LOCAL PROPERTY MANAGER: A person whose permanent address is within Adams County, the City of Natchez, Mississippi or the City of Vidalia, Louisiana, who will respond to questions or concerns twenty-four (24) hours a day. Documentation of residence must be provided (driver's license or state issued ID.).

MEANS OF EGRESS. A continuous and unobstructed path of vertical and horizontal egress travels from any occupied portion of a building or structure to a public way. A means of egress consists of three separate and distinct parts: the exit access, the exit, and the exit discharge.

EXIT ACCESS. That portion of a means of egress system that leads from any occupied portion of a building or structure to an exit.

EXIT DISCHARGE. That portion of a means of egress system between the termination of an exit and a public way.

EXIT. That portion of a means of egress system between the exit access and the exit discharge or public way. Exit components include exterior exit doors at the level of exit discharge, interior exit stairways and ramps, exit passageways, exterior exit stairways and ramps and horizontal exits.

PARTY. A social gathering of people or special event, including those who have not rented the residence, for the primary purpose of eating, drinking, or entertainment in a manner that is disruptive to the surrounding properties.

PRIVILEGE LICENSE: A license that allows an individual or company to conduct business.

SHORT-TERM RENTAL: A dwelling or housing unit that accommodates transient guests on a daily basis for a fee for a duration of time not to exceed 30 days, and which is located within the city limits of Natchez Mississippi. This includes, but is not limited to, rentals advertised on platforms similar to VRBO and Airbnb.

DELETE FROM VIII: APPENDIX

