

City of Vernon

# Short-Term Rental Operator's Guidebook



## What is a Short-Term Rental?

A short-term rental is the rental of a dwelling unit and is permitted only within a single-family home, secondary suite, accessory dwelling unit, an apartment, duplex or multi-family home for less than 90 consecutive days. Operators must follow rules and regulations to legally rent residences on a short-term basis.

The owner/operator of a short-term rental **MUST NOT**:

- Rent out any bedrooms or provide any sleeping accommodation within any vehicle, recreational vehicle or tent.
- Allow any rooms that are not approved and identified on the licence application to be used as bedrooms in the short-term rental.

Short-term accommodations have an important role in our economy and licensing and regulations reduce impacts to neighbourhoods, protect long-term rental supply and ensure operators are accountable for the wellbeing and safety of guests and residents.

## Eligibility and Requirements

- ▶ Property must be the applicant's principal residence. (Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel. Please see information below.)
- ▶ Applicants must include a local contact person, Fire Evacuation Plan, and include a Good Neighbour Agreement. If applicable, Owner Consent form, documentation verifying President of Strata Council, Fractional Ownership Agreement.
- ▶ Applicants must maintain a valid business licence.
- ▶ Applicants must maintain records, pursuant to the [Hotel Guest Registration Act](#).

Before applying for a business licence, applicants must meet several requirements. **In addition to the City requirements listed below, short-term rental operators must also meet Provincial requirements. For more information on provincial requirements please visit: [Short-term rentals - Province of British Columbia](#) and [registration with the Province](#)**

### Principal residence requirement

- ▶ Principal residence – means the residence in which an individual resides for a longer period of time in a calendar year than any other place. (Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel. Please see information below.)
- ▶ If a secondary suite or carriage house is used for short-term rental accommodation, it must be operated by a principal resident that resides at a dwelling unit on the same lot as the secondary suite or accessory building.
- ▶ Principal residence does not apply to a property in the case that the operator holds a fractional interest and the fractional ownership agreement prohibits the use of the property as a principal residence.
- ▶ For properties within the Agricultural Land Reserve, short-term rental accommodation must be in accordance with City regulations and the Agricultural Land Reserve.

### Local Contact Person

Local Contact information of a responsible person that must be available to attend the property where the short-term rental is located, on behalf of the owner with the authority to address any concerns or complaints within 1 hour of requests or complaints.

## Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel

- ▶ Exempt from Principal Residence if accommodation is provided in a manner like that of a hotel or motel and meets the conditions for exemption from the principal residence required related to strata-titled hotels or motels as prescribed under the [Short-Term Rental Accommodations Regulation](#)
- ▶ Provide the number of units contained in the strata, as well as the number of units in operation for the short-term rental as part of the Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel. The licence fee for a Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel will be calculated based on the total number of units contained in the strata.

**A Short-Term Rental Business Licence cannot be issued to an individual owner for a single unit as a Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel Business Licence. The Business Licence must be obtained by the President of the Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel on behalf of the strata corporation. Individual units cannot be licensed as stand-alone Strata-Titled Hotels or Motels.**

## Listing Requirements / Restrictions

- ▶ No more than one booking or reservation is permitted in each dwelling unit at one time.
- ▶ Provide the number of bedrooms intended for operation.
- ▶ Accommodate no more than two guests per bedroom up to a maximum of eight (8) guests per dwelling unit at any one time.
- ▶ Operators must provide one designated parking spot on the premises per bedroom, to be used exclusively for patron vehicles, and clearly marked as such.



## Fire and Safety Requirements

Your short-term rental accommodation must have appropriate safety measures in place to protect guests in the event of an emergency.

- ▶ Provide contact information for someone who is available to respond to incidents 24/7.
- ▶ Install a fire extinguisher on each floor which must be wall mounted and visible. It cannot be stored in a closet or cupboard.
- ▶ Smoke alarms shall be operated monthly to ensure they are operational. A logbook shall be kept indicating the test dates. Smoke alarms shall be replaced after 10 years
- ▶ Test annually, and maintain in working order, all smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, and carbon monoxide detectors.

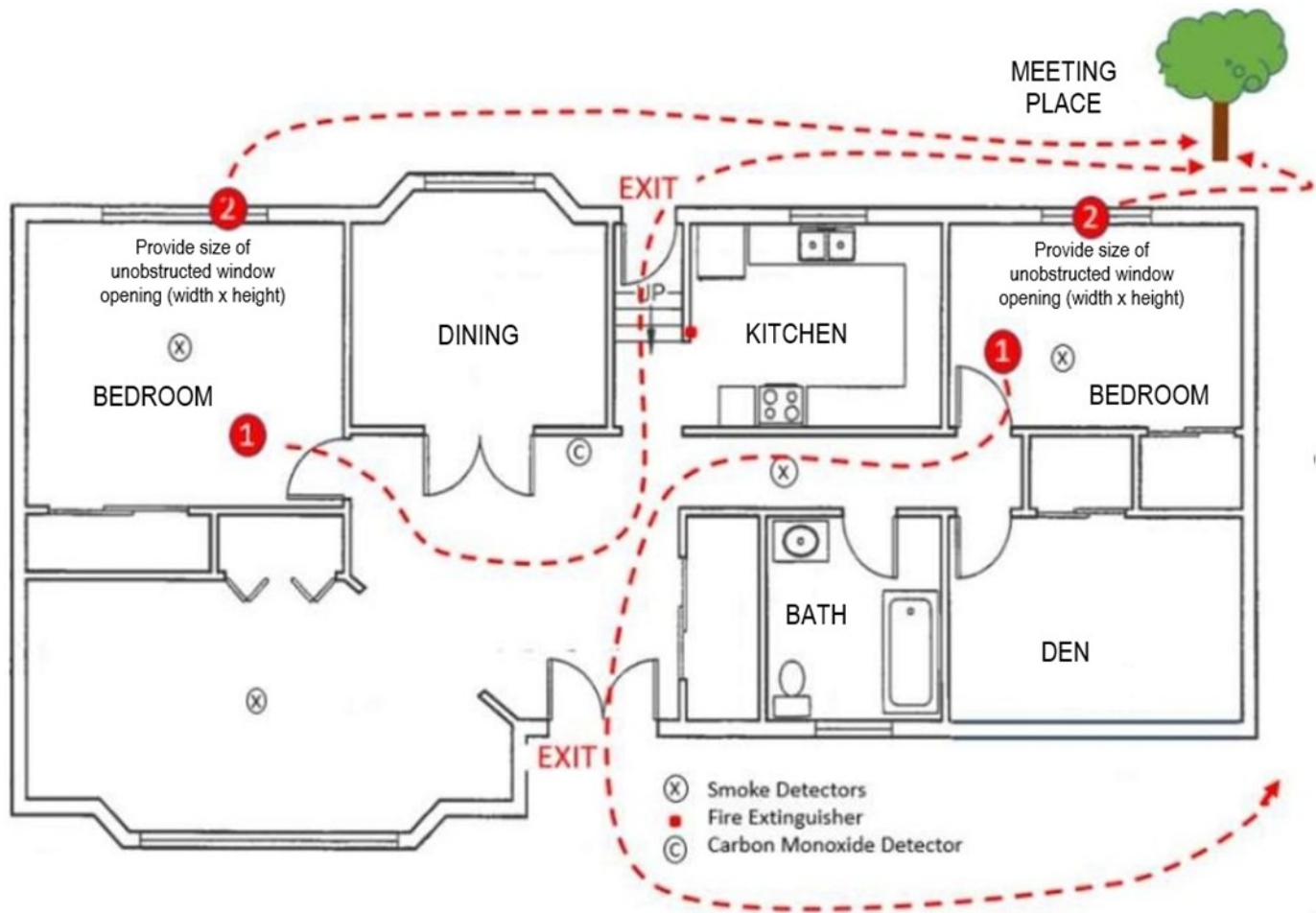
## Fire Evacuation Plan

As the fire evacuation must be posted at all entrances and exits and in each approved sleeping unit, applications must be submitted with a complete plan. The fire evacuation plan must include the following information:

- ▶ Instructions to occupants in the event of a fire
- ▶ Operator's name
- ▶ Address of the property
- ▶ Responsible Person contact (name and number of someone who is locally available 24 hours a day to address immediate concerns)
- ▶ Emergency contact number (911)
- ▶ Designating meeting point
- ▶ Secondary exit path from bedrooms(s)
- ▶ Location of smoke/carbon monoxide alarms
- ▶ Location of fire extinguishers
- ▶ Location of fire exists from the rental property
- ▶ Location of window exits and the size of their unobstructed openings
- ▶ Legends to the symbols used in drawing
- ▶ **The entire dwelling unit must be included with all sleeping units labelled for short-term rental use.**



## Sample Fire Evacuation Plan



### Instructions to occupants in the event of a fire

1. Call the Fire Department: Dial 911. Tell them you are reporting a fire at: (Address, Vernon, BC)
2. If you are able, attempt to extinguish or control the fire using the available fire extinguisher.
3. At the sound of the smoke alarm or residential sprinkler system siren, leave the area immediately by the nearest safe exit and gather at (designated meeting point).
4. Once safe, please contact (Responsible Person contact - name and number of someone who is locally available 24 hours a day to address immediate concerns).

## Parking

One designated parking spot is required on the Premises per bedroom, to be used exclusively for patron vehicles, and clearly marked as such.



## Applying for a Business Licence

Once you have satisfied the requirements above, you can apply for a business license.

**For quicker processing of your application, please ensure that you apply online at [Short-Term Rental Online](#)**

If you are unable to submit an online application, please submit a completed application to **Planning and Community Services, 3001 - 32 Avenue, Vernon, BC V1T 2L8.**

Applications must be completed and include all required information, documents and forms before being accepted for processing. **If the required forms are not completed in full, we will not be able to accept your application.**

### Application Requirements

- ▶ Proof of principal residence of the property. Please provide a minimum of two of the following: Provincial Homeowner's Grant, Driver's Licence, Home Insurance. If a tenant is applying, please provide the Owner Consent Form.
- ▶ Local Contact Person
- ▶ A fire evacuation plan of the dwelling unit identifying smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms, fire extinguishers, fire exits, each sleeping unit.
- ▶ [Good Neighbour Agreement](#).
- ▶ [Owner Consent Form](#), (If tenant is applying)
- ▶ [Strata Council Consent Form](#), (If application is for a strata)
- ▶ Documentation verify President of Strata Council. (If application is for a Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel)
- ▶ Fractional Ownership Agreement, if applicable. (Operator holds a fractional interest which prohibits the use of the property as a principal residence.)

### Business Licencing Fees

- ▶ A non-refundable application fee of \$150.00 must be paid at the time the application is submitted. If approved, an invoice will be provided and must be paid prior to the release of the licence. A non-refundable Business Licence fee for short-term rentals is \$400.00 and must be renewed annually.
- ▶ Strata-Titled Hotel or Motel. A non-refundable application fee of \$100.00 must be paid at the time the application is submitted. If approved, an invoice will be provided and must be paid prior to the release of the licence. A non-refundable Business Licence fee is \$250.00 plus \$5.00 for each short-term rental unit and must be renewed annually.
- ▶ Accepted methods of payment include cash, cheque, debit, Visa, Master Card and American Express.
- ▶ The licence fee for a Short-Term Rental will be reduced by 50% for applications after the first day of July in any year. The following year will be the full Business Licence fee.
- ▶ No refund shall be available for Short-Term Rental Business Licences for any reason.



## Cancelling a Business Licence

Business Licences are set to renew automatically, and fees are applied to the accounts, unless a notification of cancellation has been received before January 31. Cancellation requests can be submitted by emailing [buslicence@vernon.ca](mailto:buslicence@vernon.ca).

## Compliance

The City actively works to ensure short-term rental operators comply with rules and regulations. Operators may face municipal fines of up to \$500 per day, per offence, and significantly higher amounts if compliance efforts require escalation. Illegal operation may result in enforcement by both the municipality and the province.

### Example Offences:

- ▶ Operating without a valid business licence.
- ▶ Operating contrary to zoning restrictions.
- ▶ Listing or advertising a short-term rental without displaying a valid business licence.
- ▶ Listing or advertising a short-term rental exceeding the approved bedroom count on business licence.
- ▶ Listing or advertising a short-term rental without indicating if parking is available or not.
- ▶ Operating a short-term rental contrary to your business licence
- ▶ Operating an unsafe or nuisance property.
- ▶ Refusing entry for inspection by a Licence Inspector or City representative.

Operators exceeding licensing requirements or restrictions, and those with repeat offences, may be subject to escalated prosecution and higher fine amounts per offence per day.

## Inspection

The City actively inspects short-term rentals. Operators must provide access to their short-term rental accommodation for the City to inspect, upon request.

Operators understand that City staff may:

- ▶ Audit short-term rental licences and all required documentation;
- ▶ Request evidence that supports the information in a licence application;
- ▶ Request records of the short-term rental bookings and operation dates; and/or
- ▶ Request records showing fire safety inspections and safety maintenance.

## Information for guests

City bylaws ensure our community is a safe and enjoyable place for residents and visitors. Please ensure your guests are aware of the following rules, as well as any other rules set by your strata, if applicable.



### Noise

Because many short-term rental properties are near other residential homes, please ensure your guests are considerate of the public and their neighbours at all times of day.

Bylaw: [Good Neighbour Bylaw](#)



### Parking

Ensure your guests know where they can and can't park. Guests are responsible for abiding by parking regulations

Bylaw: [Section 4 of the Traffic Bylaw](#)



### Dogs

Guests must control their dogs at all times and keep on a leash when outside, unless within a designated off-leash dog park. Guests must also pick up after their dog.

Bylaws: [Animal Regulation and Animal Pound & Parks and Public Places](#)



### Garbage and recycling

Ensure guests have access to recycling and garbage bins.

Learn more about: [Residential Garbage](#)

[Recycle BC](#)



Business Licensing  
City of Vernon  
3001 32 Ave  
Vernon, BC V1T 2L8  
250-550-3634

Questions: [businesslicences@vernon.bc](mailto:businesslicences@vernon.bc)