



## **DRAFT SHORT TERM RENTALS ORDINANCE FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)**

### **1. What is the Definition of a Short Term Rental?**

A furnished house, condominium, apartment, or other dwelling room or self-contained dwelling unit rented to the transient, traveling, or vacationing public for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days and for more than 14 days per calendar year.

In addition, the Short Term Rental in or of a building may qualify the building as a “public building” subject to the jurisdiction of the State of Vermont Division of Fire Safety.

### **2. Why Does Rutland Town Need This Ordinance?**

The Town wants to ensure all Short Term Rentals are safe for the occupants and, like other lodging businesses, are inspected, pay applicable taxes, do not overburden our community’s water and septic systems, and do not alter the character of our residential neighborhoods.

### **3. How Would Short Term Rentals Alter the Character of Neighborhoods?**

It is possible that if Short Term Rentals exceed the advertised limit of occupants, do not clearly indicate emergency exits in case of fire, overburden water and septic systems, create noticeable changes in parking, garbage, noise, outdoor or nighttime activities that such rentals could result in adverse impacts in residential areas. It is the Town’s intent to balance the desire of property owners to rent their residential properties with the desire of residents to preserve the traditional peace and quiet of their residential neighborhoods.

### **4. Can Short Term Rentals Impede Emergency Responses?**

Yes. Without a Short Term Rental ordinance, the Town’s fire and police departments may not be able to respond appropriately to emergencies. For instance, if a fire breaks out, fire fighters benefit from an accurate count of the number of people in the dwelling unit.

### **5. How Many Other Vermont Towns Have Short Term Rentals Regulations?**

Our research indicates that 17 other cities/towns across the state have either adopted or are now reviewing such regulations. This is a new concept for towns and discussions began in the last few years.

### **6. We Aren't Killington, So Why Does Rutland Town Need This?**

Our research indicates there are as many as 30 Short Term Rentals in Rutland Town residential neighborhoods. Unlike a resort area like Killington with thousands of housing units slope side, Short Term Rentals in our Town are scattered across town.

### **7. What Is the Difference Between a Bed & Breakfast (B&B) and a Short Term Rental?**

B&Bs involve renting rooms in the same house in which the owner or manager lives full-time and meals are provided. Short Term Rentals typically involve the entire dwelling unit being rented out, the owner is not on site, and there are no meals provided. B&Bs are already regulated by the State of Vermont.

### **8. Do Bed & Breakfasts Pay Rooms & Meals Taxes?**

Yes. Likewise, a Short Term Rental constitutes a "Hotel" for purposes of the State of Vermont Rooms and Meals Tax.

### **9. As Long as The Owners Are Paying Their Property Taxes Why Does It Matter?**

The purpose of the Short Term Rentals Ordinance would be to promote the health, safety and welfare of the Town, its residents, and visitors. We want to ensure all housing units in Rutland Town are safe and, like other businesses, are inspected, pay applicable taxes, and the character of any neighborhood in town is preserved.

### **10. Can A Short Term Rental Still Be a Primary Residence?**

Yes, if you live there at least 6 months per year.

### **11. Does the Short Term Rental Need to be Owner Occupied?**

If not owner-occupied, a Short Term Rental must be under the active management and control of a property manager who:

- Is located within a 30-minute drive;
- Is available and authorized to respond promptly to incidents; and
- Is capable of providing timely access to the Short Term Rental on a 24/7 basis.

### **12. How Will Short Term Rentals Be Tracked?**

The Town is considering contracting with a vendor to keep track of Short Term Rentals that are being advertised on websites to rent. AirB&B is one example: [www.airbnb.com/](http://www.airbnb.com/)  
It is expected that the vendor's services would be covered by the fees paid by Short Term Rental property owners.

**13. What Will Be the Registration Requirements of a Short Term Rental?**

- An annual registration form;
- Once that form is determined complete, a Short Term Rental Authorization and Registration Number will be issued;
- All Authorization and Registration Numbers expire on October 31 of each year and will need to be renewed; and
- In addition, an annual report is required to be filed with the Select Board.

**14. What Will Be the Fees Required of a Short Term Rental?**

- A base fee of \$100
- An additional \$100 fee per bedroom

**15. Who Will Enforce this Ordinance?**

The Town of Rutland Compliance Officer, Police Officers, Constables, and Health Officer will be designated and authorized to act as Issuing Municipal Officials for violations of this ordinance.