

DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

CHAPTER 26 – TRANSIENT RENTAL STANDARDS & ENFORCEMENT

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26.010 Purpose and Findings.

- A. The purpose of this chapter is to implement procedures, restrictions, and regulations, and to provide for the payment of transient occupancy tax and applicable fees for the transient rental of properties within Transient Rental Overlay Districts (TRODs) designated pursuant to Chapter 25 of the Mono County General Plan and to provide enhanced enforcement tools to address unauthorized transient rentals countywide.

- B. The Board of Supervisors finds that allowing transient rentals within areas of the county designated for residential use will provide a community benefit by expanding the number and types of lodging available to visitors to Mono County, increasing the use of property within the county, and providing revenue to property owners so that the units may be maintained and upgraded.

- C. The Board of Supervisors also finds that the operation of transient rentals within residential communities should be regulated in order to minimize fire hazard, noise, traffic, and parking conflicts and disturbance to the peace and quiet. The Board further finds that current enforcement tools have been ineffective to address the illegal operation of transient rentals countywide, primarily because the penalty amount is easily offset by the revenue such uses generate.

26.020 Vacation Home Rental Permit.

Any person who rents a residential structure that is not a condominium (hereinafter “rental unit” or “property”) within an area of the county designated as a transient overlay district on a transient basis shall comply with the provisions of this chapter, the Mono County General Plan, and any applicable area plans or specific plans. Transient rental of a private residence within a transient overlay district without a valid vacation home rental permit is a violation of this chapter.

26.030 Application and Issuance of a Vacation Home Rental Permit.

- A. Applicant. An applicant for a vacation home rental permit shall be either the owner of title to the subject property or his or her expressly authorized representative. The authorization shall be in writing and notarized.

B. Application. An application for a vacation home rental permit shall be on a form that may be obtained from the Department of Finance or the Community Development Department. The following requirements and approvals must be met and substantiated before a vacation home rental permit will be issued:

1. The rental unit must be located within an area of the county designated as a transient overlay district;
2. The rental unit must comply with the standards and requirements as set forth in section 26.040, and any other requirement provided by this chapter. An inspection to verify compliance with such requirements shall be the responsibility of the owner or designated property manager. The owner or property manager shall certify in writing, under penalty of perjury, the rental unit's conformance to such standards. Such certification shall be submitted to the Mono County Community Development Department prior to permit issuance;
3. The applicant must designate the management company or property manager for the rental unit who will be available on a 24-hour basis to address any problems that may be associated with the property or the transient users of the property. The management company or property manager must be duly licensed, and shall be in good standing with the County. Alternatively, the property owner may serve as the property manager;
4. The property must be certified by the Community Development Department as complying with parking requirements and any applicable land use regulations set forth in the Mono County General Plan;
5. A Mono County business license must be obtained and must remain active during all times that the property is used as a transient rental;
6. Any required fees must be paid in full; and
7. A Mono County Transient Occupancy Certificate must be obtained from the Department of Finance and will be issued at the time the vacation home rental permit is issued and all conditions of approval have been met.

26.040 Standards and Requirements.

The following standards and requirements must be met in order to obtain a vacation home rental permit and to maintain that permit in good standing:

- A. Health and Safety Standards. The purpose of these standards is to establish minimum requirements to safeguard the public safety, health, and general welfare from fire and other hazards, and to provide safety to firefighters and emergency responders during emergency operations. These standards include without limitation:
1. The address of the rental unit must be clearly visible;
 2. Carbon monoxide and smoke detectors must be installed and maintained in good operating condition in each bedroom, sleeping area, or any room or space that could

reasonably be used as a sleeping area, and at a point centrally located in the corridor or area giving access to each separate sleeping room;

3. All stairs, decks, guards, and handrails shall be stable and structurally sound;
4. The rental unit shall be equipped with a minimum of one 2A:10B:C type fire extinguisher with no more than 75 feet of travel distance to all portions of the structure; there shall be no fewer than one such extinguisher per floor. Fire extinguishers shall be mounted in visible locations with the tops of the fire extinguishers mounted between 3 and 5 feet above the floor and shall be accessible to occupants at all times. California State Fire Marshal annual certification tags must be provided and be current on all extinguishers;
5. If there is a fireplace or solid-fuel barbecue, the rental unit shall be equipped with a minimum five-gallon metal container with a tight-fitting lid for ash removal. This container shall be clearly labeled and constructed to meet the purpose of containing ash. Instructions on the proper disposal of ash shall be stated in the rental agreement and clearly posted in the rental unit. The ash container shall not be placed on or near any furniture or other combustible material; ashes must be wet down thoroughly with water; the ash can must be stored outdoors with a minimum of 3 feet clearance from building, porch, trees, and other combustible materials; the lid must remain on the ash container when in use;
1. Wall or baseboard heaters in the rental unit shall be in good working condition, and instructions on the proper use of these units shall be clearly stated in the rental agreement and posted in the rental unit;
7. Furniture and any other material that may be flammable shall be kept a minimum of 54 inches from any fireplace opening and 30 inches from any wall or floor heaters;
8. Flammable or hazardous liquid or materials, firearms, controlled substances, or any unlawful material shall not be stored in the rental unit.
9. The roof and grounds of the transient rental property shall be kept clear of accumulations of pine needles, weeds, and other combustible materials;
10. Any locking mechanism on exterior doors must be operable from inside the unit without the use of a key or any special knowledge. If the dwelling unit is greater than 3,000 square feet in area, two exit doors shall be required, each of which shall conform to this requirement;
11. All fixtures, appliances, furnaces, water heaters, space heaters, plumbing, wiring, electrical, propane or gas connections, doors, windows, lighting, and all parts of the structure and furnishings (interior and exterior) must be in operable working condition and repair;
12. If telephone service is available, there shall be a telephone connected to the local carrier and in working condition for use in the event of an emergency or to contact the owner or property manager. The phone shall be connected to the reverse 911

directory. If there is no telephone service available, then the rental agreement must so state;

13. Bedroom windows shall be operable and free of obstructions to allow for emergency escape and rescue;
14. There shall be at least one screened window per bedroom to allow for proper ventilation;
15. All utilities (electric, gas, water, sewage, etc.) shall be connected, in good operating condition, and connected to approved sources.;
16. Any hot tubs, pools, and spas shall be fenced or equipped with a cover with locking mechanisms, and shall be maintained in a safe and sanitary condition;
17. There shall be no evidence of pest infestations, and all firewood and other stored items shall be kept in a neat and clean condition;
18. Exits shall be kept free from storage items, debris or any impediments at all times;
19. No tree limbs are allowed within 10 feet of any chimney or flue openings;
20. Spark arresters of a minimum opening size of 3/8-inch and a maximum opening size of 1/2-inch shall be required on all fireplace flue openings; and
21. If any applicable law, rule, or regulation enacted after the enactment of this chapter imposes requirements more stringent than those set forth herein, such requirements shall apply.

B. Sign and Notification Requirements.

1. Exterior Sign and Notice. Each rental unit shall be equipped with one temporary exterior identification sign not to exceed 8 ½ x 11 inches in size that shall be posted as long as the unit is being rented on a transient basis. This identification sign shall be placed in a location that is clearly visible from the front entrance of the unit, and may be illuminated in a manner that does not conflict with any County exterior lighting standards or signage standards. This sign shall clearly state the following information in lettering of sufficient size to be easily read:
 - a. The name of the managing agency, agent, property manager or owner of the unit and the telephone number where said person or persons can be reached on a 24-hour basis;
 - b. The maximum number of occupants permitted to stay in the unit; and
 - c. The maximum number of vehicles allowed to be parked on the property. A diagram fixing the designated parking location shall be included.

2. Interior Notice. Each rental unit shall have a clearly visible and legible notice posted within the unit adjacent to the front door that shall contain the same information set forth above, and shall additionally include the following:
 - a. Notification and instructions about the proper disposal of trash and refuse, including any bear-safe disposal requirements;
 - b. Notification and instructions concerning the proper use of any appliances, fireplaces, heaters, spas, or any other fixture or feature within the unit;
 - c. Notification that failure to conform to the parking, trash disposal and occupancy requirements for the rental unit shall be a violation of this chapter and may result in immediate removal from the premises and administrative, civil or criminal penalty;
 - d. Notification that any violation of rules or regulations set forth in the Rental Agreement may be a violation of this Chapter and may result in immediate removal from the premises and administrative, civil or criminal penalty; and
 - e. Physical street address of the unit and emergency contact information consisting of 911, the property manager's phone number, and contact information of the local fire department and the Mono County Sheriff's Department.
- C. Occupancy. The maximum number of persons who may occupy the property as transient renters or their overnight guests shall be limited to two persons (2) per bedroom plus two additional persons. In no event may the maximum occupancy exceed 10 persons in any rental unit unless the unit is certified and approved by the Mono County Building Official as meeting all applicable building standards for such occupancy. Additionally, occupancy may be further restricted by the limitation of the septic system serving the dwelling as determined by Mono County Environmental Health.
- D. Parking. Parking requirements shall be based on the parking requirements set forth in the Mono County General Plan. Parking requirements for the rental unit shall be noticed in the rental agreement and posted on and in the unit. There shall be no off-site or on-street parking allowed, and parking on property owned by other persons shall be considered a trespass. A violation of this section may subject any person to administrative, civil and criminal penalty, including fines and towing of any vehicle, as authorized by state and local law.
- E. Trash and Solid Waste Removal. A sufficient number of trash receptacles shall be available. Trash and other solid waste shall not be allowed to accumulate in or around the property and shall be removed promptly to a designated landfill, transfer station or other designated site. For purposes of this paragraph, promptly shall mean at least one time per week during any week that the unit is occupied, regardless of the number of days it is occupied. Any trash receptacles located outside a unit shall be in bear-proof containers (in areas with bears) and comply with County standards. Trash removal requirements for each rental unit shall be included in the rental agreement and posted on and in the property. Property management shall be responsible for the cleanup if the tenants do not properly dispose of trash in bear-proof containers.

F. Snow Removal. Snow removal from driveways, walkways, stairs, decks, and all exits and entrances shall be performed prior to each occupancy period, and during any occupancy period as needed to maintain the functionality of these areas. Snow removal from driveways, pathways, exits and entrances, and removal of snow, ice, and ice dams from roofs, decks, and stairs shall be performed in a timely manner as necessary to protect any person who may be using or visiting the rental unit.

26.050 Rental Agreement and Owner Responsibility.

A. Rental Agreement. The temporary rental or use of each rental unit shall be made pursuant to a rental agreement. The rental agreement shall include, as attachments, a copy of this chapter and the vacation home rental permit for the unit. Each rental agreement shall contain all required notices and shall specify the number of persons who may occupy the unit, parking requirements and number of allowed vehicles, trash disposal requirements, and include the telephone number of the person or persons to be notified in the event of any problem that arises with the rental. The agreement shall include the phone number, address, and contact information for the person responsible for renting the unit, and any other information required by the County. The rental agreement shall notify the renters that they may be financially responsible and personally liable for any damage or loss that occurs as a result of their use of the unit, including the use by any guest or invitee. The property manager or owner shall keep a list of the names and contact information of the adult guests staying in the unit.

B. Owner Responsibility.

1. The owner, managing agency, and property manager shall be responsible for compliance with all applicable codes regarding fire, building and safety, health and safety, other relevant laws, and the provisions of this chapter.
2. An owner, managing agency, and/or property manager shall be personally available by telephone on a 24-hour basis to respond to calls regarding the conditions and/or operation of the unit. Failure to timely respond in an appropriate manner may result in revocation of the vacation home rental permit and business license.
3. The owner shall require, as a term of a written agreement with a management company or agent, that said agent comply with this chapter. The owner shall identify the management company or agent, including all contact and license information in the application for a vacation home rental permit, and shall keep this information current. Such agreement shall not relieve owner of the obligation to comply with this chapter.
4. The owner shall maintain property liability and fire insurance coverage in an appropriate amount and shall provide proof of such insurance to County upon reasonable request. Additionally, the owner shall defend, indemnify, and hold the County harmless from any and all claims, judgments, liabilities, or other costs associated with the property or the rental unit, or the rental thereof.

5. The owner, managing agency, property manager and guest shall comply with all lawful direction from any law enforcement officer, fire official, building official, or code compliance officer.
6. The owner shall be responsible for assuring that the occupants and/or guests of the rental property do not create unreasonable noise or disturbances, engage in disorderly conduct, or violate any law. If an owner, property manager, or other agent of the owner is informed about any violation of this chapter, the owner, property manager, or owner's agent shall promptly take action and use best efforts to stop or prevent a recurrence of such conduct, including, when appropriate, calling law enforcement.

26.060 Compliance with Transient Occupancy Tax Requirements.

Each owner shall be responsible for obtaining a transient occupancy registration certificate and for complying with Chapter 3.28 of the Mono County Code. An owner may contract with a management company or property manager to collect, disburse, report, and maintain all records related to transient occupancy tax, but the owner remains responsible for any failure to collect, disburse, or accurately report such tax.

26.070 Enforcement.

- A. A violation of any provision of this chapter, and/or the renting of any property in a land use designation that does not allow for such transient rental, or without proper land use approvals, is subject to the General Penalty provisions and/or the Administrative Citation provisions set forth in Section 1.04.060 and Chapter 1.12 of the Mono County Code, respectively, and any other civil or administrative remedy allowed by law. Notwithstanding Section 1.12.030, the administrative fine for the operation of any transient rental facility within a transient overlay district without a valid vacation home rental permit, or the operation of any transient rental facility in violation of applicable land use requirements in any other land use designation of the county shall be \$1,000 for the first violation and \$2,000 for a second or subsequent violation within three years. In addition to these penalty provisions, the failure to comply with any provision of this chapter may result in the suspension or revocation of the vacation home rental permit in accordance with subsection D below, or the suspension or revocation of the business license and/or transient occupancy registration certificate. The failure of a management company or property manager to comply with the provisions of this chapter may additionally result in a finding that such management or company or property manager is not in good standing.
- B. An inspection and/or audit of each unit subject to this chapter, and any contract or agreement entered into in furtherance of, or to implement, this chapter, may be made at any reasonable time, and upon reasonable notice to confirm compliance with this chapter.
- C. Transient rentals may not be conducted if there are any code violations, stop-work orders, or other violation of law or regulation outstanding on the property.
- D. The following procedures shall be followed in conjunction with any proposed revocation or suspension of a vacation home rental permit.

1. The County shall provide the property owner with a notice of proposed revocation or suspension stating the nature of the violation, whether revocation or suspension is proposed, and the date, time, and place of a hearing before a hearing officer, who shall be a Planning Commissioner appointed for this purpose by the County Administrative officer, will be held. The notice shall be served on the owner at least 10 business days prior to the date of the hearing by personal service or by certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested to the address for such purpose provided on the vacation home rental permit application. Service by mail shall be deemed effective on the date of mailing.
 2. At the hearing, the hearing officer shall consider any written or oral evidence consistent with the following:
 - a. The contents of the County's file shall be accepted into evidence (except as to such portions of the file, if any, that contain confidential or privileged information); and
 - b. The notice of revocation or suspension shall be admitted as prima facie evidence of the facts stated therein.
 3. The hearing officer shall independently consider the facts of the case and shall draw his or her own independent conclusions.
 4. Upon conclusion of the hearing and receipt of information and evidence from all interested parties, the hearing officer shall render his or her decision affirming the revocation or suspension as proposed, modifying the revocation or suspension, or rejecting the revocation or suspension.
 5. If directed by the hearing officer, staff shall prepare a written decision reflecting the hearing officer's determination. Following approval of the written decision by the hearing officer, the secretary of the Planning Commission shall serve the written decision on the property owner by certified mail, postage prepaid, return receipt requested.
 6. The decision of the hearing officer shall be the final administrative action of the County, and the property owner shall be advised of his rights to challenge that decision in Superior Court pursuant to section 1094.5 of the Code of Civil Procedure and of the timelines in which such an action must be brought.
- E. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event the code compliance officer determines that suspension or suspension pending revocation of a vacation home rental permit is necessary for the immediate protection of the public health, safety, or welfare, such suspension may be made without prior hearing or determination by the hearing officer, upon the giving of such advance notice to the property owner as the code compliance officer deems reasonable given the nature of the violation and risks presented. The code compliance officer shall inform the property owner in writing of the duration of the suspension, the reasons therefor, the procedure and timelines for filing an appeal, in accordance with the following:
1. The property owner may appeal the suspension by filing an appeal with the clerk of the Planning Commission within 10 calendar days of the date the suspension or

- revocation takes effect. Such appeal shall also function as a hearing on revocation of the permit, if the suspension is made pending revocation. In the event the property owner does not appeal a suspension pending revocation within the time provided, then the suspension shall automatically become a revocation if notice of such was included in the notice of the suspension;
2. The hearing shall be in accordance with the procedures set forth in section D above; and
 3. The suspension shall remain in effect for the number of days provided by the code compliance officer, or until the appeal/revocation hearing is finally decided by the hearing officer, whichever occurs later, unless extended by the Board.
- F. When a vacation home rental permit is revoked pursuant to the procedures set forth in this chapter, a new vacation home rental permit may not be issued to the same property owner for a period of five years.

26.080 Existing and Otherwise Permitted Rentals.

Any lawful use of property as a transient rental occurring, or subsequently authorized, in a land use designation that permits such uses (or permits such uses subject to Use Permit or Director Review approval) without the application of a transient overlay district shall be exempt from the provisions of this chapter.

26.090 Unauthorized Rentals Prohibited.

The transient rental of any property, unit, or structure that is not within a designated transient overlay district or within a land use designation that permits such use and for which all necessary approvals have been granted, is prohibited. Any violation of this section shall be subject to the provisions of section 26.070, including the fines set forth therein.