STR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (UPDATED OCT 19, 2026)

WHAT IS A SHORT TERM RENTAL (STR)?

In Massachusetts: A dwelling unit or portion(s) thereof that is not a transient residential facility, where: (i) at least one room or dwelling unit is rented to an occupant or sub occupant; and (ii) all accommodations are reserved in advance. Rental periods with a change in occupancy in excess of 31 calendar days shall not be considered a short-term rental. The rental of property for a total of 14 days or less in any calendar year shall not be considered a short-term rental. A transient residential facility includes hotels; rooming, lodging or guest houses; and time sharing or time-interval-ownership dwelling unit(s). If all your rentals are in excess of 31 days, you need not register with the state or the town as an STR. 14 days or less in any calendar year still requires a MA registration.

CURRENT REGULATIONS, REGISTRY & ENFORCEMENT

What regulations in the town's code control the operation of STRs?

1. Chapter 123 of the Nantucket Code is the general bylaw whose intended purpose is to "…provide for an orderly process for identifying, registering, and regulating short term rentals within the Town so as to insure that such short-term rentals do not create or cause any nuisance conditions within the Town."
2. Chapter 123 authorizes the Board of Health, subject to the approval of the Select Board, "…to promulgate regulations to carry out and enforce the provisions of this chapter". Chapter 338 contains more specific requirements for STR operators including STR registration, insurance, operational, inspection, reporting and renter notification requirements, fees and penalties for non-compliance.
3. Chapter 139 (Zoning Bylaw) specifically permits long and short term residential rentals as long as they comply with all relevant town bylaws and state legislation.

How will STR owners be contacted to register their STRs?

Those already registered will receive an annual email notification to renew their registration(s) in the fall with general public notification posted on social media and the town's website. Once your STR account is created, the property or properties (if more than one STR property has the same owner) can be registered. Further information and instructions will be provided by the help desk and on the Town of Nantucket's STR Website . Renewal registrations must be completed by 10/31 each year for the next year.

What should I do if I plan to operate an STR and do not already have an STR account with the town?

It is the responsibility of the STR owner to contact the town via the Town of Nantucket's STR Website or contact the STR Community Liaison at 508-221-6998 or shorttermrental@nantucket-ma.gov to create an account so you can register and get

annual renewal emails. Note that STRs may only be operated and registered for an entity in which all property owners are 'natural persons', thereby banning (non-LLC/S-Corp) corporate or Real Estate Investment Trust (REIT) ownership. An amendment to Chapter 338 regulations requires proof that no members of an LLC/S-Corp are also officers, directors or investors of a corporation or REIT that owns or operates a STR on Nantucket. Submission of documentation or an affidavit with proof is required.

Who is required to register?

Any property owner who currently operates or plans to operate a STR must register by 10/31 each year if they plan to operate an STR in the following year. The annual registration cycle requires that STR operators register their properties with the town before 1 November of the year preceding their operation.

What is the process for Nantucket STRs to be registered?

Property owners must first register their STR(s) with the MA State STR Registry online using MassTaxConnect. If you own more than one rental property or separately rent dwellings on a single property, the MA registration software will ask you to list the properties and you will receive a separate certificate number for each one. Registration is free and does not expire as long as there is no ownership change. *One MA STR Certificate is needed for each separately rented dwelling on a single STR property.*

What is the website link for the Nantucket Local STR Registry?

The link to begin the local registration process is: https://nantucketma.portal.opengov.com/. First time registrants will be required to create an account using your email address along with a password and verify that email address. For renewals, simply log in with your account ID and password to complete the renewal(s).

Who do I call with a complaint against an STR?

To make a complaint, you can send an email to the Complaint Email or Call the Complaint Hotline number: 508-221-6998. Please include the date, property address, and reason for the complaint. To receive a follow-up, provide your contact information.

IF THERE IS AN EMERGENCY SITUATION (e.g. fire, medical, vehicle or immediate safety situation) CALL 911 instead!

What information will I need to register my STR on Nantucket?

Before attempting to complete your STR application, the following information is required:

- MA STR Registry Certificate Number
- Legal Property Owner Information (all owners must be 'natural persons')

- Short Term Rental Property Information
- Property Management Company Information/Agreement (if applicable) - if you use a professional property management company to handle your bookings it likely means the upload of that contract is required. However management of the maintenance of your property (e.g. caretaker) does not require a contract upload.
- If your account includes multiple STR properties or separately rented dwellings, you are likely to fall under the additional requirements passed at the 2023 Special Town Meeting that went into effect 1 October 2024. For more information, consult the Community Impact Fee FAQ on the town website. It is the responsibility of the STR owner to determine its applicability to their operation and collect and remit the fees via MassTaxConnect.
- Evidence of $1M Liability Insurance (personal policy and/or online rental platform information depending on how you rent your home). The registry requires at least one document to be uploaded but multiple uploads of all applicable liability coverages is permitted.

What current regulations and restrictions currently apply to STRs?

All STRs must register with the state and the town, submit required information, pay an annual fee to the town, certify compliance with state and town laws and face fines, termination/non-renewal of their certificate and potential civil penalties for violations. STRs must comply with town noise and outdoor lighting bylaws. In addition:

- Corporations (with the exception of S-Corps and LLCs owned solely by natural persons), Real Estate Investment Trusts and Partnerships which pool funds from investors and is engaged primarily in investment activity are banned
- Operation of STRs in deed or income-restricted housing are not permitted
- Operation of STRs in time-share or time-share-interval property are banned.

For further detail and to stay abreast of town meeting legislative changes Chapter 123, Chapter 338 and Chapter 139 (Zoning). In addition, the MA General Bylaws Chapter 64G include similar rules including the requirement to post information regarding the location of any fire extinguishers, gas shut off valves, fire exits and fire alarms in the unit and building.

What if I do not obtain a Short-Term Rental Certificate?

Renting or advertising your home for rent on a short-term basis without a certificate is in violation of the Town of Nantucket's ordinances and subject to enforcement processes as provided for in the Town Code Chapters 123 and 338.

What are the Room Occupancy Excise Tax/Community Impact Fees? When are they due? How are penalties and interest calculated?

Occupancy taxes are required to be paid quarterly by the STR operator, or their agent unless they are using an online rental platform that collects and remits the taxes on

behalf of the host. Community Impact Fee remission is also due quarterly and must be remitted by the STR owner via MassTaxConnect. GovOS has no role in these transactions. Please refer to the associated state regulations.

Do I also need to obtain a separate business license?

No. The STR Operator's Certificates (state and local) are all you need to begin advertising your rental. Nantucket does not consider vacation rentals to be a commercial enterprise. Please note that the operator must register first with the state (only once) to begin the process and initiate the means to collect taxes. Then the operator must register with the Town of Nantucket and renew their STR Certificate annually.

What is the cost of an STR Certificate?

The annual fee of $250 is currently defined in the Town of Nantucket Code Chapter 338 .

How do I pay for my STR Certificate?

Credit card payments are accepted and will involve a service fee of approximately 3%.

Does my short-term rental certificate apply to multiple properties?

No. You may register more than one short term rental property under a single STR account but each STR property that is leased separately (which may include a secondary dwelling) requires its own certificate and annual fee.

Do I have to display my STR certificates?

Yes. The state and local STR Certificates, visitor emergency information and copies of the Town Noise (Chapter 101) and Outdoor Lighting (Chapter 102) Bylaws, must all be posted in a conspicuous place within the short-term rental unit at all times. Your STR Certificate PDF can be found in the Business Center by clicking your account name under "Manage Your Account(s)". Please note that the Massachusetts STR Certificate also needs to be displayed. Having them in a "Renter's Handbook" along with Nantucket bylaws will satisfy this requirement. Any advertising/online listing must also include Massachusetts and Nantucket STR Certificate numbers or a copy of them in the photo gallery.

Is the Town of Nantucket working with online rental platforms?

No. However, Airbnb and VRBO do collect and remit room occupancy excise taxes to the Commonwealth of MA on behalf of property owners and/or authorized agents and the Commonwealth distributes its portion to the Town of Nantucket. Online platforms and also endeavor to stay abreast of state and local regulations, providing host education and guidance in how to remain compliant.

Is the Town of Nantucket working with Real Estate agencies?

No. However, most members of the Nantucket Real Estate Agency Association (NAREB) collect the room occupancy excise taxes and remit them to the state on behalf of their STR

clients and also endeavor to stay abreast of state and local regulations, providing host education and guidance in how to remain compliant.

What documentation will satisfy the Town liability insurance requirement?

Online platforms including Airbnb and VRBO provide $1M in liability coverage as part of their offering. Please note the state requirement may not be not the same as the town bylaw requirement. The town bylaw permits the insurance to be carried by the online platform on behalf of the STR operator where the Real Estate agencies do not offer that protection. This means homeowners must secure their own coverage when not using online platforms that provide the coverage.

What is the Community Impact Fee and which STRs are affected?

At the 2023 Special Town Meeting, voters approved a 3% Community Impact Fee that must be collected on Nantucket short term rentals that are one of two or more units that have the same operator and are not located in an owner occupied single-family, 2-family or 3-family dwelling. **Beginning October 1, 2024**, if your rental property fits the description above you must collect and remit the 3% Community Impact Fee (along with the State and Local Room Occupancy Excise Taxes) to MA DOR on a quarterly basis. This new fee does not apply to multi-dwelling STRs registered as a single entity on a single property. MA DOR administers the collection and distribution of this fee, 100% of which goes to the town of Nantucket as a new source of general fund revenue. For any questions about your account, visit mass.gov/masstaxconnect. If you have further questions, call MA DOR at (617) 887-6367 or toll-free in Massachusetts at (800) 392-6089, Monday through Friday, 9am to 4pm.

Are there any STR operational reporting requirements?

Yes. Quarterly operational reports must be filed with the town by registered STR operators using an online form that is sent via email on a quarterly basis in accordance with Chapter 338-6 B of the town code. Required information currently includes the number of days rented on a short-term basis for the prior quarter, type of rental (whole house, cottage, etc.), listing platforms (e.g. real estate agency, online rental platform, etc.).

Are there any STR inspection requirements?

Local STR regulations include complaint-based inspections but routine (annually or every 5 year) inspection requirements are only mentioned in recently passed MA Building Code legislation. For 1 and 2 family homes in which STRs are operated, routine inspection requirements are based on primary use and occupancy but those terms in the legislation are not specifically defined so Short Term Rental Guidance for 1 & 2 Family Dwellings has been provided by the state. Local interpretation/enforcement policy has not yet been provided.