

Town of Bethel
Local Law No. 1 of the Year 2023

A local law to add a new chapter to the Town
Code captioned Short Term Rentals

Be it enacted by the Town Board of the Town of Bethel as follows:

Article I. Intent and Purpose

It is the intent and purpose to regulate short-term rentals to preserve and protect health, character, safety and general welfare of residents.

Article II. Definitions

1. SHORT TERM RENTALS

As used in this chapter, the following term shall have the meaning indicated:

Short-Term Rental- Any portion of real property rented for compensation in exchange for lodging for a period of not more than thirty-one (31) consecutive days. This may include campgrounds, tent sites or tent platforms and other temporary structures on the parcel. For the purpose of this Chapter, the term "Short-Term Rental" shall not include a bed-and-breakfast, boarding/lodging house, hotel, motel, or ongoing month-to-month tenancies. Any portion of real property rented for compensation in exchange for lodging for a daily or weekly rate.

2. Presumption of Dwelling Unit as Short-Term Rental Property.

A. The presence of the following shall create a presumption that all or a part of the property is being used as a Short-Term Rental:

(1) All or a part of the property is offered for lease on a short-term rental website, including but not limited to Airbnb, Home Away and VRBO, for a rental period of less than 31 days; and/or

(2) All or a part of the property is offered for lease for a period of 31 days or less through any form of advertising.

(3) Any advertisement for all or part of a property advertising a daily or weekly rate for lodging.

3. Required Permit.

A Owners shall not use their property as a Short-Term Rental without obtaining a revocable Short-Term Rental permit.

B. A Short-Term Rental Permit shall be valid for one (1) year and must be renewed thirty (30) Days prior to expiration of a current permit if the premises is to continue to operate as a Short-Term Rental.

C. The Short-Term Rental permit is not transferable to a new owner. The new owner of the premises subject to a Short-Term Rental permit must file a new permit application.

4. Short-Term Rental Permit Application Requirements.

A. Applications for a Short-Term Rental Permit may be obtained at the Town of Bethel Building Department. The permit application shall be submitted to the Code Enforcement Officer, accompanied by payment of a nonrefundable permit fee to be determined from time to time by resolution of the Town Board. The application shall include the following:

(1) The signatures of all owners or their designated agents.

(2) A statement authorizing the Code Enforcement Officer to inspect the property to ensure compliance with all requirements and standards contained within this chapter.

(3) An acknowledgement of present and ongoing compliance with the short-term rental standards as defined in this chapter, including, but not limited to, the demonstration of adequate off-road parking spaces for the proposed short-term rental.

(4) A list of each property owner and the name of any manager or management agency managing the property, including names, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses of each.

(5) The name, address, telephone number and email address of a contact person, who shall be responsible and authorized to act on the owners' behalf to promptly remedy any violation of the standards outlined in this section. The contact person may be an owner, or an agent designated by the owner(s) to serve as a contact person, and shall respond to any correspondence or concern from the Town Code Enforcement Officer within 24 hours.

(6) An accurate suitable floor plan for each level of the dwelling that can be occupied

measuring at least 8.5 inch by 11 inch, drawn to scale and certified by the applicant. The floor plan does not need to be prepared by a professional, but must include the following:

- (a) The location of buildings and required parking.
- (b) Basement: location of house utilities and all rooms including bedrooms, windows, exits and any heating/cooling units.
- (c) First floor: all rooms including bedrooms, windows, exits and any heating/cooling units.
- (d) Second floor: all rooms including bedrooms, windows, exits and any heating/cooling units.

(7) A statement that none of the owners of the subject property have had a short-term rental permit revoked within the previous year for any rental properties owned individually or together with others.

B. All completed applications are subject to a floor plan review and approval by the Code Enforcement Officer.

5. Short-Term Rental Standards.

A. Property Requirements

- (1) Property must comply and meet all current NYS Uniform Building Codes.
- (2) There shall be one working smoke detector in each sleeping room and one additional smoke detector on each floor. Carbon monoxide detectors shall be installed as required by the New York State Uniform Fire Prevention and Building Code.
- (3) Evacuation procedures must be posted in each sleeping room on each floor to be followed in the event of a fire or smoke condition or upon activation of a fire or smoke detecting or other alarm device.
- (4) There shall be an ABC fire extinguisher on each floor and in the kitchen. Fire extinguishers shall be inspected prior to a renter occupying the property and no less than monthly by the permit holder(s) to ensure each contains a full charge. A record of the date inspected initialed by the permit holder shall be maintained and made available to the Code Enforcement Officer upon request.

- (5) The house number shall be located both at the road and on the dwelling unit so that the house number is clearly visible from both the road and the driveway.
 - (6) Exterior doors shall be operational and all passageways to exterior doors shall be clear and unobstructed.
 - (7) Electrical systems shall be in good operating condition, labeled, unobstructed and shall be visible for the Code Enforcement Officer during the permitting process. Any defects found shall be corrected prior to permit issuance.
 - (8) All fireplaces shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations.
 - (9) The property must have a minimum of one (1) off-road parking space for every bedroom shown on the floor plan included with the application.
 - (10) Maximum occupancy for each Short-Term rental unit shall not exceed two (2) people per bedroom shown on the floor plan included with the application and two (2) people per minimum full size convertible sleeping accommodation furniture (i.e. futon, hide-a-bed) also identified on the floor plan. The maximum occupancy of a Short-Term rental Unit shall not exceed twelve (12) people, including permanent residents and renters.
 - (11) In the event that the property has a septic system, the maximum occupancy shall be defined by the capabilities of the septic system, but in no event shall overnight occupancy for any Short-Term Rental Unit exceed twelve (12) people total.
 - (12) A septic system at the property must meet all state requirements.
 - (13) The septic system must have been pumped within the past four years and proof of pumping and satisfactory inspection by a qualified septic disposal firm shall be available to the Code Enforcement Officer. Once a short-term rental permit is issued, the septic system must be pumped at least once every four years.
 - (14) The water supply to the property must meet all state requirements.
- B. Insurance standards. All applicants and permit holders must provide "evidence of property insurance" and a "certificate of liability insurance" indicating the premises is rated as a short-term rental and maintain such insurance throughout the term of the short-term rental permit.
- C. Provisions shall be made for weekly garbage removal during rental periods. Garbage containers shall be secured with tight-fitting covers at all times to prevent leakage, spilling or odors, and placed where they are not clearly visible from the road except at approximate

pick-Up time.

D. Rental contract: All applicants and permit holders must have a rental contract, which includes the following:

- (1) Maximum property occupancy;
- (2) Maximum on-site parking provided; and
- (3) Good neighbor statement stating: :

(a) The short-term rental is in a residential area in the Town of Bethel and that renters should be considerate of the residents in neighboring homes.

(b) Guests are requested to observe quiet hours from 11:00 p.m. through 7:00 a.m.

(c) All renters will be subject to New York Penal Law § 240.20 or any successor statute regarding disorderly conduct.

(d) Littering is illegal; and

(e) Recreational campfires must be attended.

6. Procedure Upon Filing Application:

A. Short-Term Rental permit applications shall be filed with the Town of Bethel Code Enforcement Officer with all supporting documentations and the nonrefundable permit fee. Only completed applications will be accepted by the Town's Code Enforcement Officer. The Code Enforcement Officer may decline to accept an application for consideration for any of the following reasons:

- (1) The application documentation required by this Section was not included or the full permit fee was not paid.
- (2) A previously issued Short-Term Rental permit was revoked within the past year and defects and/or violations have not been corrected and inspected by the Code Enforcement Officer.

B. Upon the Code Enforcement Officer's acceptance of the completed permit application, all documents and information required by this section and the permit fee, the Code Enforcement Officer shall conduct a property inspection to certify and approve that all short-term rental requirements have been met.

C. Upon approval of the short-term rental application by the Code Enforcement Officer, a short-term rental permit will be issued. Short-term rental permits issued pursuant to this

Section shall state the following:

- (1) The names, addresses and phone numbers of each person or entity that has an ownership interest in the short-term rental property.
- (2) The name, address and phone number of a primary contact person who shall be available during the entire time the short-term rental property is being rented.
- (3) The maximum occupancy and vehicle limits for the short-term rental property.
- (4) Identification of the number of and location of parking spaces available.
- (5) Any conditions imposed by the Zoning Board of Appeals and/or Code Enforcement Officer.

7. Conformity and display of permit.

A. Short-term rental permits are subject to continued compliance with the requirements of these regulations.

- (1) If the Code Enforcement Officer has probable cause to believe that the homeowner is not in compliance with the provisions of this law, the Code Enforcement Officer may request permission from an owner of the short-term rental permit to enter the premises and to conduct an inspection of the short-term rental property for purposes of ensuring compliance with this section. If the property owner refuses to permit the Code Enforcement Officer to inspect the property, the permit will be revoked. If an inspection authorized herein is conducted, the Code Enforcement Officer shall use the results of such inspection in determining whether to revoke the permit.
- (2) The short-term rental permit, maximum occupancy limit, maximum parking, contact form and standards shall be prominently displayed inside and near the front entrance of the short-term rental; and
- (3) The short-term rental permit holder shall ensure that current and accurate information is provided to the Code Enforcement Officer and that they notify the Code Enforcement Officer immediately of any change in the information displayed on the permit. If, based on such changes, the Code Enforcement Officer issues an amended short-term rental permit; the owners must immediately post the amended permit inside and near the front entrance of the short-term rental.
- (4) The short-term rental permit holder must conspicuously display the short-term rental permit number in all advertisements for the applicable short-term rental.

8. Compliance and penalties.

A. Violations of this section or of any short-term rental permit issued pursuant to this section shall be subject to enforcement and penalties prescribed in this chapter.

B. If the Code Enforcement Officer either witnesses or receives a written complaint of an alleged violation of this section or of any short-term rental permit issued pursuant to this section, the Code Enforcement Officer shall properly record such complaint and investigate the report thereon. If the Code Enforcement Officer determines there is a violation of this code, the owners shall be notified in writing by first class mail and certified return receipt mail of said violations and the Code Enforcement Officer may take any or all of the following actions:

- (1) Attach conditions to the existing short-term rental permit.
- (2) Suspend the short-term rental permit. The notice of suspension shall be provided to the property owner and a copy filed with the Town Clerk.
- (3) Require corrective action that remedies the violation(s). The corrective action must be completed and approved within 30 days of notice from the Code Enforcement Officer or the owner risks revocation of the short-term rental permit.
- (4) Issue a court appearance ticket for violation of a Town law.
- (5) Revoke the short-term rental permit. Should a permit be revoked, all owners of the short-term rental are prohibited from obtaining a short-term rental permit on the property for one year after the date of revocation. The Code Enforcement Officer shall send notices of revocation to property owners and shall file a copy with the Town Clerk.

9. Application for Renewal of Permit.

Renewal permits will be granted for an additional 1-year term if the following conditions are met:

A. Application for renewal of the Short-Term Rental permit shall be made thirty (30) days prior to expiration of current permit and requires payment of renewal fee.

B. At the time of application for renewal, the owner or designated agent must present the

previous permit for Short-Term Rental.

C. The property must have undergone an inspection performed by the Code Enforcement Officer.

D. Any violations must be remedied prior to renewal of a permit for Short-Term Rental.

10. Grounds for Suspension or Revocation of Permit.

A. The Code Enforcement Officer may immediately suspend a Short-Term Rental permit based on any of the following grounds:

- (1) Applicant has falsified or failed to provide information in the application for permit or the application for permit renewal.
- (2) Applicant failed to meet or comply with any of the requirements of this Chapter.
- (3) Owner is in violation of any provision of the Code of the Town of Bethel.
- (4) Owner has violated any provision of the Penal Code of the State of New York, which violation occurred at, or related to the occupancy of the Short-Term Rental.
- (5) Any conduct on the premises, which disturbs the health, safety, peace or comfort of the neighborhood or which otherwise creates a public nuisance.
- (6) Removal or disrepair of any safety devices such as, but not limited to, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers and egresses.

11. Appeals and Hearings.

The property owner is entitled to appeal the Code Enforcement Officer's determination to the Zoning Board of Appeals when a property owner's application for a Short-Term Rental Permit or a Short Term Rental Permit Renewal is denied or a Short-Term Rental Permit is revoked. A Notice of Appeal shall be filed with the Town Clerk and the Zoning Board of Appeals within 60 days of the Code Enforcement Officer's filing of the denial or revocation with the Town Clerk. A hearing shall be held by the Zoning Board of Appeals not more than 45 days after the filing of the Notice of Appeal.

12. RATIFICATION, READOPTION AND CONFIRMATION

Except as specifically modified by the amendments contained herein, the Code of the Town of Bethel as adopted and amended from time to time thereafter is otherwise to remain in full force

and effect and is otherwise ratified, readopted and confirmed.

13. INCLUSION IN CODE

It is the intention of the Bethel Town Board and it is hereby enacted that the provisions of this local law shall be included in the Code of the Town of Bethel; that the sections and subsections of this local law may be renumbered or re lettered to accomplish such intention; and that the word “local law” shall be changed to “chapter,” “section” or other appropriate word, as required for codification.

14. RENUMBERING

The location and numerical designation of this local law and the sections included herein shall be delegated to the discretion of the codifier, General Code, which may renumber or re letter this local law and sections as are necessary to accommodate these amendments.

15. CODIFIER’S CHANGES

This local law shall be included in the Code of the Town of Bethel. The codifier shall make no substantive changes to this local law, but may renumber, rearrange and edit it without first submitting it to the Bethel Town Board. Any such rearranging, renumbering and editing shall not affect the validity of this local law or the provisions of the Code affected thereby.

16. SEVERABILITY

The provisions of this Local Law are severable and if any provision, clause, sentence, subsection, word or part thereof is held illegal, invalid or unconstitutional, or inapplicable to any person or circumstance, such illegality, invalidity or unconstitutionality, or inapplicability shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, clauses, sentences, subsections, words or parts of this Local Law or their petition to other persons or circumstances. It is hereby declared to be the legislative intent that this Local law would have been adopted if such illegal, invalid or unconstitutional provision, clause, sentence, subsection, word or part had not been included

therein, and if such person or circumstance to which the Local Law or part hereof is held inapplicable had been specifically exempt there from.

17. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Local Law shall take effect immediately upon adoption and filing with the Secretary of State as provided by the Municipal Home Rule Law.