

SHORT-TERM VACATION RENTAL

Frequently Asked Questions

City Council adopted Ordinance 13194 on July 11th of 2017 to provide a review process for the operation of short term vacation rentals (STVR). This ordinance moved the regulation of STVR's from the zoning code (Chapter 38) to the business licensing section of the City code (Chapter 10). Prior to the ordinance being adopted, STVR's were permitted only on properties zoned R-3 or R-4. As part of this ordinance, the City of Chattanooga established a "Short Term Vacation Rental District" that defines where this type of activity is permitted in the City. The new ordinance provided an effective date of October 1st for all STVR properties to come into compliance. The following FAQ document provides an overview of some of the questions that relate to compliance with this new ordinance.

1) APPLICABILITY - HOW DOES THIS ORDINANCE AFFECT AN STVR OPERATOR?

- A. If you are already operating a STVR and your property is zoned R-3/R-4, then you just need to register your property. You still need to obtain a business license, obtain a certificate number issued by the LDO office and comply with the ordinance requirements to display the certificate number on any materials or platforms used to advertise your rental.. You can find out the zoning of your property using the online GIS map [here](#) (click on "Live Zoning" in the "Layers" tab), or you can contact the LDO office at 423.643.5800 to see if your property is zoned R-3/R-4. You may also email stvr@chattanooga.gov.
- B. If you are operating a STVR, and your property is not zoned R-3/R-4, and your property is outside of the designated STVR district, then you are not eligible to apply for a certificate.
- C. If you are operating (or would like to apply to start) a STVR and your property is located inside the designated STVR district, then you are eligible to apply (see appropriate questions below).

2) TIMELINE FOR REGISTRATION/COMPLIANCE - STVR applications will be accepted after October 1, 2017. All operators must submit a STVR application and will be subject to enforcement for noncompliance.

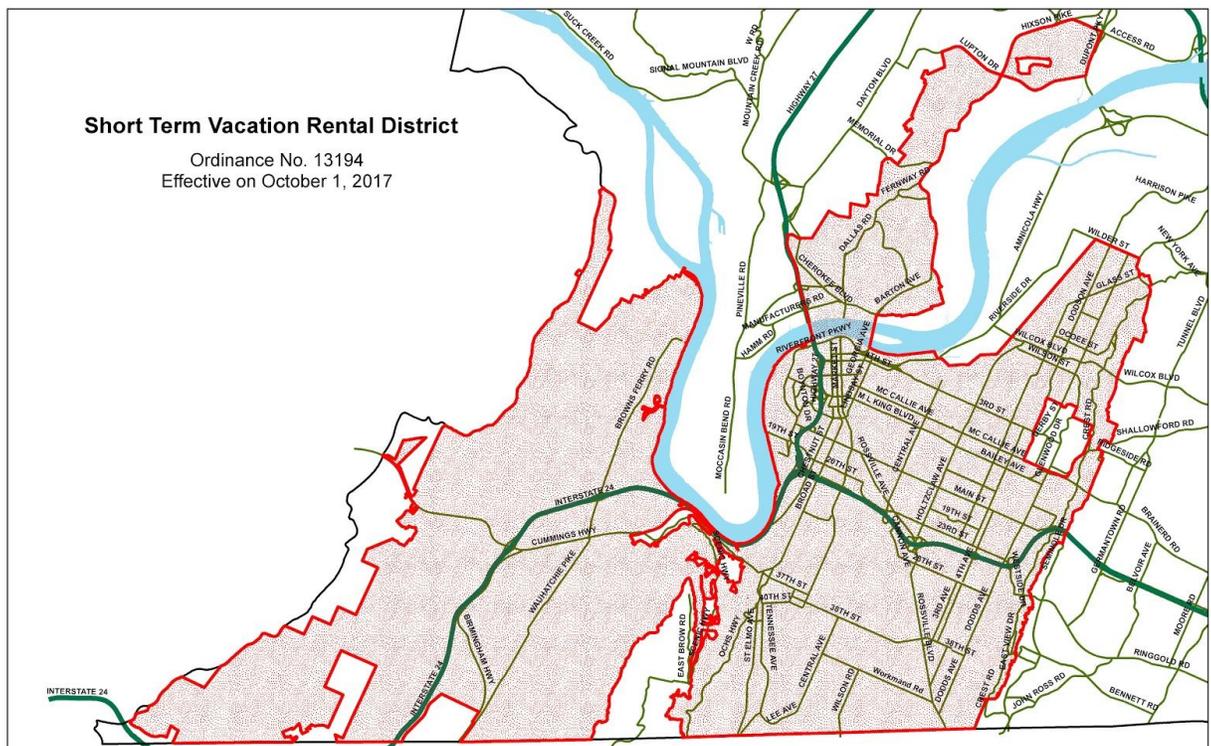
3) WHERE TO GET INFORMATION...

A. You can find information about the ordinance and the application requirements [here](#).

4) THE STVR DISTRICT....

A. *What are the boundaries of the STVR District?*

As indicated in red outlined area in the map below, the STVR District includes all of Lookout Valley, and the neighborhoods between Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge (excluding Glenwood), and the Northshore community (Hill City/North Chattanooga/Dallas Heights/Stuart Heights/Lupton City) up to Access Road and Hixson Pike.



B. *How do I find out if my address is in the STVR District?*

To find out if your property is in the STVR District, you should go to the City GIS map [here](#). Additionally you may call the Land Development Office at 423.643.5800.

5) WHAT ARE THE STEPS IN THE REVIEW PROCESS TO GET A STVR CERTIFICATE?

You must first completely fill out an application and submit it to the LDO office for review. If you are an owner-occupied STVR, staff will review your application and if qualified, issue your certificate. If you are a non-owner occupied STVR, after you have submitted your application, staff will notify residents in your area and ask you to post a sign on your property. After 30 days, if there is no opposition to your request, staff will issue your permit. If there is opposition, then your request will be heard by the City Council. City Council will determine whether or not to issue your request after conducting a public hearing.

6) GETTING YOUR BUSINESS LICENSE...

A. *What information do you need to submit a business license?*

Complete a new business application and make a payment of \$15.00 for the business license fee

B. *What business type am I applying for with being a standard homeowner?*

Short Term Rental

C. *What are the fees for a business license used for?*

Administration purposes to issue the license

D. *Can I pay my license and renewal fees online?*

First time applicants must pay in person or by mail to the City Treasurer's office. Renewals and all fees associated with will be handled by the Tennessee Department of Revenue Taxpayers Services Division. There is an online payment option available for renewals only.

City of Chattanooga business license applications can be submitted at the City Treasurer's office. It is located at City Hall 101 E 11th St STE 100, Chattanooga TN 37402. If you have questions please visit our website at chattanooga.gov, email busl@chattanooga.gov, or call the City Treasurer's office 423.643.7262.

Please ensure that you complete your Hamilton County business license application as well. This can be done with the Hamilton County Trustee's office.

7) HOW/WHERE I APPLY FOR STVR CERTIFICATE....

A. How do I get an application for becoming a STVR property?

You can download a copy of the application at the Chattanooga STVR website or pick up a hard copy at the Land Development Office.

B. Where do I turn in the application?

Applicants can drop off their application at the Land Development Office (Development Resource Center, 1250 Market Street, First Floor) between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

C. Can I apply online with a "live" document?

The City is working to secure a vendor that would be able to accommodate online applications. When the vendor is selected and the infrastructure in place, a formal announcement will be made and posted on the STVR information web-site.

D. How do I stay informed about the status of my application?

You will be contacted by email regarding the status of your request. You can also contact the LDO office at 423.643.5800 to get updated.

E. How long will the application review process take?

For owner-occupied STVR's the application review process will normally take approximately 5 business days.

For non owner occupied STVR's the application review process will take at least 2 months. This longer time period is due to the 30 day public notification period required, followed by scheduling the request on the City Council agenda if there is opposition.

8) PREPARING TO SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION FORM...

A. What information do I need to have to complete my application?

- Your name, address, telephone number and email address
- Proof of Ownership
- If you are an agent acting on behalf of the owner, a written letter notarized by the property owner giving the agent permission to apply on the owner's behalf
- City Business License
- Site plan drawn to scale, indicating the subject property, the building(s) on the site intended for Short-Term Vacation Rental, proposed parking, locations of exits and smoke/CO detectors and areas of guest access
- A description of the area available for Short-Term Vacation Rental, (i.e. the entire property and house, a guest cottage, a portion of the house, etc.)
- A description of the number of bedrooms proposed for rental
- The maximum number of guests to be accommodated at one time
- The days of operation (all year, just holidays, weekends/weeknights, etc.)
- How trash will be handled, and the method for informing occupants about method of disposal of trash

9) OWNER VS. NON-OWNER OCCUPIED STVR'S

A. *What is the difference between an owner and non-owner occupied STVR?*

Owner-occupied: A short-term vacation rental property in which the applicant is present on the property at the same time as the rental occupants for the duration of the rental period.

Non-owner occupied: A short-term vacation rental property in which the applicant is not present on the property at the same time as the rental occupants.

B. *What does this mean for the STVR application review process?*

If you are an owner-occupied operator of an STVR, then your project is reviewed by staff without any formal public notification process. If you are a non-owner occupied STVR, then your application will involve a public notification process to include a notice sign, mailed letters of notice and an inspection.

D. *How does this rule apply to me if I am already operating an STVR in an R-3/R-4 zone?*

If you are already legally operating an STVR (your property is already zoned R-3/R-4), then the owner-occupied/non-owner occupied rule does not apply to you. You just need to obtain a certificate number from the LDO office and comply with the advertising requirements.

10) EXISTING OPERATING STVRS THAT ARE ALREADY ZONED R-3/R-4

If you are an existing STVR and your property is zoned R-3/R-4, you still need to obtain a business license, obtain a certificate number issued by the LDO office and comply with the ordinance requirements to display the certificate number on any materials or platforms used to advertise your rental.

11) PROPERTIES OUTSIDE OF THE STVR DISTRICT

If your property is outside of the STVR District, you are only eligible to register your STVR if you were zoned R-3/R-4 prior to October 1, 2017.

12) PUBLIC NOTIFICATION FOR NON-OWNER OCCUPIED STVRS

A. What is a notification letter for? Why are notices sent to my neighbors within 300 ft of my STVR?

The notification letter for non owner-occupied STVR's ensures that residents in close proximity to your request have an opportunity to be informed of your request and to voice any opposition.

B. What are the sign posting requirements?

For non-owner occupied STVRs, in addition to the public notification letter issued by City staff, the STVR owner/operator will be required to post a sign furnished by the LDO that shall be prominently displayed (visible from the street) on the subject property for at least 15 days following the time of application. Failure to display the sign can result in deferral of the review of your request.

C. What does "no objections" by neighbors mean?

Any resident or neighborhood association representative has the opportunity to voice opposition or objection to your request. An objection means that the resident has expressed concerns about your property operating as a STVR in their neighborhood.

D. What does Appeal to the Council mean? How does it work?

An appeal means there is public opposition to your request. If the City receives objections to your request, you will be notified and your request will be reviewed by the City Council. The public hearing held by the City Council will include a brief staff report, followed by comments from you as the applicant and the public opposition. After hearing from you, the opposition and the staff report, the Council will make a final decision which could be to defer, approve, approve with additional conditions/restrictions, or to deny.

E. If the Council turns down my request, what else can I do?

If your request is denied by Council, your application will be withdrawn. If you choose to pursue additional appeals, your next course of action is to appeal to an appropriate court of jurisdiction. Additionally, you may reapply and begin the process again.