

TOWN OF NORWICH

INTERIM BYLAWS FOR SHORT TERM RENTAL REGULATIONS ADOPTED July 22, 2026, EFFECTIVE July 23, 2026 until July 22, 2028

- I. PURPOSE.** The purpose of these bylaws is to provide for regulation of short-term rentals in the Town. Regulating the operation of such facilities are necessary to protect residential neighborhoods, civic, commercial and educational institutions from any adverse secondary impacts associated with Short-Term Rentals and to ensure that such uses operate in a safe manner.
- II. ENACTMENT AND AUTHORITY.** The Town of Norwich has adopted these Interim Bylaws in accordance with and as authorized by the Vermont Municipal and Regional Planning and Development Act, 24 V.S.A. Chapter 117, §4415, Interim Bylaws.
- III. DURATION.** These Interim Bylaws will be in effect for a period of two (2) years from the date of their adoption unless they are extended, as authorized by 24 V.S.A. § 4415, or replaced by amendments to the Town of Norwich Land Use Regulations.
- IV. DEFINITIONS.** Words, terms, and phrases specifically defined in the Town of Norwich Land Use Regulations shall have the same meaning in these Interim Bylaws unless another meaning is clearly indicated.
 - a. **Short-Term Rental** A furnished house, condominium, 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.
 - b. **Owner Occupied**
Owner Occupied shall mean occupancy of the premises by the property owner, as a sole primary residence (domicile) where the owner resides, as declared annually by April 1 for tax purposes.
- V. Regulations**
Short-term rental on an owner-occupied lot is an allowed use in all zoning districts. Property owners shall obtain a permit whenever a dwelling unit is to be used as a short-term rental. Additionally:
 - a. The Zoning Administrator may inspect the short-term rental for compliance with Town and state regulations. The short-term rental shall not operate unless it is in full compliance with Town and state regulations.
 - b. A short-term rental permit shall be valid for one calendar year, shall expire on December 31 of the year it is in effect, and must be renewed upon expiration as long as the unit is to be continued to be used as a short-term rental.
 - c. The short-term rental permit is transferable to a new owner, so long as the new owner registers with the Town, updates the short-term rental permit application and agrees in writing to comply with the requirements of the short-term rental permit and these regulations within 30 days of sale
- VI. Permit application requirements.**

An application for (or renewal of) a short-term rental permit shall be submitted to the Town Zoning Administrator. The application/renewal must be completed on the form provided by the Town. It must be accompanied by payment of a permit fee, as determined by the Town Select Board. If relevant circumstances on the property change or for any reason the certification is or becomes inaccurate, a new certification shall be submitted. The application shall provide the following information:

- a. List of all the property owners of the short-term rental including names, residential addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. Each property owner must also provide the address of their principal residence if it is different from that of the short-term rental. (In the event the property is owned by an entity such a trust or LLC, the ultimate owners and/or beneficiaries of such entity shall provide the information required by this paragraph.)
- b. Completion of a signed affidavit by the property owners certifying the following:
 - The number of sleeping rooms within the short-term rental, as defined in this Section.
 - The number of parking spaces on the property that meet the standard set forth below.
 - The septic capacity of the STR property.
 - Compliance with the following standards:
 - A. The Short-Term Rental Safety, Health and Financial Obligations of the Vermont Departments of Health and Fire Safety [See the Vermont Division of Fire Safety at: [Safety Consideration short term rentals.pdf \(vermont.gov\)](https://www.vermont.gov/division-of-fire-safety/safety-consideration-short-term-rentals.pdf)
 - B. All exterior doors shall be operational and all passageways to exterior doors shall be clear and unobstructed.
 - C. Electrical systems shall be serviceable with no visual defects or unsafe conditions.
 - A property map showing the location of buildings, required parking and, if not served by a public sewer, the location of the septic system and leach field. An accurate, suitable plan need not be prepared by a professional.
 - The owner must designate a local (i.e., within 60 minutes by automobile) host and provide the name, address, telephone number and email address of the local host, who shall be responsible, and authorized, to act on the owner's behalf to promptly remedy any violation of these standards or the permit. The host may be the owner, or a local host or agent designated by the owner to serve as a contact person.
 - A declaration of insurance coverage specific to the renting of short-term vacation rentals is required
 - Payment of a fee of \$250.00 which has been set by the Town Selectboard.
- c. Any Town of Norwich resident that applies for and is granted a short-term rental permit shall provide, on an annual basis, the Town of Norwich Fire Department with written confirmation of the fire safety of the rental unit(s) in question.

VII. Standards.

All short-term rentals must meet the following standards:

- a. The maximum occupancy for each short-term rental unit shall be the number of people calculated based on two persons per sleeping room (unless the room size is below 100 square feet) plus an additional two persons. In all cases, maximum occupancy must be within the septic capacity of the short-term rental unit. For this purpose, a "sleeping room" is defined as fully enclosed habitable space of at least 70 square feet for one person and 100 square feet for two persons, with an emergency escape or rescue opening.
- b. The property must have sufficient off-street parking spaces to accommodate the maximum occupancy.
- c. Tenants and guests shall park in the off-street parking spaces.
- d. A house number visible from the street or road shall be maintained.
- e. Provisions shall be made for weekly garbage removal during rental periods. Garbage containers shall be animal proof and always secured with tight-fitting covers to prevent leakage, spilling or odors.

- f. Advertisements for the short-term rental must conform to what is allowed under these regulations and the short-term rental permit.
- g. In the event of a federal, state or local disaster declaration, all owners and guests must comply with federal, state and/or local disaster orders.

VIII. Procedure upon filing application

- a. Upon the filing with the Town Zoning Administrator of the permit application, permit fee, and all documents and information required by this ordinance, the Town Zoning Administrator shall have 30 days to review the application and then either issue the permit, with or without conditions, or notify the applicant in writing that the application has been denied along with the reason or reasons for denial.
- b. The Town Zoning Administrator may decline an application for any of the following reasons:
 - (1) If the application is incomplete, the documentation required by this ordinance was not included with the application or the application or the full permit fee, in payment form acceptable to the Town Treasurer, was not included with the application.
 - (2) If the Town of Norwich issued a short-term rental permit to any of the owners needing to sign the short-term rental permit application and any of such owners had a short-term rental permit revoked within the previous year.
- c. Short-term rental permits issued pursuant to this section shall state the following:
 - The names, addresses and phone numbers of every person or entity who has an ownership interest in the short-term rental property and the host who shall be available during the entire time the short-term rental property is being occupied.
 - The maximum occupancy and vehicle limits for the short-term rental unit.
 - Identification of the number of and location of parking spaces available.
 - A statement that no outdoor fires are allowed, except as permitted by local and state law. Outdoor barbecues and supervised fires in fire pits are permitted.
 - No tents will be allowed as overnight quarters.
 - Any animals which are pets of guests shall not leave the subject parcel except when under control by leash.
 - A statement that the applicant is responsible for compliance with NULR Section 3.10 Performance Standards.
 - A statement that the short-term rental permit may be revoked for violations.

IX. Inspection

The Zoning Administrator may inspect any property before issuing a permit, or at any time thereafter. The Town reserves the right to validate via inspection or otherwise any information contained in the permit application

X. Recordkeeping Requirements

- a. Owners and operators of short-term rentals are required to keep written (including electronic) records of advertising information and rental activity (i.e., number of bookings, name of booking guest, number of people, length of stay, amount collected, amount of tax collected or remitted) for a minimum of three years.
- b. In the event of a dispute with the owner(s) of a short-term rental as to the need for a permit or as to compliance with this ordinance, the Zoning Administrator shall have the right to inspect the written records upon reasonable notice

XI. Expiration

This ordinance will expire in two years after its initial adoption to allow for a period of data gathering and analysis. Upon expiration of this ordinance, the Selectboard will revisit the issue of STRs and adopt a new ordinance to replace this one.