



TOWN OF SUNAPEE
23 Edgemont Rd | Sunapee, NH 03782
Telephone: (603) 763-2212 - Ext. 1023

SHORT-TERM RENTALS: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General Questions

→ What is a Short-Term Rental (STR)?

A Short-Term Rental (STR) is defined in the Town of Sunapee Zoning Ordinance, Section 4.95. STRs shall include any single-family residence, two-family residence, or single-family residence with an additional room for rent. It shall **not** include bed & breakfasts, inns, hotel/motels, or properties being rented for periods longer than 30 days. This Selectboard regulation shall consider the short-term rental of a property to be a non-residential, commercial use. A Short-Term Rental Registration Permit is required prior to advertising and renting (or continuing to rent) your property.

→ Are there regulations on where I can have a Short-Term Rental?

Yes. Per the Sunapee Zoning Ordinance, Article IV, Section 4.95, Short-Term Rentals in the **Rural Residential (RR) District** must obtain a Special Exception from the Zoning Board if they did not register prior to January 1st, 2024. Short-Term Rentals in the **Rural Lands (RL) District** must obtain a Variance from the Zoning Board if they did not register prior to January 1st, 2024. Short-Term Rentals with owners in residence throughout the duration of the rental will not need additional permits prior to registering.

For more information about the Special Exception or Variance process and application assistance, please contact our Land Use & Assessing Coordinator, [Allyson Traeger](mailto:Allyson.Traeger@town.sunapee.nh), at Allyson@town.sunapee.nh.

★ **Unsure of your property's zoning district? Search your property card here:** https://www.axisgis.com/tri_townnh/

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

Renting or advertising your residence for rent on a short-term basis without a permit is in violation of the Town of Sunapee's Zoning Ordinance and subject to penalties and fines that could be consequential for you, renters, and your rental property.

→ Does it matter how long I have been renting?

As of January 1st, 2024, there is no designation for preexisting STR's. Every short-term rental must register, and those in the RR/RL zones must follow the appropriate channels to obtain a Special Exception or Variance. Special Exception and Variance applications may be completed directly on OpenGov.

→ What is the annual STR Permit Fee and when is it due?

The \$350 annual permit fee is due at the time of registration and every 12 months from the date of registration. You will receive automated renewal reminders beginning 60 days prior to the expiration date. Fees can be paid directly through OpenGov or delivered to the Town Office.

→ **Does one permit cover multiple properties?**

No. Each short-term rental application and permit is associated with a single property. You may submit multiple permits for multiple properties, if needed.

→ **How many occupants are allowed in each rental dwelling?**

The maximum number of occupants is **two people per the number of bedrooms shown on the property card**, plus **one additional person per dwelling unit**. At no time shall a STR have more than 16 occupants.

→ **Are there any septic system requirements?**

The number of bedrooms used at the property must conform to the permit requirements from either the State of New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Water Division Subsurface Systems Bureau (property on a septic system) or the Sunapee Water and Sewer Department (property on municipal sewer).

→ **How will I know when my permit is approved?**

You will receive an email notification once your application is approved and your permit certificate is available to print.

→ **Does a loft count as a bedroom?**

It depends. The maximum number of bedrooms that can be rented is the number of bedrooms listed on your property card. If the loft is assessed as a bedroom, then yes. If it is only considered a room in the home, then no. Questions about how the rooms in your property are assessed may be directed to our Assessing Office. For homes on septic, the number of bedrooms to rent must not exceed the number approved for septic design.

→ **Can I rent out an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)?**

If an ADU is used as a short-term rental, the owner must be in residence during the time of the rental.

→ **Are there parking requirements?**

Yes. Parking shall be 1 space/bedroom and a parking plan shall be submitted for review and approval. The number of cars on the property during overnight quiet hours in the Sunapee Noise Ordinance shall not exceed the number of bedrooms in the STR.

→ **Are there regulations for long-term rentals or rental duration?**

No. At this time there are no regulations on properties being rented for periods longer than 30 days.

→ **Are there regulations on how many days I can rent?**

A short-term rental with owner-**not**-in-residence may not be rented for more than 120 days in a 12-month period.

→ **Does the permit have to be displayed?**

The permit certificate must be placed in an accessible location within the STR unit. Your STR Permit PDF can be found through **OpenGov → My account → Permits & Documents**.

→ **Are there any on-site inspection or insurance requirements?**

We do not currently have any on-site inspection requirements to operate as a short-term rental.

→ **What are the penalties for violations of STR policies and Town Ordinances?**

Failure to comply with all terms of the registration process, an issued permit, Town Ordinances, and applicable state and/or federal laws may lead to the following sanctions as provided in RSA 41:11-c and RSA 676:17. Violations will accumulate over a 12-month period from the date of the first offense. All violations will be reported to the Town and recorded in the owner(s) STR registration profile.

- **First Offense:** Fine of \$275.00 per day.
- **Second Offense:** Fine of \$550.00 per day. Each day a violation continues shall be a separate offense.
- **Third Offense and/or subsequent offense:** Fine of \$550.00/ day. Each day a violation continues shall be a separate offense. The Selectboard is authorized to revoke the permit for the rest of the year or six months, whichever is longer

OpenGov Registration

→ **How do I apply for a Short-Term Rental Permit?**

All Short-Term Rentals (STRs) in the Town of Sunapee are managed through the OpenGov system. To register your property and manage your account, visit: <https://sunapeenh.portal.opengov.com/>. If you received a registration letter from the Town in the fall of 2023, the information allowed you to log in to our former platform, GovOS. **To register on OpenGov, you will need to create an account, but it does not require additional login codes or information from the town.**

→ **How long does the application take to complete?**

Once you create an account on OpenGov, the application should take around 20 minutes to complete.

→ **How is the application reviewed?**

Each permit application is reviewed for completion and consistency with the property card and Zoning regulations (e.g. bedrooms, sufficient parking, occupancy). Our staff will reach out if adjustments need to be made to the application or more information about the property is needed. Once deemed administratively complete, the application will be approved by the Town Manager and Sunapee Selectboard, and then the permit certificate will be issued.

→ **What payment methods are accepted by the Town and OpenGov?**

OpenGov accepts all major credit cards: Visa, Mastercard, American Express, and Discover. To pay by check, please mail to, or stop by Sunapee Town Hall - 23 Edgemont Rd. There is a 2.65% convenience fee on all credit card-based transactions.

→ **Can I manage multiple properties with one login?**

Yes. OpenGov associates each permit with a specific property. You may submit multiple permits for multiple properties, if needed.

→ **Can a property have more than one user?**

Yes. The applicant whose email was used to submit the application will be considered the primary user, but they may invite ‘guests’ by entering additional emails. Any guest will have permission to add attachments, pay fees, and message our team with questions about the application process or permit.

→ **I forgot my password. What do I do?**

From the Login page, click the “Forgot your password” link and follow the instructions that will be e-mailed to the User’s registered e-mail address.

→ **Do I have to login to OpenGov to see my alerts and reminders?**

No. All alerts are e-mailed to your authenticated e-mail address. When you login to the system, you will also see any open alerts that need to be addressed on your Dashboard.

→ **Where can I find answers about OpenGov?**

On the OpenGov homepage, there is a section titled **New User & Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**. If you cannot find an answer here, there is a **Contact Form** where you can ask specific questions.

Thank you for your consideration and cooperation as we move forward in our new STR registration and management process. We anticipate that questions and feedback will arise among property owners in the coming months and will continue to update FAQ materials accordingly. If you have questions about STR registration or operation, please email allyson@town.sunapee.nh.us.

Town Ordinances & Regulations

→ **What information do guests need?**

Owner(s) must provide renters with information including the STR address, emergency contacts for owner(s) and/or their designees, local hospitals, recommended best practices, beach regulations, and transfer station information. Owners may download the Town of Sunapee Renters’ Handbook with this information [HERE](#).

→ **Can guests use the Transfer Station and Dewey / Georges Mills Beach?**

Every property owner in Sunapee is granted (1) annual guest pass to the beach and Transfer Station, which can be given to STR guests for the duration of their stay. You may pick up a pass at Town Hall or place a request for one on the Town’s website under the Transfer Station’s department page.

→ **Can guests use a fire pit?**

Yes. STR owner(s) must receive approval for outdoor wood-burning fire pits from the Fire Chief. Each individual renter must then seek a permit from the State through the NH Forests & Lands Fire Permit System. Fires are not allowed before 5PM and must comply with any fire danger warnings/restrictions.