

**Town of Bayfield**  
**Proposed Short-Term Rental Ordinance**  
**Questions and Answers**  
**April 2019**

***Who will need to obtain a Short-Term Rental (STR) License under the proposed Town of Bayfield Ordinance?***

The Town of Bayfield Ordinance only applies to Tourist Rooming Houses as defined in the Wisconsin Department of Trade, Agriculture, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) regulations. Under such regulations, a Tourist Rooming House is defined as all lodging places, other than hotels, motels and Bed and Breakfast establishments (B&Bs) in which sleeping accommodations are offered for pay for a period less than (29) consecutive days to a person(s) who travels to a location away from his or her permanent address for a short period of time for vacation, pleasure, recreation, culture, business or employment. Common examples of short-term lodging places include homes, cabins, cottages, condos, yurts and rental rooms located above a business. Such operations are referred to in the Town of Bayfield Ordinance in the more commonly-used vernacular as Short-Term Rentals (STRs). See WI State Statutes Chapter 97 for further detail on these defined terms.

***Why regulate STRs?***

The number of STRs has grown at an increasingly rapid rate nationwide in recent years. Currently there are over 125 STR websites operating in the U.S. alone. That does not include all the rentals that are supervised by the individual building owners and management groups. We are directly experiencing that rapid growth locally as evidenced by the number of new applications that have been received by the Town of Bayfield Plan Commission.

There are many good reasons why local government leaders are focused on finding methods to manage this growth of STR properties in their communities. Residents and local government entities are seeking means to balance important community interests by ensuring neighborhood viability and livability, maintaining the availability of residential housing, and ensuring proper tax collection while accommodating a popular and desired use of private property, and in some cases even public property with the recent addition of rentable yurts on Bayfield County land, in the community. Based on input from many of our community members, we are working together on a way to balance and protect these significant interests.

***How and when do you apply for an STR license?***

The first licenses under the Bayfield Ordinance will be issued on May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Anyone currently operating, or who applies for a DATCP license to begin operating prior to that date, still needs to fully comply with existing regulations but will not need the additional Town of Bayfield STR license to operate until May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. Applications for the Town of Bayfield STR license are due no later than March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020. The Town of Bayfield will accept applications submitted for review beginning January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

***What is required to obtain an STR license?***

A completed application form, the initial application fee of \$110 (checks made out to Town of Bayfield), proof of liability insurance covering the STR in the amount of at least \$1,000,000, a copy of your DATCP license, and a copy of your Conditional Use Permit issued by the Bayfield County Zoning Office. No STR License shall be issued if the applicant or property that is the

subject of the application has outstanding fees, taxes, forfeitures, or other amounts owed to the Town, unless arrangements for payment have been approved by the Town Board.

***What is the fee for obtaining an STR license? Does a license need to be renewed? Do STR licensees need to pay taxes?***

The initial license fee is \$110 due with the application. The license is required to be renewed annually for a fee of \$100 due with the application. As is currently the case for all rentals, STR licensees will need to pay Town of Bayfield room tax and all other applicable county and state taxes.

***Am I required to have a management company?***

No. You are not required. However, you may want to consider hiring a management company to help with the numerous tasks involved in the rental process and to ensure a positive experience for your renters and neighbors.

***Will there be any additional inspections required by the Town of Bayfield to obtain an STR license?***

No. All required inspections will continue to be handled by Bayfield County and DATCP.

***Are there restrictions related to the number of rentals or days our STR property can be rented in any certain time period?***

This STR Ordinance places no restrictions on the number of days a renter can rent a lodging unit that is available for rent for less than 30 days.

***What are the renter responsibilities for use of the STR property?***

The goal of the STR Ordinance is to strike a reasonable balance between the persons wishing to rent their property in such a manner and those who have concerns about the impact of such rentals on the community, the enjoyment of their own property, property values, etc. The property owners, managers, and their renters will have to abide by all the same requirements that residents do.

***Will there be an opportunity for me to find out more and share my opinion on this draft ordinance?***

Yes. A public hearing is scheduled for Monday, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at 5:30 PM at the Bayfield Town Hall. Anyone interested in invited to attend.

***I still have questions about the STR Ordinance, what should I do?***

You can call our Plan Commission Chairman Jack Beagan at 715-209-3261 with additional questions. You can also contact our Town Clerk Kelly Faye at [bayfieldtownclerk@centurytel.net](mailto:bayfieldtownclerk@centurytel.net). Office hours are held on Tuesday from 8AM-4PM at the Bayfield Town Hall: 715-779-5671.