



ADMINISTRATION AND REGULATORY AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT

Regulatory Permitting Policy

Subject: **Short-Term Rental Registration**

Policy No.

ARA - RP - 003

Effective Date:

November 1, 2025

1. AUTHORITY

- 1.1 Chapter 28, Article XXIII, City of Houston – Code of Ordinances.

2. PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of the policy is to establish guidelines for the implementation of the City of Houston's Short-Term Rentals Ordinance and the required documentation for short-term rental registration(s).

3. POLICY STATEMENT

On April 16, 2025, the City of Houston enacted regulations requiring that all properties operating as short-term rentals located within the Houston city limits must obtain a certificate of registration from the City of Houston for the health and public safety of all Houstonians and visitors. Herein, the City of Houston is establishing guidelines and procedures for the processing of the applications for the certificate of registration and outlining the documentation that the City of Houston will accept to approve an application.

4. DEFINITIONS

Short-term rental (STR): a dwelling unit or any portion of a dwelling unit that is rented out or offered to be rented out for a period of less than 30 consecutive days.

Registrant: any person, partnership, corporation, firm, joint venture, limited liability company, association, organization or any other entity holding a certificate of registration issued pursuant to this article.

Property Owner: Any person or entity who has a legal or equitable interest in the property used as a short-term rental or who is recorded in the official records of the county as holding title to the property used as a short-term rental.

Operator – the individual who operates or otherwise manages a short-term rental, which may be the owner or the authorized agent of the owner.

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DocuSigned by:

Approved:

Tina Paiz

Date Approved:

November 1, 2025

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5. REQUIRED DOCUMENTS/INFORMATION TO BE PROVIDED TO THE CITY BY EVERY APPLICANT FOR A SHORT-TERM RENTAL CERTIFICATE OF REGISTRATION

- 5.1 Registrant full name, email address, telephone number, mobile number, address, city, state, zip code and upload images of driver's license front and back.
- 5.2 Property address - Full street address, city, state and zip code.
- 5.3 Property owner full name, mailing address, street address, email address, telephone number of each property owner and operator. Property owner must match HCAD records or the Lessor as specified in the lease agreement. The lease agreement must be submitted by the applicant for the STR registration and must include specific provisions that authorize the use of the property as an STR.
- 5.4 If the property owner is a business entity: the applicant/registrant must (a) affirm that the registrant will maintain copies of documents filed with the Texas Secretary of State establishing the entity AND (b) affirm that the entity is in good standing as an entity with the State of Texas. These records must be made available to the ARA Director or the Director's designee when requested to verify registrant's compliance with Sec. 28-731(b)(4).
 - 5.4.1 If the property owner is a business entity, the Registrant may obtain copies of the Certificate of Filing and Certificate of Formation for the business entity from the Texas Secretary of State SOS Direct webpage: <https://direct.sos.state.tx.us/acct/acct-login.asp>.
 - 5.4.2 If the property owner is a business entity, Registrant must affirm that the business entity is in good standing with the Texas Comptroller's Office. Upon request from the ARA Director or the Director's Designee, Registrants must provide proof of good standing of the business entity, which can be obtained from the Texas Comptrollers webpage: <https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/franchise/account-status/search>.
- 5.5 Full name and telephone number for the 24/7 emergency contact individual or call center authorized to respond to an emergency condition at the STR property within one hour after being notified by emergency response personnel and/or City of Houston representatives or designees.
- 5.6 Names and website addresses of all platforms (hosting/listing sites) on which the STR property is listed or advertised for rental. Applicants must include the full link to the property listing for each platform.
- 5.7 Proof of payment or proof of registration with Houston First to pay City of Houston hotel occupancy taxes (HOT).
 - 5.7.1 Applicants listing the proposed STR property exclusively on Airbnb should check the box affirming this exclusivity as no additional proof of HOT payment will be required from the applicant.
 - 5.7.2 Applicants listing the proposed STR on any platform *in addition to or other than* Airbnb must:

- Provide proof of remittance of hotel occupancy taxes for the operation of the short-term rental property. Service Order Confirmation showing tax remittance from one non-Airbnb platform to Houston First Corporation for the most recent quarter may be provided.
- If not previously registered with Houston First, provide proof of registration. Webpage here: <https://www.houstonfirst.com/hot/registration-form/>.

5.7.3 Applicants who have never rented the property as an STR and have no history of HOT payment or registration should register with Houston First if the STR will be listed on any platform other than Airbnb and provide proof of the registration. If you plan to list exclusively on Airbnb, there will be a checkbox on the application to acknowledge this.

5.8 Property Owner Authorization & Acknowledgement: The City of Houston requires the property owner's consent and written authorization in order to operate an STR. The Applicant for the STR registration must obtain the signature of the property owner granting permission to use the property as a short-term rental and acknowledging that use of the property as a short-term rental does not violate any rental/condominium agreements, bylaws, covenants, deed restrictions, homeowner association rules, or terms. The following documents may be submitted in fulfillment of this requirement:

- Property Owner Authorization and Acknowledgement Form signed by the property owner: <https://www.houstontx.gov/ara/str/Property-Owner-Authorization-and-Acknowledgement-Form.pdf>. OR
- A copy of the signed lease agreement or lease addendum containing a specific provision that allows the property to be leased as a short-term rental. The signed lease agreement or accompanying rider containing the specific provision allowing use as a short-term rental will serve as proof that the property owner is further certifying that the use as an STR is not in violation of any deed restrictions or covenants. Acceptable signature types include handwritten, Docusign, Adobe Acrobat Sign, and Authentisign.
- A signed letter from the lessor authorizing the tenant to sublease as a short-term rental. The lessor may be the property manager for a multi-family building. The signed letter or containing the specific provision allowing use as a short-term rental will serve as proof that the property owner or property manager on behalf of the property owner, is further certifying that the use as an STR is not in violation of any deed restrictions or covenants. Acceptable signature types include handwritten, Docusign, Adobe Acrobat Sign, and Authentisign.

5.9 Human Trafficking Prevent Training:

- All applicants for a short-term rental certificate of registration are required to complete a human trafficking prevention training course and retain the certificate of completion in their records to provide to the City of Houston upon request. Training can be accessed at: <https://www.houstonpermittingcenter.org/human-trafficking-prevention>.

6. REVOCATION AND APPEAL PROCESS

6.1 Reasons for denial or revocation of a Certificate of Registration:

- The certificate of registration is issued in error, the information provided to the City on the application for the STR registration is incomplete, or if the application contained false information.
- Evidence of HOT payment is not established.
- Evidence of registration to pay HOT is not established.
- Two or more nuisance violations occur on the property.
- Two or more noise violation citations are issued to any tenant of the property.
- The property owner or operator or any tenant of the property is found to have a conviction of a major offence as described in Sec. 28-733 (a)(8).

6.2 In the event of a registration denial or revocation, the City will ask short-term rental platforms to remove the rental listing.

6.3 Short-term rental platforms are required to remove the listing within ten (10) business days of receipt of the request from the City of Houston.

6.4 Appeal of denial or revocation of a Certificate of Registration:

- An applicant can appeal a denial or revocation of a Certificate of Registration by filing a written request for a *hearing* with the ARA Director within 20 calendar days after the applicant or registrant is given notice of the denial or revocation.
- A hearing shall be conducted by an impartial Hearing Officer appointed by the Director within 30 calendar days after receipt of a request.
- A decision by the Hearing Officer shall be rendered within 30 days of the hearing and is considered final.

7. GENERAL RULES & REQUIREMENTS

7.1 The owner, operator, and occupants of a Short-Term Rental property shall comply with the following rules and regulations.

- A certificate of registration issued to a registrant is nontransferable and shall not be assigned nor transferred to another person, entity, or location.
- Noise and sound levels must remain below allowable decibels outlined in Chapter 30 of the City of Houston Code of Ordinances.
- The owner, operator, and occupants of a short-term rental property must comply with all City nuisance codes, fire codes, and trash requirements.
- A minimum stay of one-night is required for all short-term rentals.
- Payment of HOT must be established.

- Promotions of special events at the STR are strictly prohibited.
- Public listings for STRs must include:
 - Registration number
 - Occupancy limits
- The designated Emergency Contact must be available at least by phone 24/7.
- The Registration Certificate must be displayed at all times.

8. COMPLIANCE AUDITS

8.1. The Regulatory Permitting Division (or its successor) shall be responsible for conducting annual audits of STR Registrants to ensure compliance with STR requirements, including but not limited to:

- Remittance of Hotel Occupancy Tax
- Filing of organizational documents with the Texas Secretary of State and proof of good standing (if applicable)
- Completion of the Human Trafficking Prevention Training Course
- Review of any nuisance complaints or public health or safety violations

8.3 Non-Compliance

- Failure to provide the requested documentation or submission of information inconsistent with the initial registration, may result in revocation of the STR registration.
- The City reserves the right to direct hosting platforms to remove any STR listings found to be non-compliant.