

Frequently Asked Questions

Village of Pepin - Short-Term Rental License

1) My Airbnb has been renting for two years, but I didn't know I needed a Wisconsin Tourist Room Boarding license. Does my rental count as an existing short-term rental in this ordinance?

No. To be classified as an existing short-term rental, the property must be advertised prior to May 18, 2022, and also have been issued a Wisconsin Tourist Room Boarding License from the DATCP.

2) I have applied for a state license, and they said their inspections are backed up for months and I can go ahead and rent my space before the inspection. Can I still get a village license?

Please include a copy of the state license application and the authorization letter with your village application. It will be taken into account.

3) If I don't use Airbnb or Vrbo to advertise and manage my rentals, do I still need a Short-Term Rental License from the Village?

Yes, any rental less than 30 days requires a Village and State of Wisconsin license and must pay the village Room Tax.

4) How long does it take to get a Short Term Rental License from the village? Can I continue to rent my property in the meantime?

Once your completed application is received, obtaining a village license may take up to 30 days. If you meet the requirements for an existing rental you may continue, otherwise you must not advertise or rent your property until a village license is received or you may be subject to fines.

5) How do I go about getting the Village required Fire hazard Inspection?

Contact the Village Clerk to get your name on a list, when dates for the Fire Inspector to be available are determined, you will be contacted to arrange a specific time.

6) I was planning to start renting my property on June 1. Do I need to get a village license before I can rent it now? Any delay really impacts my plans.

Yes, a village license is now required prior to advertising or renting your property. You are encouraged to apply for a license as soon as possible. The Village will not apply penalties to anyone having substantially initiated the Village license application process as described herein within 60 days of the effective date.

7) Why am I hearing about this requirement now? Why didn't the village tell me this was coming?

The village began working on the Short-Term Rental license ordinance over a year ago and has conducted several public hearings. This ordinance was just recently approved on May 10, 2022. Anyone who contacted the village asking about operating a short-term rental was told this ordinance was being prepared.

8) Since a public hearing and conditional use permit is required before getting a license, I'm concerned that there might be operating conditions applied to my Short Term Rental that might make my rental not feasible. Is there a way to get this done before I invest in setting up my vacation rental?

The ordinance allows for a preliminary review of your application. The fee is \$200. Such a preliminary review shall be valid for only one year. Completion of a preliminary review does not automatically eliminate the need for a conditional use public hearing that may will be required during the regular application process.

9) How much is the Room Tax? Where does the money go?

The Room Tax is 8% of the total rental fee. Seventy percent of the amount collected is distributed to the Tourism Commission for Tourism Promotion and Tourism Development activities. The rest is retained by the Village in its General Fund.

10) Airbnb collects and pays the Room Tax for my property. Do I still need to submit quarterly paperwork?

Yes. Airbnb and Vrbo do not itemize the Room Tax collections. The quarterly paperwork you provide helps the village ensure the Room Tax is applied properly to rentals in the village.

11) Vrbo does not collect Room Tax as part of the rental. How do I collect and pay the Room Tax?

You are responsible for ensuring the Room Tax is paid for each rental. You may have Airbnb or Vrbo collect and pay the tax on your behalf, or you may collect and pay it directly to the village.

12) I didn't know I was supposed to collect Room Tax. Do I owe tax on past rentals?

Airbnb or Vrbo may have collected and paid the tax for you. Please contact the village treasurer to discuss your situation.