

Short-term Rentals in RECOA

Policy Proposals

Process Background

- [Frequently Asked Questions](#) provide useful background information for the policy proposals. The FAQs were publicized and distributed to homeowners to acquaint them with the issues and policy approach.
- Well-publicized [town halls](#) were conducted in mid-January to brief homeowners on the strategy and draft policy proposals and seek their questions and comments. Approximately 70 attended.
- Draft policy proposals were the subject of a well-publicized, 3-week online comment process the latter half of January and early February.
- A total of 78 comments were received through the online comment process, the town halls, emails, and meetings. The comments were carefully considered and an [“Evaluation of Comments”](#) was prepared and disseminated.
- As a result of comments received, several revisions have been made to the policy proposals (pages 2-4) to improve clarity, provide flexibility, and address implementation issues.

Policy background

- Context and overarching goals for this initiative were affirmed by the Board at its December meeting. An explanation of how the proposals deliver on the goals is at page 5.
- The strategy seeks common-sense, enforceable, low-cost solutions. It includes four components:
 1. A new RECOA policy that establishes the responsibilities of short-term rental owners;
 2. A new RECOA policy that establishes a registration process for short-term rental units;
 3. An education effort to inform owners and their renters/guests on RECOA policies to improve awareness and compliance over time; and
 4. Reform of RECOA’s complaint, enforcement and fine policies. (These policies apply equally to all owners and guests, and are therefore outside the scope of a subcommittee on short-term rentals. With subcommittee input, this project is led by the Rules Review Committee and will be submitted in spring/early summer.)
- While the proposals would add two new policies, they do not change existing policies. They do not, for example, change existing policies on fire prevention, noise control, parking, pets, and trash disposal.
- The estimated implementation cost to RECOA is \$500. These costs would be to engage RECOA’s website developer, and they would make use of the existing 2024 budget for this service. Minimal use of ECM resources will be required to implement the proposals during the first year, at least.
- A timeline for implementing the proposals is at page 6.
- The proposals do not include a cap on maximum overnight occupancy. This is an issue that merits further study.

Short-term Rentals in RECOA Policy Proposals

Policy proposal: Short-term Rental Owner Responsibilities

Definition: Short-term rentals are rentals of residential units for periods of 30 consecutive days or less.

Overall responsibilities. Owners of short-term rentals must operate their rental units in a manner that promotes safety and livability for everyone in the RECOA community.

Owners of short-term rentals are responsible for ensuring their rental units and renters comply with RECOA rules, including those that apply to noise, noxious or offensive activity, garbage and recycling, parking, fire danger/smoking, water features, and wildlife protection. These owners are also responsible for ensuring their rental activities and renters comply with the law, including Deschutes County [noise control](#) and [transient room tax](#) ordinances.

Communication of RECOA rules to renters. RECOA calls on owners to ensure their renters are apprised of the community's rules. At minimum, when registering their short-term rentals, owners must attest that (1) their renters will be provided a copy of the RECOA-approved summary of RECOA rules prior to their stay and (2) the rules will also be posted conspicuously on or near the inside entryway of their rental units.

Responding to complaints and concerns. Owners of short-term rentals must be available to respond promptly to phone calls, texts or emails from neighbors and others notifying them of a potential safety issue or rules violation.

An owner may designate a trusted person, a property manager or other professional service as their representative, provided that the designee is able and willing to respond effectively to concerns and complaints by contacting rental guests and addressing the guest behavior that is at issue. Owners are encouraged to designate a representative who would be available within an hour of Eagle Crest if the owner would not be available to address complaints locally within an hour.

Owners or their representatives must be able to monitor their contacts 24/7 while the unit is being rented.

In the event of an emergency, RECOA will advise homeowners to contact 911 first, then contact the short-term rental owner. Homeowners who believe Deschutes County's noise control ordinance or other ordinances are being violated will be advised to contact both the Sheriff's Office and the short-term rental owner.

There is no requirement that homeowners contact a short-term rental owner if a problem arises. Homeowners always have recourse to [submitting a complaint](#) through RECOA's complaint process or requesting assistance from RECOA's management company.

Short-term Rentals in RECOA Policy Proposals

Timeline for owners or their designated representatives to address complaints:

Nature of complaint	Response time
Fire danger and life safety complaints	If there is an emergency, ensure 911 has been contacted. Contact renters immediately and directly, and seek to resolve the behavior as soon as possible, and in no cases more than 1 hour after the complaint is made. The 1-hour response time is applicable 24/7.
Noise and noxious or offensive conduct complaints	Contact renters immediately and directly, and seek to resolve the behavior within 1 hour of complaint being made. Alternatively, 911 or the Deschutes County Sheriff's Office should be contacted immediately. The 1-hour response time is applicable 24/7.
Significant property or environmental damage (if in progress) complaints	
Parking that impedes fire hydrant access, emergency access, or access to another property	
All other complaints and concerns	Seek to resolve the behavior within the first 4 business hours after the complaint is made. Business hours are defined as daily from 8am to 6pm (7 days a week).

Policy proposal: Registration of Short-term Rentals

Owners of short-term rentals must register their short-term rentals through an online tool managed by RECOA. Registrations shall contain, at minimum:

- The rental unit's address and the owner(s) name(s), email address(es), and phone number(s).
- The owner(s) designation of one or more representatives, if any.
- The priority in which the owner prefers that contacts be made (if one or more representatives is designated).
- The following attestations:
 - That the owner(s) and their designated representatives have read and understand RECOA's policies and Deschutes County ordinances pertaining to short-term rentals;
 - That the owner-designated representative(s) understands the RECOA responsibilities that are assigned, and that the representative(s) can and will fulfill the responsibilities of the owner(s) with regards to receiving and addressing complaints and concerns; and
 - That (1) renters will be provided a copy of RECOA-approved summary of RECOA rules

Short-term Rentals in RECOA Policy Proposals

prior to their stay and (2) the rules will be posted conspicuously on or near the inside entryway of their rental unit(s).

Owners must ensure the registration information for their rental unit is kept current and complete at all times.

Contact information in registration records (rental unit address, name, email address, phone number) shall be available to RECOA homeowners and RECOA's management company via a secure web page to facilitate communications and help ensure that safety issues and potential rules violations are raised and addressed promptly. The contact information may also be given to law enforcement agencies.

These policies will be added to RECOA's Policies and Procedures.

Short-term Rentals in RECOA Policy Proposals

How are the goals implemented?

Overarching Goals	Implementation
<p>Minimize noise, trash, secondhand smoke, parking, and other issues.</p> <p>Minimize the risks of fire, personal injury, property damage, and environmental damage.</p> <p>Educate owners and visitors about RECOA rules and fines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of RECOA rules is provided to renters before they arrive, and posted in rental units as well. • STR web page provides owners with easy access to summary of rules. As part of registration process, STR owners are asked to attest that they have read the rules and understand them, and that their representatives understand them as well. • STR web page includes helpful tips on managing their rentals to improve awareness of rules and reduce the risk of violations by renters. • Access to STR owner contact info enables neighbors to surface issues as they arise, facilitating prompt resolution. • Policy proposals include time standards to help ensure issues/violations are addressed promptly. • Education efforts will be on-going to improve awareness of RECOA rules and compliance over time. • Data will be collected in a manner that highlights recurring violations/violators for possible follow-up action. (Part of upcoming enforcement policy reform proposal - preliminary.) • Fine schedule will be reformed to distinguish serious offenses from lesser offenses, with higher fines tied to serious offenses and repeated offenses. (Part of upcoming enforcement policy reform proposal - preliminary.)
<p>Promote compliance with applicable laws, including Deschutes County <u>noise control</u> and <u>transient room tax</u> ordinances.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy proposals and on-going education materials cite County ordinances and their requirements. • Registration process will enable comparison between RECOA registrants and County's transient room tax rolls - when discrepancies arise, follow-up can occur.
<p>Ensure complaints are addressed swiftly, consistently and effectively.</p> <p>Ensure the consequences of violating RECOA rules are fairly applied, and substantial enough to discourage such behaviors.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To be addressed through the upcoming reform of complaint/enforcement/fines process. This reform will be equally applicable to all owners. • The reform proposal will include fines for STR owners who fail to comply with STR policies, including registration policy (preliminary).
<p>Treat all homeowners and their guests and renters respectfully and equitably.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process for developing the policies has been inclusive of all owners, with comments treated objectively and respectfully. There is nothing in the policies that is discriminatory. Every effort has been made to avoid costs and burdens on owners while still accomplishing the goals.

Short-term Rentals in RECOA Policy Proposals

Implementation Timeline

Objective: a registration process that is fully functioning by next summer's rental season

Registration form drafted	March
Registration form vetted with sample STR owners	2 weeks after Board adoption
Communication materials to STR owners drafted, vetted with a subset of STR owners. Materials will (1) inform owners of the new policy requirements, (2) provide link and guidance to registration process, and (3) provide access to summary of RECOA rules	3 weeks after adoption
Communication materials sent to all known STR owners; RECOA-wide email blasts sent	5 weeks after adoption
Define, communicate web page requirements to website developer	5 weeks after adoption
Initial registration window (45-day window). On-going assistance to owners in completing their registrations	5-14 weeks after adoption
Verification of registrants by reference to Deschutes County transient room tax records. Follow-ups as necessary	7-16 weeks after adoption
Web page fully tested, ready to implement. The web page will provide RECOA homeowners with access to (1) STR contact info (2) a summary of RECOA rules and (2) tips and contact information for emergency services, ECM, filing a complaint, etc.	18 weeks after adoption
Web page "goes live", providing RECOA homeowners with access to contact info. (To access contact info, a homeowner will be required to specify the STR address.) Email blasts and other communications sent to RECOA homeowners.	20 weeks after adoption