



Short-term Rentals

An overview of Metchosin's business licence requirements

The District of Metchosin recently changed its Business Licence Bylaw to require licences for properties that are being rented for terms of less than 30 days (short-term rentals), as well as those used for boarding. Requiring Business Licences is the first step while Council considers whether further changes or policies are needed to control short-term rental use in the District. The following overview provides information on the changes, and answers some of the key questions. Further information is available on the District's website or by contacting the District directly.

What are short-term rentals?

Short-term rentals are dwellings and suites that are rented for less than 30 days, and include those listed on online platforms such as AirBnB and VRBO.

What is boarding?

Boarding is rental of a room or rooms within a dwelling to up to 4 boarders – persons other than family members – in exchange for money. Boarding is often an option to accommodate students, and is combined with meals or other services, but rooms or shared accommodations can also be posted on online platforms such as AirBnB.

Where are short-term rentals permitted?

Short-term rentals are currently permitted in dwellings throughout the District of Metchosin.

Can multiple families stay at one short-term rental unit?

No. The District's bylaw only allows dwellings and suites to be occupied by one family. Rentals are not permitted to multiple families, and homes cannot be used for events or gatherings like weddings.

Why are there new regulations?

The District is evaluating whether to limit or prohibit short-term rentals. Business Licences will help the District understand where short-term rentals are being operated, and their impacts.

What are the new regulations?

New regulations require owners who are renting their homes for short-terms to obtain a Business Licence from the District. As part of the Business Licence process, owners must provide a contact or

property manager that will be available 24/7 to respond to any concerns on the property while it is rented. A \$500 security deposit is also required to cover the costs of any complaint investigations.

Do I need a Business Licence to operate a short-term rental?

Yes. Business Licences are mandatory for all short-term rentals.

How do I apply for a Business Licence?

Business Licences for short-term rentals can be applied for at any time, but all Business Licences expire on **October 31 of each year**. Applications are available at Metchosin Municipal Hall or online at www.metchosin.ca/content/business-licences. Business Licence applications require information and a fee.

How much does a Business Licence cost?

Annual Business Licences for short-term rentals are \$35. The fee is the same for a bed and breakfast. A \$500 security deposit is also required.

What are the requirements for a Short-term Rental Business Licence?

As part of the Licence process, an owner must:

- Submit an application form, including all mandatory documentation, the owner's signature, the \$35 fee and \$500 deposit.
- Provide the District with the name of a local contact or property manager that can be contacted 24/7 in the event of any concerns from tenants, neighbours or the District.
- Ensure the property manager's contact information and Good Neighbour brochure are distributed to all adjacent properties and to tenants. *(This can be done by delivering the information in person to neighbours and obtaining signatures acknowledging receipt, or through registered mail to adjacent properties).*
- Once the application is complete and reviewed by staff, the property will be inspected to ensure compliance with District bylaws.
- Sufficient on-site parking must be provided to accommodate renters.

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- If the property is in compliance, a Business Licence will be issued.
 - Once approved, a Business Licence number must be included in all advertising, listings or other promotional material (print, online or otherwise) referencing the short-term rental of the property.

‘I’m a renter, do these changes affect me?

Long-term renters are able to operate short-term rentals in their residence, provided they have permission from their landlord. Renters are subject to all the same Business Licence provisions, but must also ensure the use complies with their lease.

When will these changes come into effect?

The regulations take effect immediately; however, the District wants to give notice to all property owners in advance of the upcoming Business Licence season. Business Licences are issued annually, and commence **on November 1 of each year and expire on October 31**. Owners can apply for a Business Licence at any time during the year, but the rate remains constant (i.e. the fee is the same regardless of when owners apply). In other words, short-term licences will be \$35 and expire on October 31 regardless of when they are issued. All short-term rental property listings after November 1, 2018 must have the relevant Business Licence number quoted in the listing to be in compliance.

Why are short-term rentals allowed in Metchosis when they are not permitted in other municipalities?

If Metchosis wants to prohibit short-term rental uses it will need to amend the District’s Land Use Bylaw which establishes the permitted uses of in the District. In many municipalities, the Zoning or Land Use Bylaw already limits dwellings to residential uses and does not permit short-term rentals. Metchosis’s Land Use Bylaw allows dwellings to be used by one family, and does not prohibit short-term rentals. Some municipalities are regulating short-term rentals to maintain the availability of long-term rental housing, whereas other municipalities allow the use to encourage tourism, and as “mortgage helpers” to ease the burden of high-cost housing.

Why did the District make these changes?

The District is concerned about the impact of short-term rental uses on neighbouring residents. Some vacationers have less regard or consideration for

neighbours and the surrounding community. The District has a bylaw to deal with persons who are being noisy or creating a disturbance in the community, regardless of whether they are renters or residents.

How do I encourage my short-term renters to be good neighbours?

The District requires distribution of its ***Good Neighbour Brochure*** to all short-term rental properties and adjacent properties to foster appreciation of the impacts that behavior, noise and disturbances can have on the community, and to raise awareness of the District’s relevant bylaws and avenues to register concerns. The brochure is provided to licenced rentals and is available online.

The brochure reminds renters of the District’s noise bylaw, which states that no person shall:

- make or cause or permit to be made or caused, within the Municipality, any noise or sound which disturbs or tends to disturb the quiet peace, rest, enjoyment, comfort or convenience of the neighbourhood or of persons in the vicinity;
- allow property of which he is the owner, tenant or occupier of, to be used so that a noise or sound which originates from that property disturbs or tends to disturb the quiet peace, rest enjoyment, comfort, or convenience of the neighbourhood or of persons in the vicinity; or
- cause or permit any amplified music or amplified speech which disturbs or tends to disturb the quiet peace, rest enjoyment, comfort, or convenience of the neighbourhood or of persons in the vicinity.

Ensuring your renters know the bylaws, and respect the surrounding community, is critical to the success of a short-term rental business. Renting to good tenants, and communicating our local regulations, will help foster positive neighbour relations, and minimize complaints. The District also encourages short-term rental business owners to communicate and work together with their neighbours to understand and resolve any concerns.

Where can I get more information?

Check out the District’s website at www.metchosin.ca or contact the District at (250) 474-3167.