

# Short-Term Rental Unit Licensing

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. Why is the Borough regulating Short-term Rentals?**

A. The Borough intends to regulate Short-term Rentals to ensure that; 1) Short-term Rentals are compatible with and do not adversely impact surrounding residential uses, 2) property owners have the option to utilize their properties for short-term rental use, 3) risks to public safety and health to occupants and owners are minimized, 4) property values are maintained, and 5) visitation and tourism to Lewisburg and Union County is supported.

The goal is to create a simple policy that both protects residential neighborhoods and allows homeowners to take advantage of a new possible source of income.

**Q: Is the Borough trying to restrict or discourage short-term rentals?**

A: No. Lewisburg values the income-generating potential to owners of Short-term Rentals, and the increased visitor capacity that Short-term Rentals bring to our local businesses.

**Q. What is a “Short-Term Rental”?**

A “Short-Term Rental” or “STR” is a residence where a furnished room, multiple rooms or an entire property is *let for occupancy* or rented for a period ranging from 1 - 29 days. Often a vacation rental found on websites like AirBnB or VRBO, it’s a residential home or apartment rented only for a few days or weeks at a time.

**Q. What is a “Homestay”?**

A “Homestay” or “Short-Term Rental Type 1 (STR1)” is an *Owner-occupied* Short-term Rental. The Owner must maintain the home as their primary residence and they are permitted to offer rooms or the whole house for a short-term rental.

**Q. What is a “Short-Term Rental Type 2” (STR2)?**

A *Non-Owner-Occupied* one or two-Family dwelling that is used as Short-Term Rental. If the rented unit is in a multi-family dwelling, like an apartment building or condominium, it is classified as a “Short-Term Rental Type 3” (STR3).

**Q. Can I rent my home as a Homestay (STR1) even if I will be away from the house during some or all of the rental period?**

A. Yes, you are not required to be present during the occupancy. However, if you will be more than 30 miles from the rental during occupancy, you must have a managing agency, agent, property manager or local contact and a telephone number at which that party can be reached on a 24-hour basis. Providing this information is required on the application and the information given will be printed on your License to be posted at the rental unit.

**Q. How do I get a Short-Term Rental permit?**

- A. The Central Keystone COG will be enforcing the Zoning Code and the Short-term Rental Ordinance. Your first step is to complete a Zoning Permit Application **and** a Short-term Rental Unit Application (you can do these at the same time). The Zoning officer will need information about location, parking, and your lot. As long as there are no changes to the unit, you will only need to do this once at your initial application. After your Zoning Permit has been approved you will schedule a date and time for inspection of the unit by the Code Officer. This inspection is based on the Borough's Property Maintenance Codes and will verify the presence of safety items like smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, hot water pressure relief valves and clear fire egress routes.

After the Code Officer has approved the unit and you have paid the License fee, you will be issued a Short-term Rental Unit License. This License will contain important information for your guests, including maximum occupancy, emergency contacts, and Borough Ordinances that apply to your tenants.

**Q. How long is my Short-term Rental Unit License good for?**

- A. Homestay (STR1) and Bed & Breakfast (BBH & BBI) Licenses are good for twenty-four (24) months. All other Licenses are valid for twelve (12) months. The CKCOG will contact you by mail when it is time to renew your License. All Licenses are renewed by satisfactorily passing a Code inspection and paying the renewal fee.

**Q. How can I decrease the impact of my Short-Term Rental Unit on my neighbors?**

- A. Be a good neighbor and expect your occupants to be so as well! Although the Borough has not received many complaints about Short-term Rental Units to date, we anticipate occasional issues at Short-Term Rental Units for on-street parking; activity associated with arriving and departing; and late-night outdoor socializing. House rules and clear expectations for your occupants can be established to address these issues. For example, be sure that your guests know where to park, where to discard trash, and when to quiet down for the evening. Persistent complaints may result in the revocation of your Permit as well as Quality of Life tickets issued to your guests.