



## **3 Lessons Learned**

# How To Effectively Suspend Short-Term Rentals

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As COVID-19 restrictions are lifted and the weather warms up, municipalities can expect to see a surge in those seeking a summer vacation. Short-term vacation rentals (STRs) often offer a cheaper alternative to hotels. Unlike hotels, though, STRs can be more difficult to regulate, hiding behind online listings, which offer no addresses or personal contact information. Municipalities ran into this issue as they suspended nonessential businesses at the onset of pandemic. Unable to effectively communicate with hosts, cities and counties struggled to ensure regulations and health guidelines were being followed. With the CDC anticipating a second wave of COVID-19 in the Fall, we've compiled three lessons learned to help you communicate and prepare for another possible suspension.

## 01

### KNOW YOUR HOSTS

## 02

### IDENTIFY AND ENFORCE VIOLATIONS

## 03

### STREAMLINE OPERATIONS



# 01

## KNOW YOUR HOSTS

### Why It Matters

If you don't know who is operating short-term rentals (STRs) in your jurisdiction, how do you know if they've received updates on regulations and appropriate operating guidelines? It's not enough to assume that hosts are seeking out information on your website or are connected with you on social media. Direct communication is key. A registration process that collects hosts' personal information is one step towards knowing how to communicate changes to them by letters, phone, or email.

### What to Consider

Unfortunately, there may be hosts who don't register their properties, so you may not have their personal information handy. STR compliance software identifies the addresses of unregistered properties from their online listings using publicly available data, so you can still communicate important information with unregistered properties (and encourage them to apply for a permit) via mail.

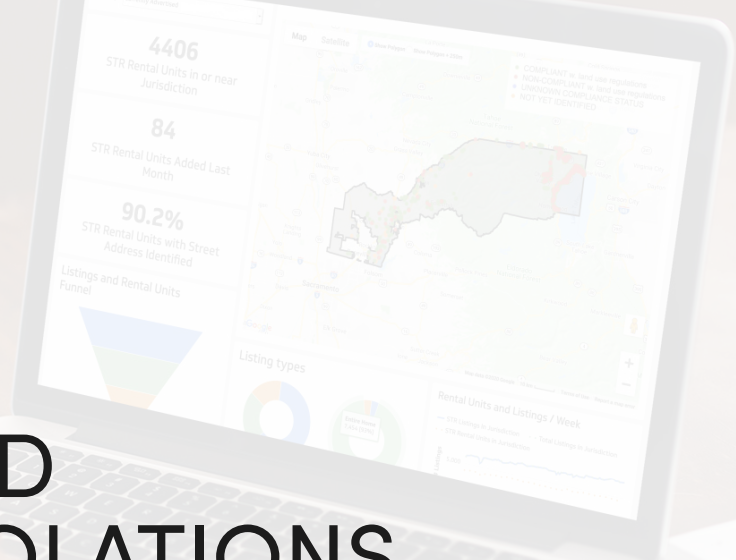
### Ask Yourself

#### **If I needed to suspend STRs again tomorrow:**

- Do I have emails and phone numbers of registered hosts?
- Do I have addresses of unregistered hosts?
- Do I have a system in place to quickly notify hosts of changes?

# 02

## IDENTIFY AND ENFORCE VIOLATIONS



### Why It Matters

You've successfully communicated changes to guidelines and regulations. How do you know hosts are following those rules? Identifying violations is the first step to identifying problem areas where residents and/or visitors may not be safe. Providing a dedicated channel, such as a 24/7 hotline, allows concerned residents to notify you of violations without inundating emergency lines or other important lines of communication.

### What to Consider

While you may learn about violations via a neighbor's complaint, not everyone will reach for the phone if there is a violation. Even with a complaint, there may not be enough evidence to enforce the violation. STR compliance software can determine if there was a stay at an STR and help you collect evidence to support your case.

### Ask Yourself

#### If STRs are suspended:

- Can I determine if listings meet ongoing regulations?
- Do I have a system that helps me collect fail-safe, admissible evidence?
- Can I determine if maximum occupancy limits are being followed?



# 03

## STREAMLINE OPERATIONS

### Why It Matters

While we want to get back to normal as soon as possible, we don't know how long social-distancing guidelines may remain in place, and it's possible they may come and go. During times of remote operations, traditional enforcement methods are difficult. It's important to offer residents and staff contactless options in the form of digital government services.

### What to Consider

A cloud-based STR compliance software keeps operations running smoothly when staff must work from home. Hosts can simply apply for permits and pay taxes online, ensuring that you're still collecting valuable resources that your municipality needs to keep running. By automating menial tasks, your staff can spend more time addressing greater concerns.

### Ask Yourself

#### **If I needed to switch to remote operations:**

- Could staff continue operations related to STR enforcement without issue?
- Would hosts still be able to apply for a permit or pay taxes?
- Would my department be able to collect evidence while practicing social distancing?



## Are you equipped to withstand changing guidelines?

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Your STR enforcement program has the potential to be a flexible program that withstands telecommuting and helps your municipality recover much-needed revenue. Ask yourself if your current tools enable you to continue operations through changing guidelines. If not, what can you do now to prepare for when the time comes that you may need to quickly contact hosts and switch back to a remote workforce.

### 🔍 Have Questions?

Our Host Compliance software can help you prepare for what lies ahead, from business-as-usual operations to communicating with hosts during a crisis.

**Get Free Consultation:**

<https://granicus.com/free-consultation-short-term-rental-compliance/>



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