



SARASOTA COUNTY

"Dedicated to Quality Service"

May 18, 2020

Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation
c/o Secretary Halsey Beshears
2601 Blair Stone Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32399-1027

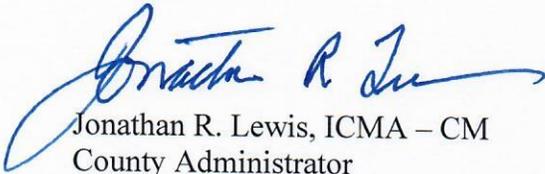
Re: ***Lifting Ban on Vacation Rentals for Sarasota County***

Dear Secretary Beshears:

Our local economy has suffered greatly, and one of those areas of impact is our legal short-term (vacation) rentals. Vacation rentals offer lodging options and promote social distancing. We are including "Sarasota County Vacation Rentals" for your consideration and approval.

I am available to discuss this matter further and will provide any additional information you may need to approve our request. Thank you again for your time, leadership and support shown to the citizens of Sarasota County.

Sincerely,



Jonathan R. Lewis, ICMA – CM
County Administrator

c: Sarasota County Commission

Sarasota County Plan to Reopen Vacation Rentals

To allow vacation rental reservations and the acceptance of arriving guests in Sarasota County beginning on May 22, 2020, the following plan will be implemented.

- Reservation and stays will be allowed from U.S. states with a COVID-19 case rate of less than 700 cases/100K residents as of May 18.
<https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html>
- Reservations from areas identified by Florida's Governor as COVID-19 hot spots through Executive Orders are to be avoided for the next 45 days.
- Reservations from international travelers will not be accepted.
- The reservation and check in/check out process, communications with guests and the acceptance of payments should be done electronically to minimize direct guest contact.
- All Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation requirements and recommended safety measures related to vacation rentals should be followed, these may be updated from time to time.
- Property owners and Managers must provide [CDC resources](#) to any guest while staying on property.
- Property owners and Managers must provide [CDC Guidance](#) to guests traveling with pets and service/assistance animals if the property is pet friendly.
- Property owners and Managers must provide guests with Sarasota County local COVID-19 information from the dedicated webpage on www.scgov.net.
- Property owners and Managers will provide employees or contractors working in short-term rentals the [CDC related safety guidance](#) to alleviate the transmission of the virus and provide further protection for employees and guests.
- All Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) sanitation guidelines must be followed: [61C-001 Sanitation and Safety Requirements of the transient lodging statutes](#).
- Maintain adequate time between the conclusion of a guest stay and the check-in of the next guest stay for appropriate cleaning and sanitation.
- To inform guests signage will be placed at each property highlighting the cleaning protocols between stays.

Recommendations for Property Owners and Managers

Sarasota County has developed a plan to allow vacation rentals in accordance with an Executive Order of the Governor. The recommendations below support implementation of the plan and will help to ensure the health and safety of employees and guests.

Reservations

- Reservations and stays will be allowed from U.S. states with a COVID-19 case rate less than 700 cases/100,000 residents as of May 15. (<https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html>)
- Reservations from COVID-19 hot spots identified by the Governor are to be avoided for the next 45 days.
- Reservations from international travelers will not be accepted.

Health and Safety of Guests

- Remote check-ins should be made available when possible to minimize face-to-face interactions.
- **CDC resources** must be provided to any guest while staying on property. These resources are available in multiple languages at the CDC website.
- **CDC guidance** must be provided to guests traveling with pets and service/assistance animals if the property is pet-friendly.
- All properties must provide local COVID-19 guidance for guests. Sarasota County has a dedicated webpage that includes local information at scgov.net/covid-19.
- Employees or contractors working in vacation rentals should be provided **CDC-related safety guidance** to alleviate the transmission of the virus and provide further protection for employees and guests.

Cleanliness of the Property

- Follow all Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) sanitation guidelines: **61C-3.001 Sanitation and Safety Requirements of the transient lodging statutes**.
- Follow **CDC-related guidelines that are for public spaces, businesses, schools and homes** that expand upon the State of Florida and DBPR requirements for safety and sanitation for all lodging. Existing cleaning programs may be augmented to include **even more rigorous sanitation and disinfection protocols**.
- Allow extra time for enhanced cleaning procedures to take place between stays based upon the use of CDC cleaning and sanitization procedures.
- To inform guests, place signage at each property highlighting the cleaning protocols between stays.
- Upon exit, ask guests to turn on all ceiling fans and/or HVAC fans to facilitate air circulation.
- If multiple members of the cleaning and/or rental staff are present at a property, they should remain at least 6 feet apart at all times, and wear masks and gloves.
- Frequently clean and sanitize elevators.
- Monitor pool decks and other common areas for cleanliness, and disinfect regularly.

Vacation Rental Reopening



Hand Washing and Hand Sanitizer

CDC guidelines explain the need for all employees to engage in frequent hand washing for the duration of at least 20 seconds and use of hand sanitizer. Washing hands with soap and water is the preferable method. In situations where soap/water is not available, alcohol-based sanitizer is recommended. This should occur after any of the following activities: using the restroom, sneezing, touching the face, cleaning, smoking, eating, drinking, accepting items from a guest (ID, cash, credit card, key card), taking a break, and before a shift and as needed throughout the shift.

When possible, employees should wear gloves for added protection and sanitation efforts. Proper hand hygiene, in accordance with CDC guidelines, should be followed prior to and after removing the gloves.

Hand sanitizer dispensers should include **no less than 60% alcohol content**, where available, and touchless where possible. Place dispensers at key guest and employee entrances and contact areas. At a minimum, this should include lobby reception areas and employee entrances, but could also include any other reception areas, entire lobby areas, restaurant entrances, meeting spaces, elevator landings, pools, exercise areas and other public areas as applicable to the property.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Follow **CDC recommendations** along with federal and local government regulations for instructions about when and how to wear PPE.



Pools and Beaches

Allow at least 6 feet of separation between groups of guests.



Guest Health Concerns

Report any presumed cases of COVID-19 at the property to local health officials. Employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should remain or return home. While at work, employees who notice a coworker or guest exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 should immediately contact a manager.

At a minimum, vacation rentals should follow **CDC guidelines** for employers and businesses, including instructing employees to self-isolate for the required amount of time, as defined by the CDC, from the onset of symptoms, and be symptom-free for at least three days without medication.



Case Notification

Report confirmed cases of COVID-19 to **local health authorities** in accordance with appropriate actions recommended by the **CDC**.



Physical Distancing and Queuing

As recommended by the **CDC's social distancing guidelines**, advise guests to practice physical distancing by standing at least 6 feet away from other groups of people not traveling with them, including any area where guests or employees queue.

Clearly mark these areas for appropriate physical distancing, and where possible, encourage one-way guest flow with marked entrances and exits. When applicable, configure lobby furniture and other public seating areas to promote social distancing.