

FAQ's

Vacation Home Rentals and Hosted Home Rentals

What is a Vacation Home Rental (VHR)?

The El Dorado County Ordinance Code defines a VHR as one dwelling unit, including either the primary single-family home, one unit of a duplex, or a single condominium unit. The site can be rented for a period of not less than one night (meaning at least 24 hours) and not more than 30 days. Month-to-month or seasonal rentals to the same party are not vacation home rentals and do not need a permit. Vacation rentals are not allowed in: sheds, yurts, campers, tents, RVs, accessory dwelling units or as camping on your property.

What is a Hosted Home Rental (HHR)?

A Hosted Home Rental (HHR) is when the owner or long-term tenant stays in the home while renting out up to two bedrooms or an attached guest house. The rental must be listed as a single booking for one party at a time, with a maximum of four guests (two per bedroom). Only one hosted rental is allowed per owner, and all sleeping areas must be indoors. A hosted rental requires an HHR permit, a business license, and payment of taxes. If the owner or tenant leaves the home while it's rented for less than 30 days, a Vacation Home Rental (VHR) permit is required instead.

What happens if I build another house on the same lot?

Vacation and Hosted Home Rental permits are valid only for the residential address on the application. If an additional residence is built, the VHR permit will not be transferred to it automatically. If an owner wants to transfer the VHR/HHR permit to another address on the same parcel, the new address must be the primary home (larger square footage), and a new VHR or HHR permit application will be required. All new permit applications are required to comply with the ordinance in effect at the time. Vacation and Hosted Home Rentals are only allowed in the primary (larger) home, not in accessory / second-dwelling units or detached guest houses.

What is the anti-clustering, 500-foot buffer and how will it affect my property?

The 500-foot County-wide VHR buffer is in addition to the 900-permit cap in the Tahoe Basin. Properties within the 500 ft buffer zones of active VHRs are not eligible to apply for a VHR permit. Properties outside of the Tahoe Basin and within a 500 ft buffer zone of an active HHR or VHR are not eligible to apply for a HHR permit. We maintain a map, updated nightly, that you can use to see how this may affect a property.

What is the process to get on the waitlist if my site is in a buffer?

*****NOTE*** We do not know how long you will be on the waitlist as it depends on the active VHRs/HHRs around you and the waitlists in line ahead of you. Waitlist found renting short-term may be subject to fines, removal from the waitlist, additional enforcement or legal action by the county.**

There are two methods to get on the waitlist: email or US Mail.

Method One - Email:

Waitlist applications can be emailed to VHRPermits@edcgov.us.

1. Put the address of the Waitlist parcel and "Waitlist App" in the subject line of your email (ex: 123 Happy St VHR Waitlist App),
2. Attach the [Waitlist Application](#) and a copy of the [recorded Grant Deed](#),
3. You will be notified via email to pay the \$141.00 non-refundable fee once the documents have been received.
4. You will receive an account number and pin to use for online payment. Payments can be made with either a check or online with a credit card or e-check,
5. Add the following email addresses to your contact list to prevent these emails from going to your spam folder: edcvhr@hdlgov.com, vhrpermits@edcgov.us

Method Two – US Mail:

1. Mail the Waitlist Application and a copy of the recorded Grant Deed to the Placerville address with a check payable to El Dorado County in the amount of \$141.00, or request to pay online as noted above,
2. Payments can be made with either a check or online with a credit card or e-check once you have been sent an email to pay.
3. Add the following email addresses to your contact list to prevent these emails from going to your spam folder: edcvhr@hdlgov.com, vhrpermits@edcgov.us

You will be notified via email when you are able to apply for the VHR permit. That email will include further instructions.

What is the process to apply for a new permit if my site is outside a buffer?

We highly recommend making an appointment with the VHR Team to discuss before applying so that your submittal is not denied.

Book Appointment: <https://outlook.office365.com/book/ElDoradoCountyVHRAppointments%40edcgov.us/>

Step 1: Submit a new VHR or HHR permit application online.

<https://eldoradocounty.hdlgov.com/Apply/Apply1/VHRPermit>. Include all attachments listed in the checklist. Attachments will need to be combined into no more than 5 items. All documents should be wet-signed and scanned or DocuSign.

Forms can be found here: <https://www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/Services/My-Property/Vacation-Home->
Revised 4/6/2026

[Rentals-Division/VHR-Applications-Forms-and-Policies](#)

Step 2: You will be sent the account number and pin for online payment. Payment for the non-refundable \$564 VHR application fee (\$282 application fee for HHRs) plus \$31 technology fee, convenience fee and fire inspection fee (amount based on square footage) can be made with either an e-check or a credit card.

Step 3: If the application is missing items or information, you will be notified by email and given 30 days to respond. Failure to provide all items and information will result in the denial of the application.

Step 4: When notified, schedule and complete the inspection with the local fire department as soon as possible. The inspection must be passed within 60 days, and the extensions may be granted if needed. Failure to complete the inspection within 60 days of the application date may result in denial of the application. The inspection checklist is available on the VHR website.

Step 5: We will issue the permit when the inspection has passed. Notify us once you have passed the inspection. Permits are valid for one year. Inspections are valid for two years.

Step 6: Provide a copy of the VHR or HHR permit to the Treasurer-Tax Collector with the application for the Business License and set up the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) account.

I want to have special events at my VHR like weddings. This is allowed, right?

No, events are not allowed at vacation or hosted home rentals. If you want to have an event venue, contact Planning Services at 530-621-5355 or E-Mail: planning@edcgov.us

What is the Enforcement process for VHRs?

Upon receiving a complaint, Code Enforcement will call the Local Contact for that property and/or make contact with the renter directly. The Local Contact will have 30 minutes to resolve the issue or Code Enforcement will follow up at the site to assess the situation. Violations and penalties are tracked through Code Enforcement.

You can find up-to-date information on Code Enforcement's Vacation Home Rental Enforcement website: <https://www.eldoradocounty.ca.gov/Public-Safety-Justice/Code-Enforcement-Division/Code-Enforcement-Division-VHR-Unit>

Is it true that the penalty of being caught renting without a permit is a fine and not being able to apply for permit for a year?

Yes, the Ordinance puts an additional penalty on sites renting without a permit. In addition to a monetary fine, sites found renting without a permit will be unable to apply for the permit and will not be allowed to join the waitlist for one year. You can find the language in the Ordinance Sec. 5.56.140.

If I buy a house with an active VHR permit, can I start renting right away?

No, VHR and HHR permits do not transfer to new owners. You will need to re-apply for the permit and meet all permitting requirements including the anti-clustering buffer.

Can I rent my primary house and be the local contact at the same time?

Yes. If you live in the house and rent out 1-2 bedrooms, this is considered a hosted rental (HHR). You, as the host, will need to take the Local Contact Certification Exam and be the contact point for Code Enforcement.

For a VHR, you will need to demonstrate that you are living within half an hour of the rental. Camping, staying at a friend's house or hotel does not meet the location requirements of a Local Contact. If an owner lives in the second dwelling/accessory dwelling unit with a separate address and rents out the primary home, then the owner could be the Local Contact for the VHR. This does not apply to HHR as the owner must live in the rented house.

I want a permit but don't intend to rent right away. Can I hold onto it while I do repairs or remodel the house?

No, properties must be rented to maintain the permit. Rental of the property must be shown in the transient occupancy tax rolls and there is a 10-night minimum rental per year.

Can I have a campfire at the rental?

The burning of solid fuel (including wood or charcoal briquettes) is not allowed outside. When not prohibited by State or local fire regulations, outdoor burning is limited to natural gas or propane fuel. No fires of any kind are allowed during red flag days, which are issued by the National Weather Service.

<https://www.weather.gov/wrh/CAFW>

Where can renters park?

Parking must be contained within the parcel. Blocking neighboring private driveway is not allowed. A minimum of two, on-site parking spaces must be supplied for each rental (one spot can be for the host at hosted home rentals).

Do I need a fire department inspection?

Yes, all VHRs and HHRs need a safety and defensible space inspection done by the local fire department every other year. The inspection checklist is posted on the VHR website. We will send an email for the fee to be paid after the application has been submitted. Please do not schedule the fire inspection until we email you to do so.

Can owners use the rental for personal use when not renting?

Yes. When the home is not being rented, owners are not subject to the VHR/HHR rules. Owners using the hot tub during quiet hours, for example, would not be a violation.

I put a bed in my den/library/loft. Is this considered a bedroom?

Only rooms that are permitted as bedrooms through Building Services are legal bedrooms. Placing beds in spaces such as basements allows visitors to sleep in spaces that may not meet safety requirements and can be dangerous in case they need to evacuate. If you have questions on how many safe, legal bedrooms your home has, or if you are interested in permitting a room as a bedroom, please contact Building Services. Phone: 530-621-5315 or E-Mail: bldgdept@edcgov.us

Please note that occupancy cannot change if you already have an Active VHR Permit; a change in occupancy would require a new VHR Application subject to the anti-clustering buffer.