

# Certified Test for Local Contacts and Hosts

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Course Material

This course material was prepared to help owners, hosts, property managers and more become Certified Local Contacts for the short-term rentals they wish to manage. This course covers the following:

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- Definitions
- Permitting
- Vacation Home Rental and Hosted Home Rental Standards
- Best Practices
- Responding to Complaints
- Violations and Penalties

# Definitions

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Course Material Section 1



# Vacation Home Rental



- **Vacation Home Rental (VHR)**: one dwelling unit, including either the primary single-family home, one unit of a duplex, or a single condominium unit, rented for the purpose of overnight lodging for a period of not less than one night and not more than 30 days.

# Hosted Home Rental



- **Hosted Home Rental (HHR)**: means a rental property at which a host resides and sleeps in one of the bedrooms during the period of the rental. This may be either the rental of up to two (2) bedrooms within a primary residence or the rental of an attached guest house. Occupancy is based on two (2) persons per bedroom with a maximum occupancy of four (4) persons. The space must be rented and advertised as a single listing to a single party. Only one hosted rental is allowed per owner and/or host.
- **Host**: means a natural person aged 18 or older who is the owner or lessee of the subject property and for whom the subject property constitutes his or her primary residence.

For HHRs, the host shall pass the test and be certified.

# What types of structures cannot be used for a hosted home rental or vacation home rental?

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- Second dwelling units or junior dwelling units
- Detached guest houses
- Farm family units
- Apartments
- Agricultural employee units
- Tiny homes
- Non-habitable structures or non-habitable portions of structures (e.g. tents, yurts, R.V.s)
- Accessory structures (e.g. garages, sheds)
- Vacant land
- Treehouses

Ranch Marketing and Wineries are not regulated by this ordinance, nor are Bed and Breakfast Inns and Campgrounds. These uses have permitting requirements not part of this ordinance (Ch. 5.56).

# Local Contact



• **Local Contact:** means a property manager, owner, or agent of the owner, who is certified and available to respond to Code Enforcement questions or concerns and take remedial action and respond to any violation of this chapter within a half hour.

- Responds to complaints and gets them resolved
- Available 24/7 while the rental is in use
- Has completed the certification

- Provide renters with the rental rules and regulations
- Obtain renters' information
- Prepare the home with proper postings and fire & life safety requirements



Responsibilities of the  
local contact, owner,  
OR host

# Permitting

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Course Material Section 2

## What items are needed to operate a short-term rental?

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- A Business License and Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) Registration number.



- Applications are available at the Treasurer Tax Collector's Office, or online at [Treasurer-Tax Collector - El Dorado County \(ca.gov\)](https://www.el-dorado-county.com/treasurer-tax-collector)
- TOT is a tax imposed on guests staying at an establishment for 30 days or less.



- A Vacation Home Rental Permit or Hosted Home Rental Permit, available at [Vacation Home Rentals Division - El Dorado County](https://www.el-dorado-county.com/vacation-home-rentals)

# VHR & HHR Permits

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- ❖ The permit process may take several weeks to complete due to requirements for:
  - A Certified Local Contact
  - Preparing the home to ensure all required postings and safety equipment is present
  - A safety inspection
- ❖ Short term rentals (of 30 days or less) cannot begin until the permit is issued. Long-term rentals (of 31 days or more, such as a seasonal ski lease) do not require a VHR or HHR Permit.
- ❖ These permits expire upon sale or transfer of the property. A new property owner is required to apply for a new permit regardless of whether the previous owner had a permitted vacation rental in the residence.
- ❖ Permits are valid for 1 year, and must be renewed prior to expiration. TOT must be paid at least every year. VHRs must show proof of 10 nights rented. A safety inspection is required every 2 years.

# VHR and HHR Standards

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Course Material Section 3



# Occupancy



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- Occupancy is limited to 2 persons (6 years of age and older) per bedroom between 10pm and 8am
  - Occupancy limits must be listed in *ALL* advertisements for the VHR or HHR
  - Enforcement of these limits is the responsibility of the local contact

## VHRs

- Occupancy is limited to 2 persons per bedroom

## HHRs

- Occupancy is limited to 4 persons  
(2 bedrooms maximum = 4 occupancy)
- Occupancy does not include the host

How are the  
number of  
bedrooms  
determined?

How many  
guests are  
allowed during  
the day?

- Staff will use evidence from a valid building permit that shows the number of rooms, and/or Assessor data. This will be verified during the fire inspection. Occupancy cannot be increased after the VHR or HHR Permit has been issued.
- Occupancy is not limited during the day. However, events such as large parties are never allowed (and may result in fines)

# Parking



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- A minimum of two on-site parking spaces must be provided for each HHR/VHR (including spot for the host)
  - All parking shall be contained within the parcel
  - Renters and guests must not block neighboring driveway access and shall comply with all neighborhood parking rules
  - The location and number of vehicles allowed must be listed in advertisements
  - Enforcement of these limits is the responsibility of the local contact

# Snow Removal (where applicable)

- The driveway and access to the front door of the property shall be cleared of snow adequately to always provide egress and ingress. The driveway shall be cleared to allow the permitted number of vehicles to be parked onsite.
- The exterior sign must also remain visible during winter.





# Noise

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Noise has been reported as the number one issue associated with vacation rentals, and it's the most likely issue to be reported to you as the Certified Local Contact.

- Quiet Hours are from 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.
- No hot tubs may be used by renters during quiet hours (even if used quietly!)
- Occupancy limits must be enforced during quiet hours
- Quiet hours must be posted in advertisements and will be on the interior sign

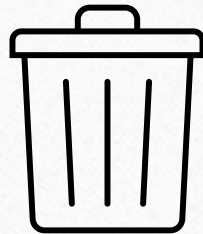
Noise means voices, loud and raucous noise, or amplified music heard at the property line, which is of such volume, intensity, or carrying power as to interfere with the peace and quiet of persons in neighboring property or public ways within the County in accordance with Chapter 9.16—Noise.



# Trash

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- VHRs & HHRs must have garbage collection and disposal at the site
- Interior notices will include the trash pick-up day and let renters know that trash shall not be stored outside except on the day of trash pick up
- All trash shall be bagged and placed inside bear box cans, where applicable
- Resolution of trash violations is the responsibility of the local contact





# Bear Boxes

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## VHRs

- Bear boxes are required in the Tahoe Basin
- If a Bear Box is required for your VHR, the local contact must provide the renters information on the proper use of the bear box to prevent attracting bears to the neighborhood.

## HHRs

- Bear boxes are not required; the host and local contact are responsible for ensuring trash is disposed of properly

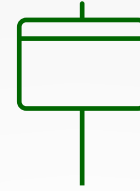
# Can renters use fire pits?

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**The use of solid fuel (wood or charcoal briquettes) burning appliances are not allowed outside, and no fires of any kind are allowed during red flag days.**

When not prohibited by State or local fire regulations, outdoor burning shall be limited to natural gas or propane fuel.





# Advertisements and Posting Rules:

## Exterior Signs

- A County-issued exterior sign must be posted on the property for a vacation home rental or hosted home rental.
- The sign must be clearly visible and legible from the property line.
  - Where a bear box is required for a rental, the exterior sign shall be attached to the bear box.
  - For condominiums, the sign shall be posted at the entrance of the rental.
  - For all other locations, the sign shall be posted within 10 feet of the property line at the location of the driveway and remain visible in the winter.

# Advertisements and Posting Rules:

## Interior Sign

A copy of the permit listing all applicable standards and limits will be provided at permit issuance and must be posted within the vacation rental property. This includes:

- The Vacation Home Rental Hotline Number
- The maximum occupancy
- Notification that all parking shall be contained within the parcel on an impervious surface and the County's parking rules during seasonal snow removal periods
- Notification that the use of solid fuel (wood or charcoal briquettes) burning appliances are not allowed outside, and no fires of any kind are allowed during red flag days
- Trash pick-up day and Bear Box instructions
- Notification that the property owner could be fined if occupants violate the rules
- Notification that events are a violation
- The drinking water source if it not a public source of water
- Notification of quiet hours and noise standards

# Advertisements and Posting Rules

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- Advertising on all platforms (AirBnb, VRBO, etc.) must include the valid Vacation Home Rental or Hosted Home Rental Permit number and TOT certificate number
- Ads must include the number of bedrooms and occupancy, as well as the rules for quiet hours
- The location and number of onsite parking spaces also need to be indicated in ads

Advertising may only be conducted for properties operating under a valid permit.

Advertising incorrect information (such as over occupancy) is a violation and may result in citation or penalties.

# Best Practices

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Course Material Section 4

# Best Practices

The success of El Dorado County Vacation and Hosted Home Rental licensing and operation is heavily reliant on informed, responsible Certified Local Contacts.

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- Set up the VHR/HHR to be safe for renters and to encourage compliance with the rules.
- Inform potential renters of rules and expectations through good online listings.
- Screen guests to ensure that they plan to rent the VHR/HHR respectfully, keeping in mind that any violations could result in penalties to the owner.
- Ensure that renters acknowledge and sign that they understand all rules and consequences for violations.
- Be available and responsive to calls.

# Vacation Home Rental Set-Up: Preparing the Home for Inspection

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## Safety Measures

- Functional Smoke alarms and carbon monoxide alarms
- An accessible fire extinguisher on each floor
- Functional sprinkler system, if installed
- Unobstructed, operable windows for egress
- Outdoor fire areas, when allowable, natural gas or propane fuel only
- Yard is well-kept and free of brush or other potential fire fuel

## Signs and Postings

- Clearly visible street address so that emergency personnel may respond if needed
- Contact information of the local contact and other emergency numbers recommended
- Instructions for operation of appliances and heat sources are recommended
- Reminder of quiet hours posted by the hot tub is recommended
- Exterior and interior signs posted

# Strategies for Success

What additional practices may be used to operate a vacation rental more effectively?

- Establish hours for arrival and check out procedures
- Noise monitors that measure decibel levels and will notify renters when noise levels exceed standards
- Motion sensor lights to ensure outside and inside lights are not left on when not in use



What additional measures will enhance guest and neighborhood safety?

- Investing in a security system to help reassure the guests that you care about their safety and want them to enjoy a comfortable stay
- Ensuring that the home is well-maintained and structures are sound
- Maintaining well-established emergency procedures, including the location of:
  - Emergency kits
  - Fuse boxes
  - Fire extinguishers
  - First aid kits

# Screening Guests

Asking potential renters a few questions about them and their plans for the stay will help determine if the renters are planning to rent the property respectfully.

Examples:

- What is the purpose of the guest's trip? If it is for an event, such as a wedding, reception, gathering, bachelor/bachelorette party, commercial filming, or concert, they should know **events are not allowed** in VHRs or HHRs.
- Have the guests stayed in a short-term rental before?
- How many adults and children will be staying in the vacation rental? Will additional guests be visiting?
- Do the guests smoke?

What questions may **not** be asked to screen potential renters?

- Questions that violate federal, state, and local antidiscrimination and housing laws may not be asked.
- Federal and local laws prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, religion, national origin, gender, familial status, and physical or mental disability.
- Additional laws may also prohibit discrimination based on marital status or sexual orientation.

# What happens if the Local Contact changes?

The owner or owner's agent must notify El Dorado County of a change of local contact or local contact's phone number.

The following is required to be submitted within 14 days of notification for the new Local Contact:

- Change of Local Contact Form (not required for staff change within the same management company)
- Local Contact Acknowledgement
- Test certification showing passing test results
- Contact information edited in the permitting system (a \$95 fee will be charged if this step is not completed)

In no case may a VHR operate without a current Certified Local Contact.

...and the #1 Certified Local  
Contact Best Practice:

Answer every call!

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# Responding to Complaints

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Course Material Section 5

# Complaint Process

1. Neighbors with complaints call Code Enforcement first



Code Enforcement tracks all complaints that come in per property, so screening and educating guests is important.

2. Code Enforcement calls the Local Contact

3. The Local Contact has 30 minutes to get the problem solved

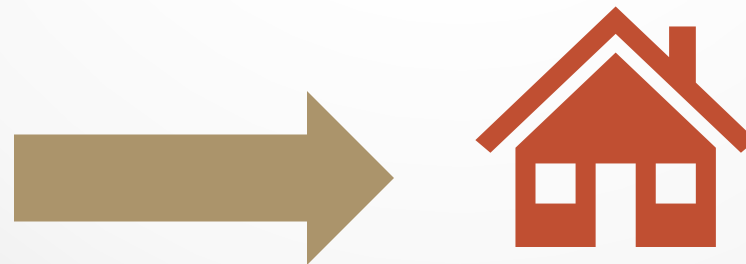
This could include calling the renter to stop the violation(s) or visiting the site. This could also include calling the Sheriff if you think you may need their assistance.

4. Code Enforcement will investigate whether the violation occurred on-site

They will also track the response time of the Local Contact and time to cure the problem.

What if the  
problem can't  
be resolved by  
phone?

- If you are unsure as to whether the issue will be resolved by calling the renter, or if the renter does not respond to your call, you must visit the site to correct the issues. Correction may include withholding a deposit, continuing to monitor the VHR, or even evicting the renters.
- The problem needs to be corrected in 30 minutes.
- If the violation is for trash, penalties will accumulate proportional to the time it takes to cure. You may want to immediately arrive at the site for cleanup.



# What if the Local Contact does not cure the violation?

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- If the Local Contact does not cure the violation within the required time, this will count as a “strike” against the Local Contact’s certification.
- Failure to respond twice to Code Enforcement and cure a violation within 30 minutes shall revoke the certification of the local contact.
  - A Local Contact is not valid without certification.



# Violations and Penalties

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Course Material Section 6

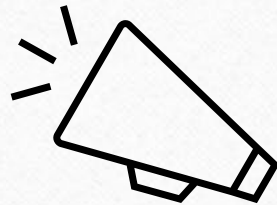
# Violations

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More than one violation may occur for each call-out to the VHR or HHR.

Example: A complaint called for noise results in:

1. a violation for noise and
2. a separate violation for hot tub use during quiet hours



# Penalties for Violations

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## If resolved in 30 minutes

A warning shall be issued.

- 3 warnings within 24 months result in a Notice of Violation

## If not resolved in 30 minutes

A Notice of Violation shall be issued with a fine.

- For the first violation within any 12-month period, the fine shall not exceed \$1,500.00;
- For a second violation within any 12-month period, the fine shall not exceed \$3,000.00;
- For a third violation within any 12-month period, the fine shall not exceed \$5,000.00.

# Violations (not resolved within 30 minutes) continued

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- For any additional (fourth or beyond) violation within any 12-month period, the fine shall not exceed \$5,000.00.
- A permit shall be suspended for 6 months after a property has three (3) violations within any 18-month period.
- A permit shall be revoked in accordance with the provisions of Section 5.56.150 after a property has four (4) violations within any 18-month period.

# Unpermitted Rentals

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- The owner of any hosted or vacation home rental that is operating without the necessary permit shall be subject to violations and penalties.
- The first violation for operating without the necessary permit shall receive a warning with five (5) days to resolve the violation.
  - A second violation for operating without the necessary permit shall receive fines as listed on the previous slides, starting with \$1500 for the first day after the warning period ends
- Each day of operation without a permit is a separate (2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>...) violation and is subject to an additional penalty.

## Violations: Trash

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- If a trash violation is not resolved within 30 minutes, each 60-minute period thereafter is a separate Notice of Violation with a fine
  - Up to 3 violations total with cumulative fines
  - If not cured in 8 hours, the vacation home rental permit will be suspended



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# Thank you!

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Ready to become Certified? Please visit [Certified Test for Local Contacts and Hosts Exam - El Dorado County](#) to complete the Certified Local Contact Exam