

# UNION COUNTY, GA SHORT TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE SUMMARY

1. This ordinance is new to Union County; it was adopted on March 9, 2023; and it went into effect on April 8, 2023. This fact sheet shall not be construed to replace or supersede the ordinance.
2. The new ordinance replaces the old ordinance, making earlier licenses invalid. Those holding older licenses were guaranteed to be granted new licenses if they applied by May 30, 2023.
3. Governs the following:
  - a. Unincorporated Union County
  - b. Only those accommodations supplied by the owner for a period not to exceed 30 days
4. It DOES NOT govern the following:
  - a. Long term rentals (more than 30 consecutive days)
  - b. City of Blairsville
  - c. Tourist Accommodations (which is more than one unit on the same piece of property). Those properties can only be permitted by the state, and are subject to mandatory inspections every 6 months. (Example: Killin Tyme Cabins, Trackrock Campground, Lakeside Inn)
  - d. Land that you allow guests to park an RV or pitch a tent on
5. COST: Licenses are due for renewal each year by July 31<sup>st</sup>; cost \$150/year; late fee of \$75 after Aug. 31.
6. VIOLATIONS: Operating without a license and any other violation of the ordinance can result in warnings, citations, fines up to \$1000, revocation of STR license, 60 days in jail, and/or 6 months probation from receiving a license.
7. LICENSE LIMITATIONS: Total number of STR licenses in Union County is limited to no more than 5% of total number of housing units as reported by the Union County Tax Assessor's Office annually. This cap for **2023/24** is 762 total STR units. As of August 28, 2023, there are 233 licenses still available.
8. OWNERSHIP: a property owner can hold a maximum of two STR licenses in Union County. Any individual listed as a member in a business entity (like an LLC) owning an STR property is considered an owner of the STR as it pertains to this ordinance.
9. SELLING A HOME WITH A LICENSE: If a home is sold with a current, valid license, the license DOES NOT TRANSFER, but the new owners have the first right of refusal for 15 days after the closing date.
10. ADVERTISEMENTS: ALL advertisements (print or digital) must have the UCSTR license number included.

11. OCCUPANCY: based on official Dept. of Public Health septic permit, or evaluation. Any of this done by a private company will not suffice. The occupancy formula: (#bedrooms AS SHOWN ON SEPTIC PERMIT X 2 people, plus 2 more people). So a 3 bedroom house can only have a max overnight occupancy of 8, no matter how big the house itself is. At no time can the overnight occupancy exceed 15 persons.
12. NEIGHBORS: All properties must deliver the Good Neighbor Notification to any neighbors within 100 feet of the STR.
13. REGISTERED AGENT: All properties must have a local registered agent who will serve as the primary contact in cases of violations of this ordinance. The agent must be available twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week for the purpose of violation resolution. The registered agent shall respond within two (2) hours to violations of this ordinance (the response DOES NOT have to be in person).
14. INSPECTIONS: are not mandatory, but can happen on a case-by-case basis
15. STR BOARD: a 7 member board made up of community members and STR owners. The Code Enforcement Officer will be the secretary. Board meetings are open to the public and follow all guidelines established by the state of Georgia for governing boards. The STR Board can assess civil penalties for any violation of this article after a hearing.
16. SOUND: A separate ordinance addresses amplified sound. The ordinance is enforced by the Union County Sheriff's Office.
17. HOA'S: Please note that a county ordinance provides minimum limitations, but it does not prevent an HOA from placing stricter regulations on properties. An HOA board can adopt supplementary rules and regulations in the association's bylaws. However, the rules and regulations must be "reasonable" and cannot conflict with local governing documents or state and federal law. Union County DOES NOT get involved in HOA Covenant violations. Covenants and Restrictions are private contracts between developers and property owners or HOAs and property owners. Private contract conflicts are resolved in civil court. Union County Government does not "check" HOA restrictions. It is the property owner's responsibility to know and understand any restrictions on their property.
18. UNION COUNTY SHORT TERM RENTAL RESOURCE PAGE:  
<http://www.unioncountyga.gov/government/commissioners-office/strcenter/>