

WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP
PINE COUNTY, MINNESOTA
Ordinance No. 2025-ORD007

**AN ORDINANCE ADOPTING REGULATIONS ON
SHORT TERM RENTALS WITHIN WINDEMERE TOWNSHIP**

Section 1. The Board of Supervisors of the Town of Windemere adopts the following regarding Short Term Rentals:

1. PURPOSE, SCOPE, & OBJECTIVES

1.1 Purpose

It is the purpose of this ordinance to regulate short-term rentals within Windemere Township, consistent with the Windemere Township comprehensive plan, by continuing to allow the use of short-term rental units, but to also mitigate possible adverse impacts to the health, safety, and quality of life on surrounding properties, as well as water and environmental quality, through the establishment of a permitting program for the review and approval of short-term rental unit operations.

1.2 Scope

Pursuant to Minnesota Statutes 145A.01-145A.11, Windemere Township does hereby affirm that Chapter 157, Chapter 327, Chapter 375.51 - 375.55, and Minnesota Rules 4625.0100 -4625.2300 relating to lodging establishments, including all subsequent amendments thereto, are hereby adopted by Windemere Township by reference, and pursuant to the authorization and policies contained in the Windemere Township Planning and Zoning enabling legislation in MN Statute Chapter 394.

1.3 Objectives

- To provide and enforce standards for short-term rentals.
- To provide local governance to promote health, safety, and wellness of Windemere Township citizens and patrons of short-term rentals, and to protect the natural resources for the enjoyment of all.

2. DEFINITIONS AND GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 2.1 Definitions.** Unless specifically defined below, words or phrases used in this ordinance shall be interpreted to give them the same meaning they have in common usage and to give this ordinance its most reasonable application. For the purpose of this ordinance, the words “must” and “shall” are mandatory and not permissive. The words “may” and “should” are permissive.

(a) **“Owner”** means the property owner of record of the real estate located in Windemere Township.

(b) **“Owner’s Authorized Agent”** means a person or entity who has written designation to act on behalf of the owner.

(c) **“Parcel”** means a unit of real property that has been given a parcel identification number maintained by Pine County.

(d) **“Lot”** for the purposes of this ordinance means a parcel or group of parcels that are contiguous to each other and owned by a single owner or any combination of common owners, regardless of how the parcels are recorded or when they were purchased.

(e) **“Short Term Rental Unit”** means any home, cabin, condominium, or similar building that is advertised as, or held out to be, a place where sleeping quarters are furnished to the public on a nightly, weekly, or for less than a 30-day time period and is not a bed and breakfast, apartment complex, resort, hotel, or motel. The short-term rental excludes Commercial Planned Unit Developments as defined in the Windemere Township ordinance.

(f) **“SSTS”** means “subsurface sewage treatment system” is either an individual subsurface sewage treatment system as defined in subpart 41 of rule 7080.1100 or a mid-sized subsurface sewage treatment as defined in subpart 4 of rule 7081.0020, as applicable.

(g) **“Bedroom”** means, an area that is (A) a room designed or used for sleeping; or (B) a room or area of a dwelling that has a minimum floor area of 70 square feet with access gained from the living area or living area hallway or have an egress window. Architectural features that affect the use as a bedroom under this item may be considered in making the bedroom determination.

(h) **“Bed and Breakfast”** means an establishment in a residential dwelling, typically consisting of a bedroom and shared bathroom, which supplies temporary accommodations and a morning meal to overnight guests for a fee. The owner or manager resides on the premises while the guests are present.

2.2 **Severability.** If any section, clause, provision, or portion of this ordinance is adjudged unconstitutional or invalid by a court of competent jurisdiction, the remainder of this ordinance shall not be affected thereby.

2.3 **Jurisdiction.** The provisions of this ordinance apply to all areas within the boundaries of Windemere Township.

3. ADMINISTRATIVE PERMIT REQUIRED

3.1 **Administrative Permit Required.** No short-term rental may be operated without a valid short-term rental administrative permit issued pursuant to this ordinance.

3.2 **New Operations.** All new short-term rental operations as of the enactment date of this ordinance shall obtain an administrative permit from the township prior to commencing operations.

3.3 **Short-Term Rental Units.** One short-term rental permit is permitted per parcel and there shall not be more than one dwelling unit per permit on a site. An accessory dwelling or accessory structure shall not be used for as a short-term rental.

3.4 **Renewal.** All short-term rental permits are issued for a three-year term and must be renewed every three years thereafter. Permit renewal applications for short-term rental operations in the following three-year period must be submitted and approved prior to any rental activity within that period.

3.5 **Access.** The owner, or in their absence the owner’s authorized agent, shall permit access to the property and all permitted units at any reasonable time for the purpose of inspection upon request of Windemere Township. Inspection shall be held at a reasonable time agreed upon by the owner.

4. PERMIT APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- 4.1 **Application Requirements.** The following information shall be provided on the Windemere Township short-term rental permit application:
- (a) The name, mailing address, email address and telephone number of the owner of the short-term rental unit for which the permit is to be issued.
 - (b) Physical address and parcel identification number.
 - (c) The name, address, telephone number and email address of the owner's authorized agent for the short-term rental unit, who is available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week, whenever the property is being rented for short-term rental purposes.
 - (d) All other information that is requested on the short-term rental permit application.

An issued short-term rental permit may not be transferred upon change of ownership of a property where a permit was issued and shall automatically expire upon such change of ownership.

- 4.2 **Application Process.** Applications for short-term rental permits shall be found online at windemeretownship.com. Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Once the completed application is received, along with any township requested supplemental information and payment of fee, Windemere Township will approve or deny the short-term rental permit in accordance with the timelines established under Minnesota Statute § 15.99, during which time the Township may contact the owner or owner's authorized agent for additional information. If the permit is denied, a letter will accompany the denial explaining the reasons for the denial, and the owner or owner's authorized agent may reapply once the conditions surrounding the application denial are corrected. Applications submitted after the township has issued all short-term rental permits will be held until the next application period. If a permit becomes available, the Zoning Administrator will contact the next available compliant application to issue a permit. Permits will be issued on a first come first served basis up to the permit ordinance limit, dependent upon a complete and ordinance compliant application.

- (a) Applications for short-term rentals will be accepted on the first Monday following January 1st or any time thereafter.
- (b) All short-term rental permits are required to be renewed. Timely Renewal notices will be sent to current permit holders on the first Tuesday after Labor Day in the final year of the permit.
- (c) Permit renewal applications shall be submitted to the Township on or before the second Monday of November with no grace period for late renewals.

- 4.3 **Fee.** The Windemere Township Board shall set a reasonable fee for the issuance of the short-term rental permit. All permit fees are non-refundable. Fees for permits issued within the 3-year permit time period shall pay the pro-rata share of the 3-year permit fee.

- 4.4 **Limitations.** Short-term rentals shall be limited to a specific number of units based on a fraction of habitable dwellings, including any habitable park models connected to a residential sanitary sewer system or municipal sewer system either in the shoreland

district or outside of the shoreland district.

- (a) Shoreland lots: Limitations on the number of permitted short-term rentals located on riparian lots contiguous to the designated shoreland and within the 1000' setback of the shoreland overlay district of Sturgeon Lake, Island Lake, and Sand Lake as of January 1, 2023, and other DNR classified lakes listed below shall be as follows:

Sturgeon Lake - seventeen (17)

Island Lake - eighteen (18)

Sand Lake - nineteen (19)

Lake Eleven - one (1)

Rush Lake - one (1)

Passenger Lake - one (1)

Lake Twelve - two (2).

Short-term rentals shall not be permitted on any other riparian lots or lots contiguous to DNR classified lakes not specified in the ordinance above, including any environmentally classified lakes or any rivers.

- (b) Short-term rentals not contiguous to a designated shoreland shall be limited to a specific number of units based on a fraction of all habitable dwellings, including any habitable park models connected to a residential sanitary sewer system or a municipal sewer system, located on any non-riparian lots located in the remainder of the township, as of January 1, 2023. For lots with more than one habitable dwelling unit, that lot shall count as one dwelling unit for the purpose of determining the overall number of dwelling units. Where shoreland overlay zones overlap, the more restrictive rules shall apply, and any dwelling units found in both shall be counted only as lying in the more restrictive zone. As such, a total of fifty (4.5) short-term rental units may be located on lots not contiguous to the DNR classified lakes noted above in Windemere Township.

5. GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Septic/Solid Waste

- (a) A short-term rental unit shall be connected to an approved subsurface sewage treatment system (SSTS), served by a central sanitary sewer system, or compliant holding tank.
- (b) A valid Certificate of Compliance, which is a certificate that was issued on a new septic system installed within the past 5 years OR a compliance inspection form which was performed within the past 3 years shall be provided. If the property is on a public sewer system, the applicant shall provide proof of inspection of the lateral sewer line.
- (c) Whenever a short-term rental unit permit is renewed, the owner or owner's authorized agent shall provide, as part of that permit renewal process, an updated certificate of septic compliance showing that the system is compliant,

including the number of bedrooms indicated in the application.

- (d) Disposal of solid waste shall comply with any Pine County Solid Waste Ordinance, or its successor or replacement.
- (e) Garbage, refuse, or recycling shall be stored completely enclosed within designated refuse containers. The owner or operator of the rental unit shall provide sufficient trash storage containers and services to accommodate the demand of the occupants.

5.2 Occupancy

- (a) The overnight occupancy of a short-term rental unit shall be limited to its septic system capacity. Additionally, there shall be no more than two (2) people per bedroom. In no case shall any unit be permitted to accommodate more than twelve (12) guests.
- (b) Use of tents, skid/fish houses, wheelhouse or similar structures to obtain additional occupancy is prohibited. No short-term rental shall be allowed in any park model homes not connected to a compliant septic system, or in a recreational camping vehicle as defined in the Windemere Township zoning ordinance regardless of whether or not it is connected to a septic system.
- (c) A permittee shall not advertise the property as containing more sleeping accommodations than the number of bedrooms identified on the permit.
- (d) A permittee shall not advertise the property as available to more guests than the occupancy limit identified on the permit.

5.3 Noise. Quiet hours are between the hours of 10 pm to 7 am Sunday through Saturday. The owner of the short-term rental must enforce this rule. Failure to do so may result in enforcement action as provided in Section 7 of this ordinance.

5.4 Parking.

- (a) The site shall provide on-site parking sufficient to accommodate the occupants of the rental dwelling unit.
- (b) Parking cannot restrict access by emergency vehicles or the traveling public and shall not impede any ingress or egress to any other properties. In addition, parking cannot encroach on neighboring properties.
- (c) No person shall, for any purpose related to the rental or use of a short-term rental unit, leave or park a vehicle, motor vehicle or recreational vehicle on or within the limits of any road or any road right of way.

5.5 Property Contact Information. The owner or the owner's authorized agent shall keep on file, with the Township, and shall notify each renter, in writing, of the contact information for the owner or owner's authorized agent, who shall be available 24 hours a day, seven (7) days a week, whenever the property is being rented for short-term rental purposes. The owner or the owner's authorized agent shall respond to any issue or complaint raised within one (1) hour of being notified of the issue or complaint. Property contact information shall be accessible to the public 24/7 on the Windemere Township website.

5.6 Permit Fees. Permit fees will be established by the Windemere Township Board and published in the Township fee schedule.

- 5.7 **Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) License.** It is the owner or owner's authorized agent's responsibility to contact MDH about lodging license requirements.
- 5.8 **Other Laws Apply.** All applicable local, county, state and federal requirements shall be followed for the taxing, permitting, and other applicable requirements.
- 5.9 **Posting Emergency Information.** The owner or owner's authorized agent shall post within the rental unit the rules and regulations and emergency contact information for fire, law enforcement, hospital, septic tank pumper and the owner or owner's authorized agent.
- 5.10 **Property Line Demarcation.** The owner or owner's authorized agent shall provide visual demarcation of property lines and shall inform guests of where such property lines are located. All property lines shall be located by a licensed land surveyor. The cost of the survey shall be the responsibility of the owner or owner's authorized agent.
- 5.11 **Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).** Current AIS prevention guidelines must be posted in the rental unit for watercraft use.
- 5.12 **Watercraft.** All guest-owned licensed watercraft must be put in the water body at a state-designated public landing. Guest-owned watercraft of any type cannot be launched from the short-term rental property shoreline on lakes without official public access.

6. LOT REQUIREMENTS

- 6.1 **Conforming Lot.** A short-term rental unit must be located on a conforming lot or an existing lot of record/legal non-conforming lot. The lot must meet all minimum zoning requirements.
- 6.2 **Single Dwelling Units.** No more than one short-term rental unit per property may be rented. Additional occupancy, other than by owners of the property, through the use of recreational vehicles, park models, tents, accessory structures, garages, boat houses, pole barns, sheds, fish houses or other similar structures, is not allowed. Cottages or bunkhouses, as defined in the Windemere Township ordinance, shall not be rented unless that cottage or bunkhouse is included in the ~~interim-use~~ administrative permit as part of the overall property for rent.
- 6.3 **Multiple Dwelling Units.** Multiple dwelling units are not allowed.
- 6.4 **Additional Standards.** The Windemere Township zoning administrator, under authority of the Windemere Township Board, may impose additional standards or conditions on an administrative permit that will reduce impacts of the proposed use on neighboring properties.

7. ENFORCEMENT

- 7.1 **Complaints.** Windemere Township will investigate all complaints and alleged violations of this ordinance and will follow up with all owners or owner's authorized agents within a reasonable period of time. The owner or owner's authorized agent shall address any substantiated complaints and/or violations as directed by Windemere Township. All substantiated complaints and/or violations not resolved as directed will result in enforcement action as provided in 7.4.
- 7.2 **Revocation.** If three (3) substantiated complaints and/or violations have occurred at a

short-term rental unit within one year, the permit may be subject to revocation as determined by Windemere Township following notice of and the holding of a revocation hearing.

- 7.3 **False Reports.** The intentional false reporting of a complaint or violation of this ordinance.
- 7.4 **Failure to Comply.** Any owner or owner's authorized agent who fails to comply with a directive of Windemere Township as provided in section 7.1, or who violate, disobey, omit, neglect, refuse to comply with, or who resist enforcement of any of the provisions of this Ordinance may be subject to misdemeanor prosecution, forfeiture of their permit, or both.
- 7.5 **Penalty.** The penalty for a substantiated violation or a substantiated false reporting of a violation will be \$100.00 fine for a first offense, \$150.00 fine for a second offense, and \$1,000.00 for a third or subsequent offense.
- 7.6 **Reissuance.** Any permit revoked under this section will not be reissued for a period of at least one (1) year from the date of revocation.

8. APPEALS

- 8.1 **Administrative Appeal.** Appeals from any order, requirement, decision, or determination made by Windemere Township must be served upon the Township Clerk or a Township Supervisor and filed in Pine County District Court within 30 days of such vote on the order, requirement, decision or determination.

Section 2. Effective Date. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effective immediately following its passage and publication.

Adopted by the Windemere Town Board on the 11th day of December 2025.



Alan Overland, Town Board Chairperson



Attest: Paula Engstrom, Town Clerk

Drafted By:

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