



COUNTY OF ALBEMARLE  
 Department of Community Development  
 401 McIntire Road, Room 227  
 Charlottesville, Virginia 22902-4596

Phone (434) 296-5832

Fax (434) 972-4126



## Homestays Quick Guide

(aka tourist lodging or short-term rentals)

### What are Homestays?

*Homestays*, aka “tourist lodging,” or “short-term rentals” is lodging in which guest rooms are occupied for less than thirty (30) consecutive days.

### Is a permit required?

A permit is required for both traditional bed and breakfasts and also for VRBO, Stay Charlottesville, and AirBnB type rentals, regardless of whether a room is rented once a year or for multiple weekends. In the Rural Areas zoning district, this is a [Bed and Breakfast](#) permit, even if you don't serve breakfast. In residential zoning districts, this is an [Accessory Tourist Lodging](#) permit. **A permit must be issued before rentals may begin.**

### What is allowed?

Residential Zoning Districts	Rural Areas Zoning District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rent up to 5 rooms inside a <u>single family detached</u> structure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rent up to 5 rooms inside a <u>single family detached</u> structure</li> <li>Rent up to an additional 5 rooms in a 2<sup>nd</sup> unit, if development rights allow</li> <li>Use accessory structures for guest rooms</li> </ul>

### What is NOT allowed?

All Zoning Districts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Whole house rentals (no one present during rental) for less than 30 days</li> <li>Room or house rentals without manager or owner residing on the parcel</li> </ul>

Residential Zoning Districts	Rural Areas Zoning District
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rent a detached structure or carriage house</li> <li>Hold weddings or other special events</li> <li>Rent out rooms in an attached house (duplex/townhouse), or apartment for less than 30 days at a time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hold weddings or other special events without a special use permit</li> </ul>

## REGULATIONS AS OF 5/24/19

## How do I get approved for Homestays?

Important! Applicant must ensure each step is complete:

1. Contact Zoning Staff to confirm zoning ordinance requirements will be met. If deemed necessary, Zoning will set up a Zoning Inspection.
  2. Submit an [Accessory Tourist Lodging](#) application (in Residential Zoning Districts) or a [Bed and Breakfast](#) application (in Rural Areas Zoning District) and a \$108 Zoning Clearance fee and a \$50 Fire Marshal Fee to Albemarle County Zoning.
  3. Contact the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to determine whether your well and septic is sufficient, if you need to apply for a VDH Bed and Breakfast application, and whether a **Health Inspection** is necessary. If necessary, set up a VDH inspection (\$40 + application fee). Forward the VDH approval or satisfaction of no approval necessary to Albemarle County Zoning.
  4. Contact the Building Official to set up a **Building and Fire Inspection**. Once approved, the Building Official and Fire Marshal will notify Zoning of their approvals. If smoke detectors need to be brought up to code, a separate Electrical Permit may be required from Building Official.
- [Fire Marshal's Transient Lodging Safety Guide](#)
5. Contact the Finance Department to determine business license requirements and set up remittance of Transient Occupancy Taxes. Rentals may begin.

## Frequently Asked Questions

- What does it mean that a resident owner or manager is required to reside on the parcel?
  - Either the owner or a manager must live on the parcel rented for more than 50% of the year and must be present during the rental.
- What if I have been renting guest rooms for tourist lodging without a permit?
  - If you are renting without an approved permit, you are in violation of the Zoning Ordinance. If the County receives a complaint about your property, you will be contacted by a code compliance officer and expected to come into compliance.
  - If your rental scenario is permissible, you will be expected to obtain the proper permit.
  - If your rental scenario is **not** allowed as shown above, then you must discontinue rentals.
- What if I have a concern about a tourist lodging establishment?
  - Call the Complaint Line at 434-296-5834 or lodge a complaint at <https://www.albemarle.org/codeenforcementcomplaints/>

## Contacts

### Zoning Staff (Contact first):

Rebecca Ragsdale, [rragsdale@albemarle.org](mailto:rragsdale@albemarle.org),  
434-296-5832, ext. 3226 OR  
Lea Brumfield, [lbrumfield@albemarle.org](mailto:lbrumfield@albemarle.org),  
434-296-5832, ext. 3023

### Building Official:

Michael Dellinger, [mdellinger@albemarle.org](mailto:mdellinger@albemarle.org),  
434-296-5832 ext. 3228

### Health Department:

Alan Mazurowski,  
[alan.mazurowski@vdh.virginia.gov](mailto:alan.mazurowski@vdh.virginia.gov)  
(434) 972-6219  
[Health Department Fee Schedule](#)

### Finance Department:

434-296-5851, Option 3

## REGULATIONS AS OF 5/24/19