

February 13, 2017

Community Update by Tami Scott Administrative Services Manager

Please note:

The following is a correction of the Community Update for February 9, 2017...

As many of you are aware, we are entering high season here in Cathedral City and the Coachella Valley. With less than desirable temperatures in many parts of our country, visitors (transients) flock to the California desert throughout the year, especially in the winter and spring. Here in Cathedral City, like many of our neighboring cities, we have not only hotels, motels and recreational vehicle (RV) parks available for our visitors to rent, but we also have a number of individually owned “vacation rental units” available throughout our city.



You might ask yourself what exactly is the definition of a vacation rental unit. The City of Cathedral City defines a vacation rental unit as a privately owned residential dwelling (not a hotel, motel or timeshare), including without limitation, a single-family detached or multiple-family attached unit, lodging or rooming house, dormitory, apartment house, condominium, cooperative apartment, duplex, mobile home or house trailer. Also the definition includes any space, lot, area, or site in any trailer court, campsite, park, or lot where a trailer, recreational vehicle, mobile home, motor home or any other conveyance, is rented for occupancy for dwelling, or lodging, or sleeping purposes.

For all vacation rentals, the owner or the owner’s authorized agent/representative is required to obtain a business license. In addition, short-term vacation rentals, 30 consecutive calendar days or less, require a vacation rental unit permit. The business license application and the vacation rental unit permit application shall be accompanied by the current application fee of fifty-five dollars (\$55.00) and sixty dollars (\$60.00), respectively and both subject to change in the near future. Both the business license and the vacation rental unit permit must be renewed annually to remain valid. Furthermore, any rental agency or service engaged in advertising or renting vacation rental units shall maintain a separate business.

While a vacation rental unit is rented, the owner, the owner’s authorized agent/representative and/or the owner’s designated local contact person shall be available twenty-four (24) hours/day, seven (7) days/week for the purpose of responding (within forty-five (45) minutes) to complaints regarding the condition, operation, or conduct of occupants and/or guests of the vacation rental unit. Should there be an issue with a vacation rental unit, Cathedral City has a HOTLINE available for residents to register a complaint. The vacation rental hotline number is 760-553-1031.

One of the primary concerns is to ensure the safety of our City's residents and visitors. As a result, there is a limitation on the maximum number of occupants allowed to occupy a vacation rental unit:

Number of Bedrooms	Total of Overnight* Occupants	Total Daytime** Occupants (Including Number of Overnight Occupants)
0—Studio	2	8
1	2	8
2	4	8
3	6	12
4	8	16
5	10	18
6	12	18
7	14	18

* Overnight (10:01 p.m.—6:59 a.m.)

** Daytime (7:00 a.m.—10:00 p.m.)

In addition to the license and permit requirements, the owner or authorized agent/representative collects not only their nightly or weekly rent, but they also collect a 12% transient occupancy tax (TOT). This tax is remitted on a monthly basis to the City. You might ask the question “why have a tax for short-term vacation rentals”. Just like visitors coming to our City and staying at a hotel, motel or RV park, those opting to stay in a short-term rental unit are also using the City's services (such as police, fire and paramedic), and City amenities such as roadways, streets, and parks. As such, there is the associated cost to maintain those City services and amenities.

