

2018 -- H 8189

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LC005585  
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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2018

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A N A C T

RELATING TO PROPERTY -- SHORT-TERM RENTALS ACT

Introduced By: Representatives Vella-Wilkinson, Carson, Fogarty, Marshall, and  
Filippi

Date Introduced: May 11, 2018

Referred To: House Judiciary

It is enacted by the General Assembly as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Title 34 of the General Laws entitled "PROPERTY" is hereby amended by  
2 adding thereto the following chapter:

3 CHAPTER 50

4 SHORT-TERM RENTALS ACT

5 **34-50-1. Short title.**

6 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Short-Term Rentals Act."

7 **34-50-2. Definitions.**

8 As used in this chapter, the following words and terms shall have the following  
9 meanings:

10 (1) "Short-term rental listing service" means a business which facilitates or arranges the  
11 renting of short-term rental units, whether through the listing of short-term rental units on a  
12 website or through other means, but not including any business whose primary function is  
13 ownership, management or marketing of a duly-licensed realtor.

14 (2) "Short-term rental provider" means a person who receives payment for owning or  
15 operating a short-term rental unit.

16 (3) "Short-term rental unit" means a residential dwelling of any type, including a single-  
17 family residence, apartment, condominium or cooperative unit, in which a person can obtain  
18 sleeping accommodations for less than thirty (30) days.

19 **34-50-3. Affordable housing.**

1 (a) A residential dwelling may not be used as a short-term rental unit if the owner or  
2 resident of the dwelling has received affordable housing funds or any other housing assistance,  
3 with respect to such dwelling, from the federal, state, or local government, unless the owner or  
4 resident is residing in the dwelling while renting out other bedrooms in such dwelling.

5 (b) No short-term rental provider shall rent a short-term rental unit to any person under  
6 the age of eighteen (18) years.

7 **34-50-4. Local control.**

8 (a) All short-term rental units must comply with municipal laws and regulations.

9 (b) Cooperative buildings, condominium buildings and other buildings governed by a  
10 homeowner's association or other such bodies shall retain the right to regulate short-term rentals  
11 in the bylaws of the homeowner's association.

12 **34-50-5. Safety and health.**

13 (a) A short-term rental provider shall maintain the facility in a sanitary condition.

14 (b) A short-term rental provider may not rent a unit to a person succeeding a previous  
15 occupant before thoroughly cleaning the unit and providing clean and sanitary sheets, towels, and  
16 pillowcases.

17 (c) The department of health and the fire marshal may inspect short-term rental units at  
18 its discretion to ensure that the property meets applicable safety, emergency and health standards.

19 (d) The short-term rental provider shall post a clearly visible list of emergency  
20 information, including emergency numbers, emergency exit information, and the location of fire  
21 extinguishers or pull fire alarms

22 **34-50-6. Insurance.**

23 A short-term rental provider shall have at least three hundred thousand dollars (\$300,000)  
24 in property and casualty insurance to cover damage done by, or suffered by, any person renting  
25 the short-term rental unit from the short-term rental provider.

26 **34-50-7. Accessibility requirements.**

27 A short-term rental provider who offers to rent out two (2) or more bedrooms within one  
28 building, whether in one short-term rental unit or multiple short-term rental units, must comply  
29 with all accessibility requirements to which places of public accommodation are subject.

30 **34-50-8. Civil rights.**

31 Each short-term rental unit shall be deemed to be a public accommodation. It shall be  
32 unlawful for any person who owns, leases, rents, operates, manages or in any manner controls  
33 such public accommodation to withhold, deny, curtail, limit or discriminate concerning the full  
34 use of such public accommodation by any individual because of the individual's race, color, sex,

1 gender identity, age, religion, disability, national origin, ancestry, sexual orientation, marital  
2 status, parental status, military discharge status or source of income.

3 **34-50-9. Posting of rates.**

4 A short-term rental provider shall post a card or sign in a conspicuous place in each unit  
5 stating:

6 (1) The daily room rate; and

7 (2) The date on which the card or sign was posted.

8 **34-50-10. Penalties.**

9 Short-term rental listing services and short-term rental providers shall be fined five  
10 hundred dollars (\$500) for each applicable violation of this section.

11 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon passage.

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EXPLANATION  
BY THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL  
OF  
A N A C T  
RELATING TO PROPERTY -- SHORT-TERM RENTALS ACT

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1           This act would establish the Short-Term Rentals Act which would set forth requirements  
2 for short-term listing services, and short-term rental providers, when renting to a person for less  
3 than thirty (30) days. Failure to follow the statutory requirements of the act would result in a five  
4 hundred dollar (\$500) fine for each applicable violation.

5           This act would take effect upon passage.

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