

Steps to Start Renting Your Home as a Vacation Rental

Tourist Rooming Houses, also known as short-term rentals, Air B n B's, VRBO's, rental cabins, vacation cottages, etc. are required in the State of Wisconsin to have a lodging license and follow State of Wisconsin Lodging Code, ATCP 72. Resorts and hotels follow the same lodging code. Your home, cottage or cabin may also need a Short-Term Rental Permit from Lincoln County Zoning.

Steps in obtaining a Tourist Rooming House (TRH) license from the Lincoln County Health Department include:

1) **Ensure all licensing requirements are met and understood.**

In addition to the Lincoln County Health Department TRH license, many townships require a Lincoln County Zoning Short Term Rental permit.

- a. Contact Lincoln County Zoning Department at 715-539-1087 or visit <https://co.lincoln.wi.us/land-services/page/permits-and-forms>

2) **Read ATCP 72 and review checklist below to ensure that your property meets requirements and is ready for licensing.**

3) **Apply for license.**

Complete the [Lincoln County Health Department Lodging & Recreation License Application](#) and submit to the address listed on the application. Applications are processed in the order they are received; there is no expediting licensing.

4) **Schedule a pre-inspection.**

A pre-inspection is **REQUIRED** before license can be issued.

An inspector will contact you by phone or email to set up a date and time for your pre-inspection. Pre-inspections **MUST** be complete within 30 days from receiving the application. Someone is required to be at the property during the pre-inspection. Failure to complete the pre-inspection within timeframe will result in application being returned and possible operating without a license if renting occurs without proper licensing.

NOTE: Licenses will not be issued until all requirements are satisfied. Please visit our website at <https://co.lincoln.wi.us/health/page/permit-inspections-codes-and-handouts> for additional information or contact our office.

You must meet all requirements before you can begin renting your property.

Cabin & Vacation Home Checklist

- Drinking water from private well tested within last 12 months and a copy of results provided.
- Private well should be constructed and pump installed in accordance with Ch. NR 812.
- All plumbing systems must be connected to an approved sewage system.
- All toilet facilities must include a toilet, sink, and bathtub or shower. Bottom of shower/tub should be slip resistant or have a slip resistant mat.
- Hot and cold running water shall be available at all sinks.
- Soap, single-service towels or other means of drying hands shall be provided in each toilet room.
- All garbage shall be kept in separate, leak-proof, nonabsorbent containers with tight fitting covers.
- All garbage containers shall be emptied often to prevent decomposition or overflow.
- Recycling containers shall be provided with tight fitting covers.
- Appliances and furnishings shall be in good repair and installed to facilitate cleaning.
- Eating and cooking utensils shall be in good repair and designed for food contact. Determine that food contact surfaces are being washed, rinsed, and sanitized or sign with directions is provided.
- Linens shall be washed between guests and at least once per week. Soiled linens are kept in a separate washable container.
- Blankets, quilts, and bedspreads shall be washable and maintained in a clean condition.
- Sheets must have a fold-back of at least 12 inches over the bed covering.
- Mattress and pillow covers or protectors must be provided.
- Any room that has a gas space heated must have a constant supply of fresh air through a permanent opening.
- At least one 2A fire extinguisher is recommended to be readily available and in good working order.
- At least one smoke alarm shall be located on each floor level in the hallway near bedrooms.
*It is recommended that a smoke detector be located in each bedroom.
- At least one carbon monoxide detector shall be located on each floor if there is an attached garage, fireplace, or fuel burning appliance.
- Every sleeping room must be 400 cu. ft. per occupant over 12 yrs. of age and 200 cu. ft. per occupant under 12 yrs. of age. All ceilings shall be at least 7 ft. high.
- Staircases with more than 3 risers shall have a securely fastened handrail.
- Guardrails shall be provided for elevated surfaces (decks, patios balconies that are more than 24 inches off the ground). Guardrails should be 36 inches high and gaps of no more than 4 inches.
- All exterior doors shall be key locking from the outside and non-key locking from the inside.
- All windows that can be opened shall be screened and screen doors shall be installed on dwellings that lack air conditioning.
- All dwellings shall be kept in good repair and a sanitary condition.
- Effective measures shall be taken to minimize the presence of insects and rodents.
- A guest register shall be maintained and kept for one year.
- Fill and drain Jacuzzi tubs are permitted without licensure, but must be cleaned and sanitized after each guest/ party rotation.

- Any facility that prepares, serves, or sells food to the public must have a food license in addition
- TRH's must meet the requirements for exits as stated below:

| <u>Exit Requirements</u> | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | Constructed Before June 1, 1980 | Constructed After June 1, 1980 |
| 1 st Floor Exits | No requirement- Recommend 2 exits | Two exit doors required unless structure is less than 400 sq. feet. One exit door should discharge directly to grade If < 400 sq. feet one exit door and one egress window required |
| 2 nd Floor Exits | No requirement- Recommend two exits | Two exits required: -One must be a stairway that lead to the 1 st floor or discharge to grade. -The other exit can either be a door that leads to a balcony or a window that complies with window exiting requirements. |
| Exits From Lofts | No requirements- Recommend 1 exit | If loft > 400 sq. feet one stairway exit is required. If loft < 400 sq. feet, a stairway or ladder may be used. |
| Exits from Basements and Ground Floor | No requirement- Recommend two exits | Each basement used for sleeping shall have at least 2 of the following: - A door to the exterior of the building -A stairway or ramp that lead to the floor above. - A stairway that leads to the garage provided the garage has an exit door. - An egress window that complies with window exiting requirements in EACH bedroom. |
| Windows Used for Exits | No Requirements- Recommend that rules are followed. | Windows used for exits shall: -Open from the inside without the use of tools. - Dimensions of at least 20 x 24 inches. - Lowest point of opening shall be no more than 60 inches above the floor. |