



Vacation Rentals Regulations

Vacation rental units are defined in the City of Duluth Legislative Code Chapter 50 (Unified Development Chapter) as Vacation Dwelling Units and Accessory Vacation Dwelling Units and are subject to the regulations described here. Please contact the City Planning Division at 218-730-5580 to learn about the process for obtaining a permit to operate a vacation rental and to schedule a pre-application meeting.

Vacation Dwelling Unit – a habitable unit in a dwelling providing sleeping, cooking, eating, living and sanitation facilities that are physically separated from other habitable units that may or may not be located in the same building for periods of occupancy from 3 to 21 days. This use does not include hotels, motels, or bed and breakfasts.

Accessory Vacation Dwelling Unit – an accessory dwelling unit as defined by this chapter that is used for periods of occupancy from 3 to 21 days.

Vacation Dwelling Units and Accessory Vacation Dwelling Units are allowed as an Interim Use in RR-1, RR-2, R-1, R-2, R-P, MU-N, and F-5 districts. All vacation rentals must obtain an Interim Use Permit.

Vacation Dwelling Unit Interim Use Permit Standards:

1. The minimum rental period shall be as follows:
 - a. For properties zoned RR-1, RR-2, R-1, and R-P the minimum rental period shall not be less than 2 nights except for the period from June 15 to September 15 when the minimum rental period shall not be less than 5 nights;
 - b. For properties zoned R-2, MU-N, and F-5 the minimum rental period shall not be less than 2 nights except for the period from June 15 to September 15 when the minimum rental period shall not be less than 3 nights.
2. The total number of persons that may occupy the vacation dwelling unit is one person plus the number of bedrooms multiplied by two.
3. Off-street parking shall be provided at the following rate:
 - a. 1-2 bedroom unit, 1 space
 - b. 3-4 bedroom unit, 2 spaces
 - c. 5+ bedroom unit, 3 spaces
4. Only one motorhome (or pickup-mounted camper) and/or one trailer either for inhabiting or for transporting recreational vehicles (ATVs, boat, personal watercraft, snowmobiles, etc.) may be parked at the site, on or off the street.
5. The property owner must obtain all licenses and permits from the City of Duluth and State of Minnesota required for guest occupancy on the property for 3 to 21 days.
6. The property owner must provide required documents and adhere to additional requirements listed in the City of Duluth's UDC Application Manual related to the keeping of a guest record, designating and disclosing a local contact, property use rules, taxation, and interim use permit violations procedures.
7. The interim use permit shall expire upon change in ownership of the property or in six years, whichever occurs first.

Accessory Vacation Dwelling Unit Interim Use Permit Standards:

An accessory vacation dwelling unit may be created within, or detached from, any one-family dwelling or vacation dwelling unit in those districts shown where allowed by Table 50-19.8, provided these standards are met:

1. Only one accessory vacation dwelling unit may be created per lot.
2. No variances shall be granted for an accessory vacation dwelling unit.
3. An accessory vacation dwelling unit shall contain no more than 800 square feet of floor area and shall be consistent in character and design with the primary dwelling.
4. If a separate outside entrance is necessary for an accessory vacation dwelling unit located within the primary building, that entrance must be located either on the rear or side of the building.
5. The minimum rental period shall be as follows:
 - a. For properties zoned RR-1, RR-2, R-1, and R-P the minimum rental period shall not be less than 2 nights except for the period from June 15 to September 15 when the minimum rental period shall not be less than 5 nights;
 - b. For properties zoned R-2, MU-N, and F-5 the minimum rental period shall not be less than 2 nights except for the period from June 15 to September 15 when the minimum rental period shall not be less than 3 nights.
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9. The property owner must obtain all licenses and permits from the City of Duluth and State of Minnesota required for guest occupancy on the property for 3 to 21 days.
10. The property owner must provide required documents and adhere to additional requirements listed in the City of Duluth's UDC Application Manual related to the keeping of a guest record, designating and disclosing a local contact, property use rules, taxation, and interim use permit violations procedures.
11. The interim use permit shall expire upon change in ownership of the property or in six years, whichever occurs first.

In addition to the UDC Interim Use Permit requirements listed above, Vacation Dwelling Units and Accessory Vacation Dwelling Units must adhere to the following regulations:

1. Permit holder must keep a guest record including the name, address, phone number, and vehicle (and trailer) license plate information for all guests and must provide a report to the City upon 48 hours' notice.
2. Permit holder must designate a managing agent or local contact who resides within 25 miles of the City and who has authority to act for the owner in responding 24-hours-a-day to any complaints from neighbors or the City. The permit holder must notify the Land Use Supervisor within 10 days of a change in the managing agent or local contact's contact information.
3. Permit holder must provide the name, address, and phone number for the managing agent or local contact to all property owners within 100' of the property boundary. The permit holder must notify neighboring properties within 10 days of a change in the managing agent or local contact's contact information.
4. Permit holder must disclose in writing to their guests the following rules and regulations:

- a. The managing agent or local contact's name, address, and phone number;
 - b. The maximum number of guests allowed at the property;
 - c. The maximum number of vehicles, recreational vehicles, and trailers allowed at the property and where they are to be parked;
 - d. Property rules related to use of exterior features of the property, such as decks, patios, grills, recreational fires, pools, hot tubs, saunas and other outdoor recreational facilities;
 - e. Applicable sections of City ordinances governing noise, parks, parking and pets;
5. If a permit holder is cited for any nuisance event as described in Chapter 40, Article III of the Duluth Legislative Code, the Land Use Supervisor may suspend the Interim Use Permit for 90 days. If the permit holder is cited for any nuisance event a second time, the Interim Use Permit shall be revoked.
 6. Permit holder must post their permit number on all print, poster or web advertisements;
 7. Prior to rental, the building must be inspected and an Operational Permit issued by the Fire Prevention office. Contact the Fire Prevention office at 218-730-4397 or 218-730-4399 for information.
 8. Permit holder must apply for and be granted State and local sales tax numbers, including Hotel and Motel Use Sales Tax.

Minnesota State Building Code Requirements

The following summarizes applicable Minnesota State Building Code regulations for vacation rental units as defined in the Duluth Unified Development Chapter. Contact a Plans Examiner in the Construction Services Division at 218/730-5300 with questions about building code requirements.

One and Two Family Dwellings

Use of existing one and two family dwellings not more than three stories above grade plane in height with separate means of egress as vacation rentals is not a change of use for purposes of building code applicability.

Additions, alterations and repairs to one and two family dwellings not more than three stories above grade plane in height with separate means of egress must comply with the Minnesota State Residential Code.

The Minnesota Accessibility Code does not apply to one or two family dwellings. Owners of vacation rental properties should research federal regulations related to accessibility.

Three and More Dwelling Units

Conversion of apartments in buildings with three or more units to rentals of less than 30 days duration is a change of use from an R-2 occupancy (permanent) to an R-1 occupancy (transient.) A permit is required for a change of use and plans and a code summary prepared by a Minnesota licensed architect showing compliance with applicable provisions of the Minnesota State Building Code must be submitted for review with the permit application.

Required alterations will vary with each building. Owners should consult with a licensed architect for an evaluation of changes needed to comply with applicable building code provisions.