WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
LYCOMING COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE #2026-01

THIS ORDINANCE AMENDS
THE WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP
SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE
ADOPTED OCTOBER 3, 2022

Enacted April 6, 2026

Effective April 11, 2026

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-01

Short-Term Rental Ordinance of Washington Township

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SECTION 1 – SHORT TITLE

This Ordinance shall be known and may be cited as THE SHORT-TERM RENTAL ORDINANCE OF WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP.

SECTION 2 – APPLICABILITY

This ordinance shall apply to all short-term rentals as defined in Section 5 and all provisions of this ordinance shall apply in addition to all other applicable requirements of Township ordinances.

SECTION 3 – NUISANCE DECLARED

In the interest of protecting and promoting the public health, safety and welfare, and minimizing the burden on Township and community services and impacts on residential neighborhoods posed by short-term rentals, the violation of any of the provisions of this ordinance is declared to be a public nuisance.

SECTION 4 – DEFINITIONS

The words and phrases used in this ordinance shall have the following meanings:

Bedroom	A room containing a minimum of eighty (80) square feet that is used as a sleeping room and for no other primary purpose.
Dwelling Unit	One (1) or more rooms in a residential dwelling structure, including a kitchen, sleeping facilities, bath and toilet, designed as a household unit for long term residency by not more than one (1) family at a time.
Local Contact Person	A local property manager, owner, or agent of the owner, who is available to respond to tenant and neighborhood questions or concerns, or any agent of the owner authorized by owner to take remedial action and respond to any violation of this ordinance.
Owner	The person or entity that holds legal or equitable title to the private property.
Park Model	A specialized, transportable recreational vehicle (RV) designed for seasonal or long-term, semi-permanent placement.
Rent	The consideration received by a vendor in money, credits, property or other consideration valued in money for lodging.
Single Family Dwelling	A building intended for occupancy by one (1) family at one (1) time.
Two-Family / Multi-Family Dwelling	A building intended for occupancy by two (2) or more families at one (1) time.
Short-Term Rental	Any dwelling unit within a residential dwelling structure rented for overnight lodging for a period of not less than one (1) day and not more than thirty (30) days.

SECTION 5 – SHORT-TERM RENTAL PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

The owner shall be responsible for obtaining all permits and permit renewals.

A. PERMIT REQUIRED – A short-term rental permit shall be required when any dwelling unit in a single-family dwelling or a two-family/multi-family dwelling is advertised for rent or is rented for a period of thirty (30) consecutive calendar days or less.

B. PERMIT RENEWAL – A permit shall be renewed annually and at any time when any of the conditions of the rental which are governed by this ordinance are changed.

C. SEPARATE PERMITS – A separate permit is required for each short-term rental; for two-family or multi-family dwellings, a separate permit shall be required for each dwelling unit being rented pursuant to the definition of “short-term rental”.

D. ISSUANCE TO OWNER – The permit shall be issued only to the owner of the short-term rental.

E. FORMS AND PROCEDURES – The enforcement officer is authorized to prescribe forms and procedures for the processing of permits under this ordinance.

F. PARK MODEL SHORT-TERM RENTALS – A park model structure may not be used as a short-term rental unless the structure is equipped with permanent water, sewer, and electrical connections, complies with current square footage requirements, and is less than twenty years old.

G. TWO-FAMILY/MULTI-FAMILY SHORT-TERM RENTALS – No building shall be used as a short-term rental that has two (2) or more dwelling units unless said building has been approved by the Township as a two-family or multi-family dwelling. If such approval has been granted by the Township and one (1) or more of the dwelling units, but not necessarily all, are being rented as set forth in the definition of "short-term rental", then the requirements of this ordinance shall apply to such rental unit or units.

H. INSPECTION AUTHORIZATION – The owner, by making application for a permit and/or accepting issuance of a permit grants permission for all inspections authorized by Section 12.

I. PERMIT NOT TRANSFERRABLE

1. The permit issued to an owner pursuant to this ordinance is personal to the owner identified in the application and does not run with the property. If the ownership of the property changes, either directly by sale or deed transfer, or indirectly by death, change in ownership of the entity owning the property, sheriff sale or court order, the new owner must apply for a permit under the provisions of this ordinance prior to renting the property, but shall be entitled to get a permit provided such new owner complies with the terms of this ordinance.

2. If an owner has been convicted of a violation of this ordinance (hereinafter the "violating owner"), or if a violating owner's permit has been revoked by the Township, then a transfer of the property by the violating owner to one or more family members, or to an entity owned by the violating owner, or such owner's family members, then that new owner shall be subject to the violations and penalties imposed upon the violating owner.

SECTION 6 – LOCAL CONTACT PERSON

A. DESIGNATION – Each owner of a short-term rental shall designate a local person, property manager or agent, as a local contact person who has access and authority to assume management of the unit and take remedial measures. An owner of a short-term rental who resides within fifty (50) miles of the short-term rental may designate himself as the local contact person. The local contact person shall respond to the enforcement officer within two (2) hours after being notified by the enforcement officer or other Township official of the existence of a violation of

this ordinance or any disturbance requiring immediate remedy or abatement. If the local contact person is not the owner, the local contact person shall immediately advise the owner of any notification of a violation.

B. RESPONSIBILITY – The owner of the short-term rental is responsible for compliance with the provisions of this ordinance and the failure of an agent, managing agency, or local contact person to comply with this ordinance shall be deemed noncompliance by the owner.

SECTION 7 – APPLICATION FOR SHORT-TERM RENTAL PERMIT

A. APPLICATION REQUIRED INFORMATION – An application for a permit shall be filed with the designated Township official before use of the property as a short-term rental. Permit applications for properties presently used as a short-term rental shall be filed within ninety (90) days of the effective date of this ordinance. The application shall contain the following information:

1. The name, address, telephone number and email address of the owner of the short-term rental for which the permit is issued. If the owner does not have a managing agency, agent or local contact person, then owner shall provide a 24-hour telephone number.
2. The name, address, and 24-hour telephone number of the managing agency, agent or local contact person for the owner of the short-term rental.
3. A photograph of the short-term rental taken from the access road side.
4. The marketing entity identification number(s) for the short-term rental.
5. Acknowledgment that all designated bedrooms contain a minimum of eighty (80) square feet.
6. The number of bedrooms (each containing the required minimum eighty (80) square feet) and the maximum number of overnight occupants, maximum of 5 bedrooms or less.
7. If the building is a Two-Family/Multi-Family Dwelling structure, the number of dwelling units and the number of dwelling units being used as a short-term rental. a specialized, transportable recreational vehicle (RV) designed for seasonal or long-term, semi-permanent placement
8. A diagram or photograph of the premises and indicating the number and location of designated on-site parking spaces and the maximum number of vehicles allowed for overnight occupants.
9. The location, approximate age and capacity (if known) of the sewage disposal system.
10. Acknowledgment that the owner, agent and/or local contact person have read all regulations pertaining to the operation of the short-term rental.
11. Acknowledgment that the owner, agent or local contact person will post and maintain the short-term rental with the notice required in Section 10.A.15.
12. Acknowledgement that the owner, agent or local contact person will post and maintain the 911 emergency address sign in accord with applicable requirements.
13. A copy of a current Lycoming County Hotel Room Rental Tax Certificate and current Pennsylvania Sales Tax License.

B. INSPECTION FEE – If the information supplied by the property owner on the application for a short-term rental permit is not consistent with Township records, an inspection can be required prior to or after the issuance of the short-term rental permit. An inspection fee established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors shall be charged for any inspection.

SECTION 8 – APPLICATION AND RENEWAL FEES

A. APPLICATION FEE – An application for a short-term rental permit shall be accompanied by an initial fee established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors.

B. RENEWAL FEE – An annual renewal fee shall be established by Resolution of the Board of Supervisors which permit holders shall pay when renewing their permit issued pursuant to this ordinance. Failure to pay the renewal fee by February 15th will result in the assessment of a fee twice the amount of the normal renewal fee. If the fee is not paid by May 1st the permit shall be null and void and application for a new permit, not a renewal, shall be required.

SECTION 9 – OPERATIONAL STANDARDS AND CONDITIONS

A. STANDARDS – All permits issued pursuant to this ordinance are subject to the following standards:

1. The owner shall by written agreement, limit overnight occupancy of the short-term rental to the specific number of occupants designated in the permit, with the number of overnight occupants not to exceed two (2) persons per bedroom per residence.
2. The maximum number of day guests allowed at any one (1) time shall be seventy-five percent (75%) of the maximum occupancy of the short-term rental.
3. The person responsible for the short-term rental shall make sure the property is cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the protocols prescribed by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and free of damage at the end of the rental period, aside from normal wear and tear or existing damage that was known to the owner and made known to the occupants prior to renting.
4. The number of bedrooms permitted for a short-term rental shall not exceed the number of bedrooms approved for the dwelling on the sewage permit issued for such property. The Township shall have the right to inspect sewage permits and sewage systems at any time.
5. Where there is no sewage permit on record, the short-term rental for such a dwelling shall be limited to number of bedrooms that have been historically maintained in the dwelling based on documentation provided by the owner and which is acceptable to the Township. In addition, the owner shall execute with the Township the Short-Term Dwelling Agreement for Dwellings with Preexisting Sewage Systems provided by the Township. Should the Township determine that the evidence provided is not adequate to document the proposed number of bedrooms, the number of bedrooms shall be limited to three (3).

6. In no instance shall the existing number of bedrooms be increased without proper Township and DEP approval being obtained.
7. If a sewage system malfunction occurs, rental of the unit shall be discontinued until the malfunction is corrected in accord with Township and PA Department of Environmental Protection requirements.
8. The short-term rental shall also have at least one (1) other habitable room containing a minimum of one hundred twenty (120) square feet.
9. The owner shall by written agreement, limit the number of all vehicles of overnight occupants and day guests to the number designated in the permit with the number of all vehicles not to exceed the number of designated on-site parking spaces.
    a. All parking for occupants shall be designated in the permit and shall be located on the owner's property and not in any private, community or public right-of-way.
    b. A minimum of one (1) parking space per bedroom shall be provided. The required number of parking spaces may include spaces in a garage which can accommodate vehicles, however the maximum number of vehicles allowed at the short-term rental shall be limited to the available number of off-street parking spaces provided on the same property as the short-term rental.
    c. All parking spaces shall be improved to a mud-free condition with paving, stone or similar material and shall count as part of the maximum lot coverage established by the Township Zoning Ordinance.
    d. Each vehicle parking space shall be a rectangle with a minimum width of nine (9) feet and a minimum length of eighteen (18) feet and adequate aisle width shall be provided to facilitate access and use of the spaces.
    e. If the short-term rental is accessed directly by a Township or State road, all parking spaces shall be accessed from the driveway serving the short-term rental and not directly from the Township or State road.
10. The owner shall use best efforts to assure that the occupants or guests of the short-term rental do not create unreasonable noise or disturbances, engage in disorderly conduct, or violate provisions of this ordinance or any state law pertaining to noise or disorderly conduct by notifying the occupants of the rules regarding short-term rentals and responding when notified that occupants are violating laws regarding their occupancy. It is not intended that the owner, local agent or contact person act as an enforcement officer or place himself or herself in harm's way.
11. The owner shall, upon notification that occupants or guests of the short-term rental have created unreasonable noise or disturbances, engaged in disorderly conduct or violated provisions of this ordinance or state law pertaining to noise, or disorderly conduct, promptly use best efforts to prevent a recurrence of such conduct by those occupants or guests.
12. Any lights used for exterior illumination shall direct light away from adjoining properties. Lighting shall be pointed/shielded downward to minimize upward glare.

13. Occupancy of recreational vehicles, camper trailers and tents shall not be allowed. Children under the age of thirteen (13) are allowed to “camp out” in a tent on the premises.
14. The use of open fires, fire pits, charcoal-burning grills or other devices (as applicable) shall be the responsibility of the owner or local contact and shall comply with any and all local burning ordinances. All open fires shall be extinguished by midnight.
15. The owner of the short-term rental shall post a copy of the permit and a copy of the conditions set forth in this Section 10 in a conspicuous place within the short-term rental.
16. Each short-term rental shall have a clearly visible and legible notice posted within the unit on or adjacent to the front door, containing the following information:
    a. The name of the managing agency, agent, property manager, local contact or owner of the unit, and a telephone number at which that party may be reached on a 24-hour basis.
    b. The maximum number of occupants permitted to stay in the unit and the maximum number of day guests permitted at any one (1) time.
    c. The maximum number of all vehicles allowed to be parked on the property and the requirement that all renter/guest parking must be on the property and not in any private, community or public right-of-way.
    d. The number and locations of on-site parking spaces and the parking rules for seasonal snow removal end emergency vehicle access (if any).
    e. Trash and refuse shall not be left or stored on the exterior property except on the day designated for trash pick-up.
    f. Notification that an occupant may be cited and fined for creating a disturbance or for violating other provisions of this ordinance; and
    g. Notification that failure to conform to the parking and occupancy requirements of the structure is a violation of this ordinance subject to a citation and fines.

THE OCCUPANTS OF A SHORT-TERM RENTAL SHALL MAKE THE NOTICE REQUIRED BY THIS PARAGRAPH AVAILABLE FOR INSPECTION BY THE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER UPON REQUEST.

17. All residential short-term rentals shall comply with the following standard: It is unlawful for any person to maliciously and willfully disturb the peace of any neighborhood, person, or family by loud or unusual noises or by tumultuous and offensive conduct, public indecency, threatening, traducing, quarreling, challenging to fight, or fighting.
18. Smoke detectors and carbon monoxide detectors must be installed per the International Residential Building Code.

B. ADDITIONAL STANDARDS – The Board of Supervisors, at a duly convened meeting, shall have the authority to impose additional standards applicable to short-term rentals as necessary to achieve the objectives of this ordinance.

C. PERMIT CONDITIONS – The enforcement officer shall have the authority to impose additional conditions on any permit or renewal in the event of any prior violation of the conditions of the permit or the provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 10 – ENFORCEMENT OFFICER(S)

A. APPOINTMENT – The Board of Supervisors may appoint one (1) or more enforcement officers, who may be an individual, firm or agency, to conduct inspections, make reports and administer other parts of this ordinance as determined by the Board of Supervisors.

B. DUTIES – The administrative, inspection and enforcement responsibilities established by this ordinance may be delegated to different enforcement officers appointed in accord with Section 11.A.

C. CONSULTATION – The enforcement officer, with the authorization of the Board of Supervisors, may engage the services of competent engineers or other consultants to determine the nature and extent of any violation.

SECTION 11 – INSPECTIONS AND ACCESS

A. INSPECTION – All places and premises in Washington Township shall be subject to inspection by the enforcement officer to verify application, permit or operating requirements or if there is reason to believe that any provision of this ordinance is being violated.

B. INTERFERENCE – Provided the short-term rental unit is accessed in accord with this Section 12, it shall be unlawful for any person to hinder, delay, resist or prevent the enforcement officer from having full access to any place or premises upon which a violation of this ordinance is believed to exist.

SECTION 12 – MARKETING

The marketing of a short-term rental which exceeds the maximum occupancy requirements permitted by this ordinance or which promotes any other activity which is prohibited by this ordinance shall be a violation of this ordinance subject to the penalties and costs of Section 16. The owner or local contact person shall provide to the enforcement officer a copy of all advertisements relating to the short-term rental.

SECTION 13 – ACTION ON COMPLAINTS

A. VIOLATION IN PROGRESS – Upon receipt of a verbal complaint of a violation in progress and if the complainant's name and address is provided, the enforcement officer shall immediately notify the owner and/or the local contact person of the complaint. If the enforcement officer believes a crime to be in progress, he/she shall immediately notify the police department. The enforcement officer shall have no obligation to respond to any violation in progress at the property in question, unless the Township has appointed a police officer or police department to act as the enforcement officer for this ordinance. If the enforcement officer is a police officer, or if a police officer is called to the property to address possible criminal activity, then the Township may proceed with an action on a violation if the police officer in question confirms that a violation of this ordinance has occurred or

provides information to the enforcement officer establishing that a violation has occurred.

B. VIOLATION PRECEDING COMPLAINT – Upon receipt of a complaint of a violation which occurred prior to the date of the complaint, the enforcement officer shall not be obligated to proceed with any action to determine if a violation of this ordinance exists unless such complaint is made in writing and it includes the name and address of the person registering the complaint.

C. CONFIDENTIALITY – The enforcement officer shall maintain the confidentiality of the name and address of the person registering the complaint unless otherwise required by law to release such information.

SECTION 14 – NOTICE TO VIOLATORS

A. SERVICE OF NOTICE – Whenever the enforcement officer, determines that a violation of this ordinance exists, the enforcement officer shall prepare a written Notice of Violation, to be served on the owner and/or occupant(s) of the premises on which the nuisance is located or originates. The written Notice of Violation shall be served within five (5) days of the determination of the violation by one (1) or more of the following methods:

1. Personal delivery or certified mail.
2. Fixing a copy to the door of the building on the premises of the violation.

B. CONTENT OF NOTICE

1. The Notice shall enumerate the conditions which constitute the violation and what action is required to abate the violation.
2. The Notice shall include a time frame for the abatement of the nuisance, with such time frame established by the enforcement officer based upon the nature of the violation and providing a reasonable period for the violator to take the required action. In certain cases, immediate correction may be required.

C. REPEAT VIOLATORS – If an owner commits the same or a similar violation within six (6) months of receiving a Notice of Violation as set forth in Section 15, no additional notice shall be required to be served on that owner prior to initiating enforcement action in accord with this Section 15.

SECTION 15 – VIOLATIONS, PENALTIES AND COSTS

A. COMPLIANCE – Failure to comply with any provision of this ordinance, and/or failure to comply with an order to abate an activity, use and/or condition, shall be a violation of this ordinance and subject to criminal prosecution and the revocation of the permit.

B. VIOLATION AND PENALTIES – Violation of this Ordinance shall be enforced as a summary offense. Its enforcement shall be brought by action before a magisterial district judge in the same manner provided for the enforcement of summary offenses under the Pennsylvania Rules of Civil Procedure. The Solicitor of Washington Township may assume charge of the prosecution without the consent of the District Attorney as required under Pa.R.Crim.P. No.

83(c) (relating to trial in summary cases). Any person found to be in violation of this Ordinance, upon conviction of a summary offense therefore, shall pay a fine not to exceed $1,000.00 per violation and may be imprisoned to the extent allowed for the punishment of summary offenses (not to exceed 90 days). Each day a violation exists constitutes a separate and distinct violation. In addition to the aforementioned fine, any person found guilty of a violation of this Ordinance shall be responsible to cover the costs incurred by the Township in enforcing this Ordinance including reasonable attorney fees and costs of prosecution. All judgments, administrative, enforcement, police response, other costs, interest and reasonable attorney fees collected for the violation of this Ordinance shall be paid over to the Township.

C. REMEDIES – The Court of Common Pleas, upon petition, may grant an order of stay, upon cause shown, tolling the per diem fine pending a final adjudication of the violation of judgment. The Township shall also have the right to seek Injunctive Relief for violations of this ordinance.

D. PERMIT REVOCATION – If an owner commits two (2) or more violations which result in convictions, and/or the owner has acknowledged the violation(s), and such violation(s) occur with a two (2) year period, then the permit shall be revoked by the Township and the short-term rental must be discontinued while the permit is revoked. The revocation shall be not less than one (1) year and not more than three (3) years. Any violation of the PA Sewage Facilities Act and applicable regulations may result in immediate permit revocation until the violation is corrected.

SECTION 16 – SEVERABILITY

Should any section, subsection, clause, provision or other portion of this ordinance be declared invalid by any court of competent jurisdiction, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remainder of this ordinance; the Board of Supervisors having adopted this ordinance as if such invalid portions had not been included therein.

SECTION 17 – REPEALER

All Ordinances or parts of Ordinances which are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

SECTION 18 – EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall become effective five (5) days after the adoption thereof.

SECTIONS AMENDED:

Section 4. ADDED "PARK MODEL" TO DEFINITIONS

Section 5. Subsection F, amended to read as follows:

PARK MODEL SHORT-TERM RENTALS – A park model structure may not be used as a short-term rental unless the structure is equipped with permanent water, sewer, and electrical connections, complies with current square footage requirements, and is less than twenty years old.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED into law by the Board of Supervisors of Washington Township, Lycoming County, Pennsylvania, this 6th day of April, 2026.

WASHINGTON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

By: _____
Brett Taylor, Chairman

_____
Zach Cleaver, Vice Chairman

_____
George Ulrich, Supervisor

ATTESTATION:

I, Susan Satteson, Secretary for the Township of Washington, do hereby attest and certify that the above ordinance was duly advertised according to law and was approved by a majority vote of the Washington Township Board of Supervisors at their regular meeting held on April 6, 2026.

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