

# **Bay County Plan for Opening Short-term Rentals**

May 16, 2020

The Bay County Plan for Opening Short-Term Rentals was developed using guidance from the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation, the Vacation Rental Management Association, and the Vacation Rental Hospitality Professionals, with input from Vacation Rental Management companies operating in Bay County. These guidelines seek to establish an industry wide best practice to ensure guest safety. The County recognizes the importance of keeping residents and visitors safe, and as such we would expect the following conditions to be required to reopen short term rentals.

## **Vacation Rental Reservations**

- Vacation rentals reservations and stays will be allowed from all U.S. states with a COVID-19 Case Rate less than 500 cases/100K residents as of May 14, 2020.
- Vacation rental reservations, from areas identified by Governor DeSantis as high risk, through Executive Orders, must be for periods longer than the quarantine period established in that Order. Guests occupying those vacation rentals must adhere to the quarantine restrictions or be subject to established criminal and civil penalties.

## **Best Practices**

- Use mobile platforms for customer service and communication with guests, including the acceptance of payments by mobile or electronic methods.
- Minimize direct guest contact with property owners or managers through remote check-in and check-out procedures.
- Post signage or other notices regarding the cleaning practices that are completed prior to each guest stay.
- Display signage or notices to guests in the rental property to frequently remind guests to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID-19, including the wiping and sanitation of touched surfaces.

## **Products, Cleaning Agents, and Equipment**

- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should use cleaning products in line with the EPA's list of products with "Emerging Viral Pathogens AND Human Coronavirus claims for use against SARS-CoV-2."
- Disinfecting procedures should allow for required dwell time to kill the viruses and microbes.
- Disinfectant products should be used on all major surfaces.

### **Cleaning and Inspections**

- Maintain adequate time between the conclusion of a guest stay and the check-in of the next guest stay for appropriate cleaning and sanitation.
- Clean and disinfect all frequently-touched surfaces in the property between each guest stay.
- Wash all linens, dishware, and other service items available for use by guests between each guest rental.
- Provide sufficient soap and surface sanitation supplies for guests to utilize in the vacation rental property during the guest's rental period.

### **Soft Surfaces and Upholstery**

- A pressurized pump sprayer should be used to distribute a sanitizing product across all soft surfaces.
- Dirty linens and bedding should be handled and sanitized in such a way as to safeguard cleaning staff and prevent the spread of viruses and germs.
- Linens and bedding should be professionally laundered for proper cleaning.
- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should remove gloves, use hand sanitizer and put on fresh gloves after handling dirty linens.
- Blankets/comforters should be removed for laundering and replaced with a freshly washed item, or covered with a freshly washed duvet cover as an alternative.

### **Trash Removal**

- For both inside and outside trash gathering, gloves and masks should be worn at all times.
- Disinfectant should be used on the trash barrel, and a fresh liner or bag should be used inside the barrel or bin.

### **Maintenance**

- All guests should vacate property before maintenance staff enters.
- Technicians should wear gloves and masks at all times, and dispose of those properly after exiting. Staff entering a property less than 18 hours after guests have vacated should wear splash goggles.

### **Owner and Guest Policies**

- Extra throw blankets, decorative pillows or other soft objects should be put away until further notice.

### **Common Areas - Lobbies, Pool Decks, Elevators, etc**

- Ensure adequate safety protocols are in place and publicly displayed, in line with CDC

guidance, regarding shared or multi-residence amenities such as pools, gyms, and other communal spaces.

- Lobby areas should be monitored and disinfected throughout the day
- Hand Sanitizer should be provided in all common areas, including lobbies, pool decks and elevators
- Elevators should be disinfected throughout the day.
- Pool furniture should be spaced to encourage social distancing (6ft apart)
- Pool furniture should be disinfected between each use.

### **Staffing Standards and Guidelines**

Vacation Rental Management Companies shall strive at all times to adhere to the following guidelines:

#### **1. Social Distancing**

- a. Encourage associates to maintain a safe distance (at least 6 feet) and not to gather in groups of larger than 10 people.
- b. Stagger arrival times to prevent congregating
- c. Limit access to break areas and look for areas where staff can spread out for breaks. Allow staff to eat their meals in their assigned areas, where possible.

#### **2. Masks, gloves and other personal protection equipment**

- a. Masks and gloves should be worn by all employees who interact with the public, unless a physical barrier such as a Plexiglas barrier separates the staff member from the guest is present. Appropriate cleaning supplies will be provided to clean their work areas and stations

#### **3. Wellness Checks**

- a. All staff members should receive a wellness check upon arrival to work. The wellness check, at a minimum, will consist of a temperature check.
- b. Staff members who have a temperature of 100.4 degrees or higher will not be permitted to work.

#### **4. Hygiene**

- a. Wash/sanitize your hands frequently especially after touching frequently used items or surfaces
- b. Avoid touching your face
- c. Sneeze or cough into a tissue or inside your elbow.
- d. Disinfect your work area frequently throughout a shift and before/after a shift if it is a shared space
- e. Individual hand sanitizers will be provided to employees for their assigned work area and for staff members who move through the property and/or community.

#### **5. Mandatory Training**

- a. All staff members will be required to train on and adhere to the minimum standards established by this plan.