



Janice P. Gilley
County Administrator

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
ESCAMBIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

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Secretary Halsey Beshears
Dept. of Business and Professional Regulations
2601 Blairstone Road
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-1027

Dear Secretary Beshears,

Thank you for your service to the citizens of Florida. As you are aware, tourism is a primary economic driver for Escambia County and we have suffered greatly. While we have heard from numerous owners, I have received information from three vacation rental owners that they have losses in excess of \$5M and nearly 1,000 employees have been laid off. Our residents need to return to work to generate income.

One quick way to restore Escambia County is for you to support the reopening of short-term vacation rentals to Florida residents and out-of-state visitors. Our community has experienced the loss of tourism in differing ways. For example, 100% of the transient housing on Perdido Key is affected by the current short-term vacation rental ban as there are no hotels on the island. Your assistance in allowing our rentals to reopen to guests when the owners follow specific guidelines provided by the CDC and the Vacation Rental Management Association will help us rebound more quickly.

I know you love this state and have committed yourself to public service. I am sure that you want to see Northwest Florida move beyond this economic downturn. Thank you for your consideration of the Escambia County plan for reopening short-term vacation rentals starting Monday, May 18th. I will review the plan weekly and provide updates to the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners.

Please feel free to contact me should you have any questions or concerns regarding our plan.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Janice P. Gilley". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Janice P. Gilley
County Administrator



Short-Term Vacation Rental Reopening Plan for Escambia County



Be calm. Be clean. Be healthy.
COVID-19 Information For Escambia County Citizens



Guidelines for Property Owners and Managers



To allow short-term vacation rental reservations and the acceptance of arriving guests in Escambia County, beginning the week of May 18 the following plan will be implemented. This plan will be reviewed weekly and updated as needed.

Reservations

- Reservations and stays will be allowed from U.S. states with a COVID-19 Case Rate less than 700 cases/100K residents as of May 15. (<https://www.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/index.html>)
- Reservations from COVID-19 hot spots identified by the Governor are to be avoided for the next 30-45 days.
- Reservations from international travelers will not be accepted.

Health and Safety of Guests

- Remote check-ins should be made available when possible to cut down on face-to-face interactions.
- [CDC resources](#) must be provided to any guest while staying on property. These resources are available in multiple languages at the CDC website.
- [CDC guidance](#) must be provided to guests traveling with pets and service/assistance animals if the property is pet friendly.
- All properties must provide local COVID-19 guidance for guests. Escambia County has a dedicated webpage that includes local information at myescambia.com/COVID19
- Employees or contractors working in short-term rentals will be provided [CDC related safety guidance](#) to alleviate the transmission of the virus and provide further protection for employees and guests.

Cleanliness of the Property

- All Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR) sanitation guidelines must be followed: [61C-3.001 Sanitation and Safety Requirements of the transient lodging statutes](#).
- [CDC related guidelines that are for public spaces, businesses, schools and homes](#) must be followed which expand upon the State of Florida and DBPR requirements for safety and sanitation for all lodging.
- Extra time must be allowed for enhanced cleaning procedures to take place between stays based upon the use of CDC cleaning and sanitization procedures.
- To inform guests signage will be placed at each property highlighting the cleaning protocols between stays.
- Upon exit, guests should be asked to turn on all ceiling fans and/or HVAC fans to facilitate air circulation.
- If multiple members of the cleaning and/or rental staff are present at a property, they should maintain at least 6 feet apart at all times, and wear masks and gloves.
- Elevators will be subject to frequent cleaning and sanitizing.
- Pool decks and other common areas will be monitored for cleanliness and disinfected regularly.

Short-Term Vacation Rental Reopening



Hand Washing & Hand Sanitizer

[CDC guidelines](#) shall govern the duty of all employees to engage in frequent hand washing for the duration of at least 20 seconds and use of hand sanitizer. Washing hands with soap and water is the preferable method. In situations where soap/water is not available, alcohol-based sanitizer is recommended. This should occur after any of the following activities: using the restroom, sneezing, touching the face, cleaning, smoking, eating, drinking, accepting items from a guest (ID, cash, credit card, key card), taking a break, and before a shift and as needed throughout the shift. When possible, employees shall wear gloves for added protection and sanitation efforts. Proper hand hygiene, in accordance with CDC guidelines, should be followed prior to and after removing the gloves.

Hand sanitizer dispensers shall include [no less than 60% alcohol content](#), where available, and touchless where possible. As available, dispensers shall be placed at key guest and employee entrances and contact areas. At a minimum, this will include lobby reception areas and employee entrances, but could also include any other reception areas, entire lobby areas, restaurant entrances, meeting spaces, elevator landings, pools, exercise areas and other public areas as applicable to the property.



Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

[CDC recommendations](#) along with federal and local government regulations shall dictate appropriate PPE to be worn.



Pools and Beaches

Seating shall allow at least six feet of separation between groups of guests.



Guest Health Concerns

Responding swiftly and reporting to local health officials any presumed cases of COVID-19 at the property shall be a staff-wide requirement. Employees exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 shall remain or return home. While at work, employees who notice a coworker or guest exhibiting symptoms of COVID-19 shall immediately contact a manager.

At a minimum, vacation rentals shall follow [CDC guidelines](#) for employers and businesses, including instructing employees to self-isolate for the required amount of time, as defined by the CDC, from the onset of symptoms and be symptom-free for at least three days without medication.



Case Notification

At minimum, confirmed cases of COVID-19 shall be immediately reported to [local health authorities](#) in accordance with appropriate actions recommended by the [CDC](#).



Physical Distancing & Queuing

As recommended by the [CDC's social distancing guidelines](#), guests shall be advised to practice physical distancing by standing at least six feet away from other groups of people not traveling with them, including any area where guests or employees queue.

Such areas shall be clearly marked for appropriate physical distancing, and where possible, encourage one-way guest flow with marked entrances and exits. When applicable, lobby furniture and other public seating areas will be reconfigured to promote social distancing.