

# Best Practices for Short-Term Rental Owners



## Guests

Most STR guests are great, but every once in a while, there's a bad apple. One way to combat this is to require that a guest have two positive reviews before allowing them to book. You can also turn off instant booking so that you can communicate with and approve each guest. You can ask them their reason for visiting and who will be accompanying them. You can also set your own age limit and max number of guests.

We highly recommend setting a two-night minimum, only renting to guests coming from out of town (unless the situation involves hurricane evacuees or something similar) and pricing your property appropriately (you don't need to be the cheapest on the market)!

Avoid taking a booking from a third-party, such as a family member of the person.

## Contact Information

Make sure you can easily get in touch with guests and that they can get in touch with you. If you don't live nearby or will be out of town during a stay, appoint someone local to handle issues for you.

You should also make sure that your neighbors have a way to contact you in case they have a concern/complaint.

## Safety & Security

Your home should have smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, a fire extinguisher and first aid kit. Be sure to communicate in your materials where these are located.

You can legally set up cameras outside your property to be able to monitor who's coming and going. You just have to state where the cameras are located in your listing materials.

## Parties

Your listing and all of your subsequent materials should state that you "do not allow parties of any type." When you are accepting a listing, you can ask who will be accompanying the person who made the booking and remind them that you don't allow parties/extra visitors. Some red flags for parties are local guests and one-night rentals. You should also establish clear consequences/protocol for people who break the rules. If someone has an unauthorized party, no matter the age, they will be asked to leave immediately and forfeit their deposit.

As a host, you need to do all you can to stop a party before it starts. If you see extra people/cars parked at your listing, inquire right away. If you see a rental truck parked in front, that's a red flag. If a neighbor has a concern, address it immediately (especially on social media).

Your "House Rules" should be posted inside the home in full view of guests so that it's one of the first things they see when they enter.

## **Occupancy**

Occupancy should include 2 people per bedroom unless you have a bunk room or something similar. Still, occupancy should equal the number of people in beds so to discourage parties and overcapacity.

## **Parking**

Communicate to guests where they can park and how many cars/type of vehicle you can fit at your rental. You can set a maximum number of cars (we suggest two). Having plenty of street parking is great, but you want to make sure to leave parking for your neighbors as well. If guests have too many vehicles, you can suggest they park one or two in a public place.

## **Trash**

Let guests know where the outside trash/recycle bins are located and what day trash pickup is. That way, trash doesn't pile up inside or outside the house. You can also let guests know what can and can't be recycled in Lafayette Parish (<https://www.lafayettela.gov/public-works/curbside-services/recycling/guidelines>).

## **Noise**

Make it clear to guests the hours that are designated by your city as "quiet" (7 a.m.-10 p.m.) You can even adjust these by an hour or two, depending on the type of neighbors you have. Let guests know what will happen if they violate the quiet hours (they will be asked to leave, extra charge, etc.)

## **Pets**

Set clear rules if you allow pets, such as waste pickup, noise and where they are/are not allowed on the property.

## **Community**

Offer guests suggestions on where to eat, shop, recreate, etc. You can create a list of your favorite places in Lafayette, neighborhood hangouts or cultural excursions. The Lafayette Welcome Center also has tons of brochures, magazines and guides that you can leave in your rental for guests to check out.

## **Contacts**

AirBnB Neighborhood Support

*If you need help with something related to home sharing in your community—to report a party, noise, or a neighborhood concern.*

<https://www.airbnb.com/neighbors>

VRBO Neighborhood Support

<https://homeaway.secure.force.com/helpcenter/StayNeighborly>

Lafayette Tourism Lodging Association

[info@lafayettela.org](mailto:info@lafayettela.org)

Lafayette Planning & Zoning

(337) 291-8000

[DP@LafayetteLA.gov](mailto:DP@LafayetteLA.gov)

Lafayette Police Department

Call 911

*If you have suggestions for these best practices, e-mail [info@lafayettela.org](mailto:info@lafayettela.org). Updated 4/1/2022*