

Item: Plan for re-opening vacation and short-term rentals.

Description:

On Friday, May 15, Governor Ron DeSantis issued Executive Order 20-123 which transitioned the state to a full Phase 1 reopening.

As part of the full Phase 1, counties may seek approval to operate vacation rentals by submitting a written request and county vacation rental safety plan to the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.

So far, Bay, Charlotte, Citrus, Clay, Collier, Dixie, Duval, Escambia, Flagler, Franklin, Gilchrist, Gulf, Lafayette, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Nassau, Okaloosa, Osceola, Pinellas, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, St. Johns, Sumter, Wakulla, and Walton counties have had their vacation rental plans approved.

Requested Action: Adopt the attached plan and authorize forwarding same to the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation.



Board of County Commissioners

13150 80th Terrace Live Oak, FL 32060

May 26, 2020

RE: Plan for Reopening Short Term Vacation Rentals (Suwannee County)

The Suwannee County Board of County Commissioners would like to submit the following for consideration in the reopening of short-term vacation rentals. The following cleaning guidelines should be considered for distribution to short term rentals as they prepare for reopening. The guidelines suggested by the Vacation Rental Housekeeping Professionals (VRHP) and the Vacation Rental Management Association (VRMA) are summarized below and attached in full. These guidelines should be implemented alongside and align with CDC standards to build confidence in traversers and industry employees that their health and safety is a top priority. These guidelines would provide an industry wide standard for the vacation rental industry. *In addition to the cleaning guidelines, we would require that during the initial phase, properties not allow rentals to visitors from communities with substantial community spread of COVID-19 or international travelers.* We recognize the priority of keeping both our residents and visitors safe and feel the below guidelines would allow for a safe reopening of short-term vacation rentals.

COVID-19 Disinfection and Sanitization

- Surfaces should be cleaned and then disinfected, in two distinct steps.
- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should dispose of gloves and use hand sanitizer before entering their vehicle.
- Cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should follow CDC handwashing guidelines throughout the day.
- All cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should wear masks and disposable gloves and be trained in their proper usage. (Including disposing of gloves and masks as needed.)
- All cleaning personnel and vacation rental staff should wear splash goggles that protect their eyes from air and/or liquid.

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

- Extra time must be allowed for enhanced cleaning procedure to take place.
- Guests should be asked to turn on all ceiling fans and/or HVAC fans when leaving to facilitate air circulation.
- If multiple members of the cleaning and/or vacation rental staff are present at a property, they should maintain at least 6' apart at all times, and wear masks and gloves.
- Remote check ins should be made available when possible to cut down on face to face interactions.
- Elevators will be subject to frequent inspections, cleaning and sanitizing.
- Pool decks and other common areas will be monitored for cleanliness and disinfected and sanitized regularly as well as be subject to enforcement of social distance guidelines.

Soft Surfaces and Upholstery

- A pressurized pump sprayer should be used to distributed 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. (See VRMA/VRHP recommendations.)
- 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.
- Linens and bedding should be professionally laundered for proper cleaning.

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. Anyone 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.

Telling Your Story

- Notice should be provided to guests alerting them that the property has been properly cleaned and sanitized.

We ask that you consider implementation of these industry-suggested guidelines when considering reopening short-term rentals in Suwannee County.

Sincerely,

Len K. Stapleton
Chairman