

Manatee County, Florida

Manatee County Vacation Rentals Plan for Phased Opening

Updated and Approved by state officials:
7/8/2020

PLAN FOR PHASED OPENING

NOTE: The Manatee County Plan for Opening Short-Term Vacation Rentals for the safe and healthy reopening of vacation rentals in Manatee County was unanimously approved by the Manatee County Board of County Commissioners during a meeting on May 19, 2020. It is effective as of May 21, after having been reviewed and approved by the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation and the Executive Office of the Governor Ron DeSantis.

The Manatee County Plan for Opening Short-Term Vacation Rentals was developed using guidance from the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation (DBPR). This Plan seeks to establish industry-wide best practices to ensure guest safety as the County recognizes the importance of keeping residents and visitors safe.

Tourism remains the top industry in Manatee County, and vacation rentals are a critical part of the tourism industry network that operates with strong success in our community. Local standards and guidelines directly align with the Governor's Safe. Smart. Step-By-Step Plan for Reopening Florida. In the County's plan to open vacation rentals, the same Safe. Smart. Step-By-Step guidelines will be employed to allow vacation rentals to reopen *safely* for visitors, vacation rental owners and hospitality staff. The guidance from the Department of Business and Professional Regulations (DBPR) and the May 15, 2020 issued guidelines are followed: <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/os/documents/2020.05.15%20Posted%20Recommended%20Safety%20Measures%20and%20Best%20Practices%20for%20Vacation%20Rentals.pdf>

This plan will be reviewed at least bi-weekly and updated as necessary. As with all our reopening strategies, public health and safety is at the forefront to address the vacation rental sector in Manatee County.

RESERVATIONS

1. Vacation rental reservations, from areas identified by Governor DeSantis as high risk, through Executive Orders (currently EO 20-82 New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO_20-82.pdf and EO 20-86 Louisiana https://www.flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/orders/2020/EO_20-86.pdf must be longer than the quarantine period established in that Order. Guests occupying those vacation rentals must adhere to the quarantine restrictions.
2. Prohibit rentals from international travelers in a country with a substantial community spread of COVID-19 and prohibited by Executive Order: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/from-other-countries.html>.
3. The number of guests in each rental will be limited to no more than 10 persons and expand in accordance with State guidelines as new phases are entered. The number of guests allowed should abide by local ordinance occupancy limits.

HEALTH & SAFETY OF GUESTS

1. Use mobile platforms for customer service and communication with guests, including the acceptance of payments by mobile or electronic methods.
2. Minimize direct guest contact with property owners or managers through remote check-in and check-out procedures.
3. Using reservation desk, guests shall practice social distancing by standing at least six feet from other groups not in their party, including any queue areas. Such areas shall be clearly marked for physical distancing, and where possible, encourage one-way guest flow with marked entrances and exits.
4. CDC resources must be provided to any guest staying on property at the time of arrival. Resources will be available in multiple languages at the CDC website.
5. CDC guidance must be provided to guests traveling with pets and service/assistance animals if the property is pet friendly. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-lifecoping/animals.html>
6. Employees or contractors working in short-term rentals will be provided the CDC related safety guidance to alleviate the transmission of the virus and provide further protection for employees and guests.
7. 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.
8. Post signage or other notices regarding the cleaning practices that are completed prior to each guest stay including ample time to complete all CDC sanitizing guidelines between guest check out and new guest check in.
9. Display signage or notices to remind guests to take steps to prevent the spread of COVID19, including the wiping and sanitation of touched surfaces.
10. Property owners and managers will provide COVID-19 guidance regarding any local restrictions that are in place during the guest stay and other related local information. The county has posted online all current information related to such restrictions for easy accessibility.
11. Encourage all guests and staff to:
 - a. Abide by social distancing rules and remain 6' apart in all directions.
 - b. Wash hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
 - c. Cover coughs and sneezes. If soap and water are not readily available, use a hand sanitizer with 60% alcohol.

CLEANLINESS OF PROPERTY

1. 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.
http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/hr/statutes/documents/61C_1348-bookmarks.pdf
2. 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.
3. All staff members will be required to receive training on and adhere to the minimum standards established by this plan.
4. Extra time must be allowed for enhanced cleaning procedures to take place between stays based upon the use of appropriate cleaning and sanitation according to CDC procedures and in accordance with Health & Safety of Guests, item 9, of this plan.
5. 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."
6. If multiple members of the cleaning and/or rental staff are present at a property, they should maintain a distance of at least 6 feet apart. All guests must vacate the property before maintenance and cleaning staff enters a property.
7. Pool decks and other common areas will be monitored for cleanliness and disinfected regularly.
8. Wash all linens, dishware, and other service items available for use by guests between each guest rental.
9. Extra throw blankets, decorative pillows or other soft objects should be put away until further notice.
10. For both inside and outside trash gathering, gloves and masks should be worn at all times. Disinfectant should be used on the trash containers and a fresh liner or bag be used inside the barrel or bin.
11. Disinfectant products should be used on all major surfaces
12. Clean and disinfect all frequently touched surfaces in the property between each guest stays.
13. If using an external or professional cleaning company, communicate expectations and plans for cleaning and disinfection standards, and get periodic confirmation that they are being followed by the company contracted.
14. Provide sufficient soap and surface sanitation supplies for guests to utilize in the vacation rental property during the guest's rental period.
15. If guests clean the property themselves, all CDC guidelines must be adhered to. Regardless, implement disinfection procedures.

GUEST HEALTH CONCERNS

1. Respond swiftly and report to local health officials of any presumed case of COVID-19 at the property shall be required.
2. Employees and guests 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.