

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)
South Portland Supplement #1 Emergency Regulations dated April 2, 2020
Short Term Rentals and Self-Quarantine

SHORT TERM RENTALS

Q: What is a short term rental, as defined by these regulations?

For purposes of these regulations, short-term rental means the use, control, management or operation of a dwelling unit or accessory dwelling unit, in whole or in part; for use by guests for dwelling, sleeping or lodging purposes; for compensation, directly or indirectly; for less than 30 consecutive days; and without regard to whether the unit is registered under Chapter 14 of the South Portland Code of Ordinances.

Q: I operate a short term rental. What does this mean to me?

You are prohibited from renting or continuing to rent through at least April 30, even for those with whom you already have an arrangement with. For those who are not yet here, you must cancel their reservation and inform them the rental is no longer available. For those who are in the rental as of the effective date of this regulation (noon on Friday, April 3), they must vacate the premises no later than noon on Friday, April 10. If they are from out of state or country, they must also self-quarantine during their stay. These regulations do not apply to stays of more than 30 days.

Q: I am currently in or am coming to a reservation at a short term rental in South Portland. What does this mean to me?

If you are currently in a short term rental with a term of less than 30 days, you must vacate no later than Friday, April 10 at noon. You must also remain quarantined for your first 14 days here if coming from out of state or out of the country.

Q: Are there any exceptions?

Short-term rentals in South Portland are prohibited through at least April 30, 2020, unless such rentals are for the following purposes:

1. To house a Maine resident who is homeless;
2. To house a health care professional who is coming to South Portland to join the COVID-19 response;
3. To house individuals who need a place to isolate away from their families because they have contracted COVID-19 or are being quarantined for having been exposed to or possibly testing positive for COVID-19;
4. To house individuals who are in South Portland to care for a family member or friend, including someone who may have contracted COVID-19;
5. To house public safety individuals (*i.e.*, police and/or fire/EMS personnel) who are in South Portland to provide assistance in the area based on a request from a municipal, county, or state governmental agency or department; or
6. To house individuals (and their children, if applicable) who are victims of domestic violence.

Q: I see out of state plates in a driveway of a known short term rental house. Why are they still here?

The regulations allow those currently here to remain until April 10 at noon. In addition, the regulations do not apply to rentals of 30 days or more. If you suspect someone is here for a stay shorter than 30 days and it is past April 10 at noon, please contact our City Clerk's office and we will investigate (see below).

Q: I paid for a short term rental registration and now I cannot rent for part of April (at least). Is this City going to pro-rate my registration fee?

Registration fees are set by City Council and cannot be waived or prorated by the City Manager, even with the emergency powers granted to him. The City Council could opt to revisit this in the future, but as of now, there are no plans to do so.

Q: Are hotels/motels also prohibited from renting?

Not at this time. Many hotels are being used for essential business purposes. Others have voluntarily shut down due to a lack of business. We will continue to monitor hotels and motels to see if any of their guests are contributing to the spread of COVID-19 and may take additional steps if warranted. Those staying at hotels are still subject to a 14 day self-quarantine if they are traveling from out-of-state or out-of-the country, unless for one of the exceptions listed in the new regulations.

Q: When do these short term rental regulations take effect and for how long are they effective?

The regulations take effect at noon on Friday, April 3 and run through at least April 30, 2020. However, the prohibition on rentals may be extended beyond this date so renters are advised to proceed with caution for booking beyond this date as those arrangements may need to be canceled as well.

Q: Is there a penalty for violating the terms of the short term rental regulations?

Yes. Pursuant to Sec. 8-2.13 of the Code of Ordinances, the penalty for violation of or failure to comply with these regulations, in addition to injunctive relief, is a fine of at least \$100 but not greater than \$5,000 per occurrence, plus the costs of prosecution.

Q: What if I feel someone is violating the terms of the short term rental regulations?

Contact the City Clerk's office at 207-767-3201 or escully@southportland.org.

SELF-QUARANTINE

Q: I have arrived in South Portland from out-of-state/out-of-country. What do these regulations mean to me?

All persons arriving in the City of South Portland from another state or country and who are not merely passing through South Portland (and without regard to whether they are residents of Maine) are ordered to immediately self-quarantine for a period of fourteen (14) days. Self-quarantine is stricter than a stay-at-home order and requires that an individual stay in a quarantine location; not go to work;

not conduct, or travel to and from, essential activities as defined in the Governor of Maine's March 31, 2020 Executive Order No. 28 FY 19/20, "An Order Regarding Further Restrictions on Public Contact and Movement, Schools, Vehicle Travel and Retail Business Operations"; not use public transportation; separate from other individuals in a residence as much as possible; use standard hygiene and wash hands frequently; and avoid sharing personal items, towels and utensils.

Q: Are there any exceptions to the self-quarantine regulations?

Yes. First off, if you need medical attention, you are permitted to leave to get that attention.

In addition, the following individuals are exempt from self-quarantining:

1. Maine residents who are homeless;
2. Health care professionals coming to South Portland to join the COVID-19 response;
3. Individuals who need a place to isolate away from their families because they have contracted COVID-19 or are being quarantined for having been exposed to or possibly testing positive for COVID-19;
4. Individuals who are in South Portland to care for a family member or friend, including someone who may have contracted COVID-19;
5. Public safety individuals (*i.e.*, police and/or fire/EMS personnel) who are in South Portland to provide assistance in the area based on a request from a municipal, county, or state governmental agency or department; or
6. Individuals (and their children, if applicable) who are victims of domestic violence.

Q: Can I access an essential service if I am self-quarantined, such as groceries?

No. The only reason someone in self-quarantine may leave their quarantine is to seek medical attention. Delivery services for groceries from friends, family, volunteers, or paid delivery services are options that should be utilized. Visit our website for a list of potential resources.

Q: Does the self-quarantine apply to me as a resident, too?

Yes. While the main purpose of the regulations are to discourage people coming from high infection states and spreading the virus in our community, risk is also associated with our own residents who may travel out-of-state or the country for various purposes. That travel is riskier than if they had been subject to the stay at home order issued by the City at the end of March. Therefore, they must also self-quarantine to help prevent the spread of the virus and also distance themselves from others in their household.

Q: When do these short term rental regulations take effect and for how long are they effective?

These regulations take effect on Friday, April 3 at noon and are in place for an indefinite period until either rescinded or modified by the City Manager or the emergency proclamation is terminated by the City Council.

Q: Is there a penalty for violating the terms of the self-quarantine regulations?

Yes. Pursuant to Sec. 8-2.13 of the Code of Ordinances, the penalty for violation of or failure to comply with these regulations, in addition to injunctive relief, is a fine of at least \$100 but not greater than \$5,000 per occurrence, plus the costs of prosecution.

Q: What if I feel someone is violating the terms of the self-quarantine regulations?

Contact the Local Health officer at 207-799-3314 extension 7376 or jpobrislo@southportland.org so that he can investigate, or call the South Portland Police Department at 207-799-5511.