



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE
City Commission Agenda Memo
CONFERENCE MEETING

#26-0219

TO: Honorable Mayor & Members of the Fort Lauderdale City Commission

FROM: Rickelle Williams, City Manager

DATE: June 2, 2026

TITLE: Vacation Rental Enforcement: Current Practices and Opportunities for Enhancement – Community Services Department (**Commission Districts 1, 2, 3 and 4**)

The City Commission will receive an overview of the City of Fort Lauderdale’s existing vacation rental enforcement framework, including commonly enforced violations, enforcement methods, and penalty provisions designed to address quality-of-life impacts of vacation rentals on residential neighborhoods. The presentation also includes a comparison with neighboring municipalities and opportunities for enhanced enforcement.

City staff routinely evaluate the vacation rental registration program and enforcement procedures to ensure operational effectiveness, enforcement consistency, and alignment with community expectations. When appropriate, staff provides the City Commission with program updates and recommended refinements.

Ordinance amendments and program enhancements must be compliant with State of Florida law governing vacation rentals which largely preempts local governments from selectively enforcing vacation rentals in a manner differently than other similar uses or banning them completely. Based on the State’s preemption, the City may require registration of vacation rentals and charge a reasonable registration fee as well as regulate issues including maximum occupancy, noise, parking, and safety standards.

The most recent comprehensive review of the City’s vacation rental program was presented to the City Commission on February 7, 2023. As a result of that presentation, the City Commission moved forward and ultimately approved several ordinance amendments, including:

1. Requiring vacation rental operators to install noise monitoring devices at their properties;
2. Increasing penalties for properties operating during a suspension of their vacation rental license to up to one thousand dollars (\$1,000) per day for a first violation and five thousand dollars (\$5,000) per day for a repeat violation; and

3. Establishing a penalty of up to fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) for violations that are irreparable or irreversible in nature.

Additionally, staff conducted a comprehensive review of the vacation rental program's revenues and expenditures and determined that existing registration fees were not achieving full cost recovery. Based on this financial analysis and supporting data presented to the City Commission, the Commission approved an increase to vacation rental registration fees on September 16, 2025, to ensure full program cost recovery.

Since those amendments and the increase to the registration fees, staff has continued to monitor enforcement trends, operational challenges, and community concerns. Staff has participated in ongoing vacation rental meetings with interested parties, peer jurisdictions, and community stakeholders to discuss enforcement trends and potential policy adjustments. Feedback received has been evaluated and incorporated into the proposed refinements presented herein.

Staff has also conducted a comparative review of how neighboring municipalities regulate and enforce vacation rentals. This analysis highlights variations in enforcement structure and penalty provisions and informs opportunities to strengthen clarity and consistency within Fort Lauderdale's existing framework.

The proposed updates to the City's vacation rental ordinance are intended to clarify enforcement authority, strengthen compliance, and prevent the circumvention of local regulations. Key refinements include:

- Correcting a scrivener's error regarding the 425-day suspension period and establishing explicit authority to assess penalties of \$1,000 per day for properties operating without a valid Certificate of Compliance;
- The issuance or renewal of certificates will be prohibited if unpaid fines exist;
- Defining a rolling twelve (12)-month compliance period and mandating property access for safety-related inspections; and
- To prevent the evasion of enforcement, these proposed changes codify that all violations, suspensions, and revocations remain enforceable despite changes in ownership or entity structure when continuity of control exists.

The presentation, attached as Exhibit 1, is intended to provide the City Commission with an updated overview of the current enforcement program, compare the City's program to other municipalities, and facilitate discussion regarding potential ordinance refinements to further enhance the effectiveness of registering and monitoring vacation rentals operating in the City.

Attachment

Exhibit 1 – Vacation Rental Enforcement Presentation

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