

FAQs

Measure T:

As of 11/25/19 pending litigation's next action will be held April 10, 2020.

Measure T, voted in November 2018, Effective December 2018. All items in Measure T have been incorporated into the current [city code](#) with the exception of the 12 occupant maximum. There has been a lawsuit which has not yet been adjudicated. The main item that effects VHRs is there are no more VHR permits being issued in the residential zones. There is no change to the Tourist Core, the Commercial or Recreational zones.

VHR Citations:

Citations for VHR infractions range from \$250 to \$1,000 and will be issued to occupants and/or owners. The fee per Event shall not exceed \$1,000. The main items are: Trash not contained in the required bear box is issued to the owner at \$1,000; Excessive Noise for the time of day/circumstances are \$500 for both occupants and owners; Over occupancy (at any time or duration) are \$500 for both occupants and owners; Hot Tub use after 10pm are \$500 for both occupants and owners; parking not on a paved surface or exceeding the permitted # of vehicles are \$250 for both occupants and owners. Often owners will pass on their citation fees to the occupants as well.

How does the new VHR Complaint line [\(530\) 542-7474](tel:5305427474) process work?

Background: In January of 2018, the City contracted with Host Compliance for 2 main products: 1/ to identify the addresses of advertised short term rentals here and compare them to the list of permitted VHRs 2/ to provide a 24/7 complaint hotline for VHR complaints.

Host Compliance's Call Center handles calls for service for multiple municipalities. They do not know the specifics of each municipality's service levels. The City of South Lake Tahoe's are below.

The hotline is particularly useful as the City's Police Dispatch, who handle all 911 and 530 542-6011 (non-emergency) calls for Police and Fire, were not always able to immediately dispatch a VHR CSO or police officer if other high activity calls were in progress. The City was authorized to increase the VHR CSO staff to handle the calls quickly, but periodic late dispatches resulted in delayed responses.

Here is what to expect. After calling 530 542-7474, you will receive a series of automated questions and will then be transferred to a live customer service agent.

It advises you to:

- Press 1 if calling about a disturbance at a particular VHR (you need to know the full address) or Press 2 if you have general questions
- Press 1 to enter your phone # in case further detail is needed (not shared with anyone); Press 2 to remain anonymous
- Press 1 if you have a photo or video to submit to the CSO; Press 2 if none

- Press 1 if it is regarding a Noise, Parking, or Trash Complaint and then:
 - Press 1 Loud Party, Press 2 Noise, Press 3 Trespassing, Press 4 Parking, Press 5 Trash, Press 6 Other
- Press 1 or 2 to advise the person responsible for the property (the point is to get compliance as quickly as possible in order to eliminate the disturbance. The City has instructed that the Local Contact will always be advised (via a robo-call at the end of the call) regardless of which # you press)
- Press 1 to receive a call back to see if problem is resolved (in 30 minutes), Press 2 if no callback needed

You are then transferred to a live agent to give as many details about the disturbance as possible. Noise/parties and parking will get top priority, unpermitted VHRs and Trash will be a lower priority.

IMPORTANT: a VHR CSO receives a text message immediately upon the end of the call. If you have other items to discuss, please ask for the CSO to give you a call back. Arguing with the Customer Service rep on the phone will only delay our CSO response. They will take all details about the complaint. Their job is to get the call dispatched as quickly as possible to resolve the disturbance. The Customer Service rep does not have any input on how the process should work. They are to politely and professionally document and dispatch. Please contact the City during regular business hours if you have some recommendations at 530 542-6071 or vhrcomplaints@cityofslt.us.

The Customer Service reps issue a disclaimer at the end of each call which says “Your local authority may not review this call until the next business day” – this is a generic statement. Our complaint calls are dispatched immediately. Calls for information or general questions are followed-up on the next business day.

Why is a local contact called?

Local contacts are called when the complaint is dispatched. It is a “robo-call” from the customer service center. It advises the Local Contact that a complaint has been made and the nature of the complaint. It is dispatched 40 minutes after the VHR CSO has been alerted to the complaint. The goal is to quiet any disturbances from noise, loud party, or bad behavior as quickly as possible. The CSO will, in most cases, be en route to the complaint call. They have no power to evict tenants; the local contact does.

Should I contact Code Enforcement at the Police Department for permit or administrative related questions such as renewals, TOT, etc.?

T.O.T. questions should be directed to Finance at revenue@cityofslt.us

Applications for the tourist core should be directed to mstuhلمان@cityofslt.us

All other permit questions should be directed to Development Services at VHR@cityofslt.us

How do I appeal a citation?

The appeal can be by phone, in person, or in writing. The total of the amount of the fine plus an appeal fee of \$100, along with the completed appeal form, must be received within 30 calendar days of the issuance of the citation. The appeal may be made online at www.citationprocessingcenter.com. You will need to know the Citation number and the time of the citation. The request to appeal must include the total amount of the fine, the service charge, and the \$100 appeal fee. If by mail, send to:

City of South Lake Tahoe
C/O Citation Processing Center
P.O. Box 7275
Newport Beach, CA 92658-7275

Please include your reasons for the appeal. Failure to pay the total amount of the fine, submit within 30 days of the citation date, or submit the appeal details, shall render the appeal incomplete. You will be notified upon your acceptance of the appeal and then later of your hearing date. All of the instructions for the appeal are on the back of the citation itself. [Appeal Form when mailed](#)

Does an officer have to personally observe a violation to issue a citation?

Yes. The only exception is when Clean Tahoe sends enforcement a time/date stamped photo of a trash violation.

Are service vehicles and owner/agent/property manager personnel exempt from vehicle/parking restrictions, or can we receive a citation for visiting to service the home? Service vehicles are not counted in the vehicle count at a VHR.

My VHR has a large, unpaved, unused side yard. If I store my boat trailer there, would I be in violation of the VHR ordinance?

The answer is yes, as it is parked on an unpaved surface. It would also be counted in your vehicle count.

Will city snow removal issue a citation if a car is parked, while servicing the home, on the street with no other option?

Probably. That's not necessarily a VHR related question. Officers may have the same discretion as any other non-VHR situation. The snow removal conditions are so the plows do not have to expend valuable time working around vehicles on the street. It is time consuming and dangerous.

Are there other types of permits I can apply for since Measure T? A Qualified VHR Permit is included in Measure T. The "qualified" requirement is that the property must be the primary residence of the property owner (as determined by the County's Homeowner's Exemption) AND the property owner must reside there for the majority of the year. It is the same application procedure at Development Services (Tata office) as well as the same fee. It cannot be rented for more than 30 days per year to short term renters.

There is also a Shared Home Business License is not a VHR permit but a Business License. Currently someone can rent a portion of their home to short term renters. They are doing business in the City so they need a Business License and they are short term rentals, so they need to pay TOT. There is no specific ordinance for this scenario. The thinking was that the owner/long term tenant renting part of the home would eliminate disturbances to the neighbors.

How do I determine if I'm in the tourist core?

Please consult the map at <http://www.cityofslt.us/index.aspx?nid=453> and scroll to the bottom of the screen. The black outlined area of the map is the tourist core. A new map outlining the Commercial/Recreational Zones vs Residential Zones that pertains to the 12/20/2018 Voter initiated VHR ordinance can be found at this [link](#).

Can I get a VHR permit for a Duplex in the Tourist Core or Commercial Area? No. Existing multi-family properties will (pending litigation) expire on their renewal date in 2021. No new permits for multi-family properties (includes duplexes) have been issued since 2015 including the Tourist Core.

Can I be in my own hot tub after 10pm, exceed occupancy/vehicle restrictions if my home is a permitted VHR?

Yes. As long as the owner is present, the vacation rental rules do not apply. It is a good idea to take the time to meet your neighbors when you are in town. Otherwise they may still call for VHR violations or complaints.

What if I want to have a seasonal lease at my VHR?

The lease must be for greater than 30 consecutive days. All lessees must have access to the property for the entire duration of the lease. Submit the lease in advance to mstuhman@cityofslt.us. VHR rules are suspended during the lease term. T.O.T. must be filed but no T.O.T. fees will be assessed.

Can guests meet at a rental (exceeding occupancy) to caravan away from the property without being subject to an excess vehicle violation?

No. Vehicle and occupancy limitations are for the entire party. Guests or friends stopping by must not exceed the permitted occupancy and/or vehicle limitations. Note: commercial vehicles (cabs/ busses/ limos/uber) are permitted to be at a VHR for up to four hours without being in violation.

If a vehicle is partially parked on dirt, even if the VHR limitations are not exceeded, can a citation be issued?

Yes. The code states that vehicles that are attached to VHR occupants/guests must only be parked on a paved surface of the property or inside the garage. We would recommend that VHR owners clearly indicate where the vehicles can park, along with the dimensions for access to garages, etc. If guests arrive with 4 very large vehicles, they may not be able to easily park them on the designated spaces and could receive a \$250 citation.

When can trash be left outside of a vacation rental?

Any day other than the actual day of trash collection would constitute a violation. Effective July 31st, 2018*, all VHRs shall be required to have a bear box. No trash will ever be allowed to be placed outside of the bear box (including paper, recycling, boxes, etc.). Most Tahoe locals know not to put trash out on their personal property the night before trash day because of bears and they don't face the threat of \$1000 fine. VHR guests must be made aware of this.

If the bear box is too full to add any more trash, what should I do?

If instructions aren't left for how the guests should handle excess trash then they should contact the owner/agent/property manager/local contact. It is recommended that there are instructions on how to open and secure the bear box as well....many visitors do not even know what a bear box is. It should be removed from the property immediately.

What are the size requirements for can in Bear Boxes?

The common size is 2- 32 gallon cans, however, there are styles available that accommodate 3- 30 gallon cans that are square (there is a speculation that due to the shape they may accommodate the same volume as a 32-gallon can). From the collection standpoint STR is not concerned with either, as long as the cans do not exceed 45 gallon capacity or weigh more than 50lbs ([Bear Box flyer per STR](#))

Can I get an exemption for my existing Bear Box?

The City Code has been updated to include, *“The requirements of this subsection shall not apply to any person whose Vacation Home Rental is within a common interest development subject to the Davis-Stirling Common Interest Development Act, as set forth in Civil Code section 4000 et seq., provided that the board of directors of the association governing the common interest development has implemented rules or regulations requiring and enforcing the regular disposal of trash within such common interest development.”*

Trash/Yard waste: As a Vacation Rental, will we be fined for putting out green waste street- side for pick-up as almost all neighbors do? The ordinance specifies trash, not green waste.

It is pretty clear to our CSOs (and hopefully neighbors) what a bag of trash (recycling or regular trash) looks like vs yard waste. The ordinance is written so that people will not put bags that would be enticing to critters out prior to trash day. This is an ordinance for all properties in Tahoe.

When the VHR ordinance goes into effect requiring bear boxes (7/31/18), trash and recycling bags/containers must all be inside the bear box. There is no way 10-20 bags of pine cones and pine needles would ever fit in a bear box.

If/when we find critters getting into them, we may have to revise our enforcement, however at this time, green yard waste in bags, properly closed, will not result in a citation.

We hope this clarifies how the ordinance is enforced.

If there are any items needed to be added to this FAQ, please email mstuhlman@cityofslt.us. Thank you.

Last updated 10/21/2019

