

ORDINANCE NO. \_\_\_\_

AN ORDINANCE OF THE BRIDGETON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS AMENDING THE BRIDGETON TOWNSHIP ZONING ORDINANCE BY ADDING PROVISIONS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN ACCESSORY SHORT-TERM RENTAL USE.

IT IS HEREBY ORDAINED AND ENACTED by the Board of Supervisors of Bridgeton Township, Bucks County, Pennsylvania, as follows:

ARTICLE I.           PURPOSE

Bridgeton Township's residents, businesses, property owners and visitors value the many qualities of life that make Bridgeton Township a great place to live and visit. It is recognized that Short-Term Rentals, when properly managed and regulated, can provide economic benefits to the Township's residents. However, absent proper limitations and accountability, Short-Term Rentals have the potential to negatively impact adjoining property owners, neighborhoods, and the community at large. This Ordinance amends the Township's Zoning Code to provide standards for the establishment of Short-Term Rentals throughout Bridgeton Township. The regulations are intended to balance the economic opportunity for Bridgeton Township residents created by Short-Term Rentals with the need to maintain the Township's residential character and protect the rights and safety of property owners, guests and neighbors.

ARTICLE II.           ACCESSORY USES

Section 202, Home Occupation, of the Bridgeton Township Zoning Ordinance shall be revised to read as follows, while the remainder of the regulations under this Section shall remain unchanged:

A customary home occupation for gain. An accessory home occupation is an accessory use that shall be clearly subordinate to the existing residential use of the property. Such uses shall meet the general standards listed below, as well as any specific standards relating to the type of accessory home occupation proposed. The specific standards are listed under 403.D.9.

ARTICLE III. USE REGULATIONS

A. Section 202 of the Bridgeton Township Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to include the following definitions related to a “Short-Term Rental” use, and shall read as follows:

**Autonomous Dwelling Unit.** A Dwelling that is the Operator’s Primary Residence and which is being offered in its entirety, as a Short-Term Rental. The Operator is not staying in the Dwelling during the term of said rental.

**Operator.** A natural person who is a Bridgeton Township Resident and the owner of a Dwelling that seeks to offer the Dwelling as a short-term rental.

**Primary Residence.** A Dwelling owned by the Operator and in which an Operator resides for at least six months out of a 12-month period. Primary residence shall be demonstrated by showing that as of the date of usage applying for registration or renewal as a Short-Term Rental, the Operator has resided in the Dwelling for six of the past 12 months or that the Operator intends to reside in the Dwelling for six of the next 12 months, in accordance with the proof of primary residence requirements set forth below.

**Proof of Primary Residence.** A copy of the deed, driver's license or state issued identification, as well as one other document showing residency at the Dwelling being proposed for the Short-Term Rental, such as: utility bill, cable bill, motor vehicle registration, passport or tax return reflecting the address of the Dwelling as the Primary Residence. It is the burden of the applicant to demonstrate primary residency in the Township. After demonstrating proof of primary residency in the initial application, a declaration must be submitted to Bridgeton Township during the first ninety days of the next applicable even calendar year attesting to continued primary residency when the short-term rental is identified as such in the original application.

**Shared Dwelling.** A Dwelling that is the Operator’s Primary Residence and only a portion of the Residential Dwelling is being offered as a Short-Term Rental. The Operator shall be staying on the property in which the Residential Dwelling or legally established accessory dwelling is located during the term of said rental.

**Short-Term Rental.** The rental of a Primary Residence, accessory building or Shared Dwelling, for its intended purpose, in exchange for payment, as residential accommodations, for a duration of fewer than 28 consecutive days. Such a rental may or may not be facilitated through the use of a booking agent.

B. Section 403.D of the Bridgeton Township Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to add the following:

18. Standards for Short-Term Rental Use

1. Accessory use. This Short-Term Rental Use shall be accessory only to an Autonomous Dwelling Unit and shall be allowed only when:

- (a) The entire Primary Residence and accessory building may be rented out as a Short-Term Rental, in accordance with the provisions of this Ordinance.

- (b) The Operator has obtained a Short-Term Rental permit from the Township.
  - (c) Short-Term Rentals not owned by a Bridgeton Township Residents are not permitted.
  - (d) The Single Family Detached Dwelling is the principal building on the property and used by its Operator(s) as his/her/their primary residence and fronts on a public street maintained by the Township, County or State of Pennsylvania.
  - (e) The room(s) offered for rent shall be within a principal or an accessory building that meets all of the requirements of the Township's Building Code and the Pennsylvania Uniform Construction Code for residential occupancy.
  - (f) The Operator of the Single Family Detached Dwelling must be present overnight on the same property as the Dwelling during the course of the Shared Dwelling Short-Term Rental except as provided in (g) below.
  - (g) The total rental period shall be limited to a total of 200 days in the aggregate over the course of a 12-month permit period, where the Operator is present.
  - (h) If the Operator is not present during the use of the Primary Residence or accessory dwelling as a Short-Term Rental, the term of the rental shall be limited to 120 days in the aggregate over the course of a 12-month permit period.
  - (i) Food service by the Operator to a short-term occupant shall be prohibited.
  - (j) The Dwelling shall otherwise be code compliant as to all applicable, fire, safety and building codes.
2. Short-Term Rental shall be permitted in each Residential Zoning District as an accessory use.
  3. The number of bedrooms that can be rented out at any one time shall be as follows:
    - (a) In the R-3, R-2, R-1, VR, and VC Zoning Districts: The entire Dwelling.
    - (b) In the EC or ECA Zoning District:

- (i) On lots 1 acre and smaller: the entire Dwelling.
    - (ii) On lots between 1 and 5 acres: the entire Dwelling.
    - (iii) On lots 5 acres and greater: the entire Dwelling.
  - (c) In the I Zoning District, no new Short-Term Rental Use shall be permitted.
4. Parking - One (1) off-street parking space per bedroom being rented out shall be provided on the same lot as this Use. Such spaces shall be in addition to any other parking requirements applicable to the uses being conducted upon the lot and designated for use by the guests of the Operator. Each space shall be at least 9 feet by 18 feet in size; improved to a gravel, paved or mud-free condition; and freely accessible to a public street without having to move other vehicle(s) or backing into the street.
  5. The Operator shall be responsible for any zoning or other ordinance violation(s) committed by any short-term tenant, in addition to the tenant's liability.
  6. A Dwelling offered as a Short-Term Rental shall be limited to ten (10) guests or two (2) guests per bedroom, whichever is fewer.
  7. A Dwelling may only be rented to one party of renters at any given time.
  8. The rental of a Dwelling on an hourly basis or fewer than 24 consecutive hours shall not be permitted.
  9. Events, such as weddings, banquets, parties, bachelor/bachelorette parties, charitable fundraising, or other commercial events or gatherings for direct or indirect compensation, are prohibited.
  10. Application and Permit. Prior to the commencement of a Short-Term Rental Use, the property owner shall make application and obtain a permit from the Bridgeton Township, which shall contain the following information:
    - (a) Contact information for the Operator in case of emergencies or violations shall be provided with the application.
    - (b) Along with the permit application, owner/applicant shall provide proof of the applicant's ownership of the Primary Residence or accessory building.

(c) The property owner must provide proof of insurance for the Dwelling.

(d) The Operator shall pay a fee established by the Township as set forth in its fee resolution.

(e) Any permit granted pursuant to this Ordinance for this Use shall be renewed during the first ninety days of the next applicable even calendar year. The Operator/applicant is responsible for renewing this permit in a timely fashion. Permits are non-transferrable and not assignable.

(f) A zoning permit for this Use may be revoked by the Township for any of the reasons listed below:

(1) The owner is cited for three or more zoning, other Township Ordinance, and/or criminal violations by the Township, or State Police within any 12-month period.

(2) The owner is cited by the Township for any single violation of any specific regulation of this Use.

(3) The Dwelling is subject to a building, sanitary, zoning, building code, fire code or similar violation, whether issued by the Township, County or other governmental entity having jurisdiction over the property being used as a Short-Term Rental.

(4) Any violations referenced herein shall be enforced in accordance with Section 106 of the Bridgeton Township Zoning Ordinance, which allows for, among other things, a thirty (30) day period to cure such violation(s) from the issuance of a written violation, as outlined in Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code.

(5) All permits issued pursuant to this Ordinance shall be effective for a period of 24 months from the day of issuance (being March 1 of the next even calendar year) by the Township.

11. Pre-existing Non-Conforming Use. If a Dwelling in the Township is currently being used for a Short-Term Rental, that property may continue as a Short-Term Rental, as long as such property is owned by a Bridgeton Township resident. In the event a resident of the Township owns and currently operates a second Short-Term, that Short-Term Rental may be permitted to continue, and shall be exempt from the primary residence requirement as long as it is owned by the resident who owns the property as of the date of this ordinance. If a non-

resident owns and operates a Short-Term Rental as of the date of this ordinance, that Short-Term Rental may be permitted to continue, and shall be exempt from the primary residence requirement only for as long as the current owner as of the date of this ordinance, continues to own the property. The Applicant shall have the burden of establishing any pre-existing rights to the use if established prior to the enactment of the Ordinance. To the extent permitted by law, the rights of the Operator or owner to a pre-existing/non-conforming Short-Term Rental Use on the property shall terminate upon the sale of the Dwelling. In all instances, all existing Short-Term Rentals will be subject to a bi-annual application and permit, as provided in this Ordinance.

12. Nothing herein shall excuse Operators from complying with all applicable federal, state, county and local laws and ordinances, including, but not limited to the Fair Housing Act, G.L. c. 151B, local building, fire and zoning codes, county department of health regulations regarding the unit and the on-lot sanitary sewer system, applicable to the property or the use being conducted therein. Any existing violation shall be grounds for the denial of a permit request.

13. The Operator shall retain all rental records related to the Short-Term Rental for a period of 3 years from the date a permit is issued to the Operator for the operation of the Short-Term Rental Use. Each Operator applying for a permit or permit renewal, shall make such records available to the Township as may be requested and as the Township deems reasonably necessary for the evaluation of the permit or permit renewal. The records shall demonstrate, at a minimum, the nature of each Short-Term Rental and the dates the property was actually used as a Short-Term Rental pursuant to this Ordinance.

14. Each property owner who operates a Short-Term Rental pursuant to this Ordinance shall maintain contact information for the Operator or its emergency representative with the Township, and shall further provide to renters such additional information concerning emergency contacts, emergency responder information, insurance information and dates and times the Operator may not be present in the Dwelling during any rental. The Operator shall also be obligated to provide written notice of this information to adjoining property owners and provide proof of same with each permit application and renewal.

15. Each property owner or Operator that operates a Short-Term Rental in violation of this Ordinance shall be subject to fine of Two Hundred Dollars (\$200.00) per day for the first offense and Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00) per day for each subsequent offense. An owner/applicant whose Short-Term Rental Zoning Permit has been revoked pursuant to this subsection shall not be eligible to receive a new zoning permit for this Use for up to two (2) years.

The Table of Use Regulations under Section 306.B of the Bridgeton Township Zoning Ordinance is hereby amended to add the Short-Term Rental Use as follows:

List of Uses	EC/EC A	R-3	R-2	R-1	VR	VC	CC	I
Accessory Uses								
Short-Term Rental	y	y	y	y	y	y	y	n

ARTICLE V. REPEALER

All ordinances or parts of ordinances which are inconsistent herewith are hereby repealed.

ARTICLE VI. SEVERABILITY

If any sentence, clause, section or part of this Ordinance is for any reason found to be unconstitutional, illegal, or invalid, such unconstitutionality, illegality, or invalidity shall not affect or impair any of the remaining provisions, sentences, clauses, sections, or parts of this Ordinance. It is hereby declared as the intent of the Board of Supervisors of Bridgeton Township, that this Ordinance would have been adopted had such unconstitutional, illegal, or invalid sentence, clause, section, or part thereof not been included therein.

ARTICLE VII. EFFECTIVE DATE

This Ordinance shall become effective five (5) days after enactment.

ENACTED AND ORDAINED this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, A.D., 2025, by the Board of Supervisors of Bridgeton Township in lawful session duly assembled.

BRIDGETON TOWNSHIP BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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