




# City of Austin

P.O. Box 1088, Austin, TX, 78767

## Memo

### AUSTINCODE DEPARTMENT

**To:** Mayor and Members of City Council  
**From:** Carl Smart, Director   
**Date:** October 5, 2015  
**Subject:** Update on Short Term Rental (STR) Program

The Austin Code Department is excited about the changes that Council has accepted for the Short Term Rental (STR) program, as well as additional proposals being considered. We will work with the City Manager's Office and the Law Department to shepherd the amendments through the review process. In the meantime, Austin Code will make every effort to increase the enforcement of STR regulations using existing tools. The following is a summary of the efforts that we are currently making and ones that are being put into place immediately.

The STR-PACE Team will be continued, working late nights on Friday and Saturday. The team will do a combination of patrol and complaint response, visiting those sites where repeat complaints and violations have been noted and responding to 3-1-1 calls and other requests for service, including emails. A Code Officer from the regular Saturday patrol will also check locations during the day on Saturday (usually 7am – 4 pm) and Sunday morning during checkout time (8am – noon).

The Department has made temporary re-assignments from neighborhood code districts to the STR team. This results in the addition of four (4) Code Enforcement Officers to the team. This enhanced team will be properly trained on the ordinance and utilized to conduct inspections, investigations and research.

Moving forward, the STR team will work to make better use of existing enforcement tools, such as:

- Expanding the Administrative Hearing process to include zoning cases, including STRs.
- Increasing the collaboration with neighborhood residents who serve as volunteers in reporting problems in their areas
- Working with the Administrative Hearing process to utilize evidence from neighbors, such as pictures, videos and eyewitness testimony.
- Sending emails to STR owners where advertising appear to encourage over-occupancy

- Retooling the STR license renewal process to provide greater scrutiny to insure identification of those licenses that should be denied or suspended.

Additionally, the Department is working with an interdepartmental group to consider other ideas to address the STR problems. The department will provide Mayor and Council with monthly reports on the progress of the enhanced licensing and enforcement efforts. Of course, we will welcome your feedback and that of the neighborhood residents throughout this effort. Our goal will be to get the owners and renters in STRs to be responsible and respectful of the neighborhoods and the families who reside there.

Please let me know if you need further information or if you have any questions regarding this information. Thank you.

c:     Marc A. Ott, City Manager  
       Rey Arellano, Assistant City Manager