

ROOMING & BOARDING HOUSE

Chapter 13 of the City's Local Amendments to the International Property Maintenance Code (IPMC), defines a Rooming/Boarding House as a building that is not a hotel, motel, bed & breakfast or short term rental that provides lodging (with or without meals) for 7 or more unrelated individuals. A license is required to operate a rooming or boarding house.

Most rooming or boarding houses have historically been located in areas zoned multi-family residential. Except for properties located within the McMansion area, occupancy in most single-family residential properties is limited to 6 unrelated individuals (See City Code Section 25-2-511). If the property is located within the McMansion area, the limit is 4 unrelated individuals.

By definition, a rooming/boarding house cannot be located in a residential area that is subject to Section 25-2-511. Houses located in residential zoned areas with 7 or more unrelated individuals are operating in violation of City Code. As of April 1, 2017, property owners are required to obtain an annual operating license from the Austin Code Department.

REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

In order to allow a Rooming or Boarding House to operate on residential properties, Council passed Resolution No. 20130808-049, which directed the City Manager to evaluate existing reasonable accommodations processes. After evaluating existing processes, Council adopted an ordinance that created a reasonable accommodations process (See Ordinance No. 20160204-046). The reasonable accommodation process allows for a person with a disability or someone representing a person with a disability to request a reasonable accommodation verbally or in writing to any City of Austin employee, however the single point of contact is the City of Austin Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Office. You may reach the ADA office at 512-974-3256 or at ADA@austintexas.gov.

An accommodation is a change, exception, or adjustment to a City requirement (City Code provision, uncodified ordinance, rule, policy, or procedure). Examples of accommodations include: increased impervious cover to extend the length of a driveway; extending the deadline to respond to comments during the permitting process. An accommodation is reasonable when it provides an individual with a disability with an equal opportunity to use and enjoy a dwelling. In this case, the accommodation will be to allow 7 or more unrelated individuals to live in the same establishment.

INSPECTION PROCESS

The Austin Code Department will work with the applicant to come into compliance. Below is a step-by-step process for inspections.

**Disclaimer: this chart is just a representation of how the process could work. Unexpected or extenuating circumstances could alter the process as seen here.*



INSPECTION CHECKLIST

Austin Code conducts initial inspections on rooming and boarding homes, followed by annual inspections, to ensure properties are clean and safe. Inspectors investigate structural conditions, safe exit and ingress, electrical, heating and cooling systems, kitchens and bathrooms, smoke alarms, plumbing, ventilation, hot water heaters, pest and rodent infestation, and over occupancy.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Over Occupancy (7 or more) | <input type="checkbox"/> Broken Doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged Exterior | <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged Walls/Floor/Ceiling |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Missing/Broken Handrails | <input type="checkbox"/> Broken/Leaky Sinks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leaking/Damaged Roof | <input type="checkbox"/> Broken/Damaged Appliances |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged/Cracked/Broken Windows | <input type="checkbox"/> Leaking Tub/Shower |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Entry/Exit Does Not Meet Code | <input type="checkbox"/> No Fire Protection/Smoke Alarms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Exposed Wiring | <input type="checkbox"/> Broken Plumbing |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tall Weeds & Grass (Over 12" High) | <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged Interior Stairway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Work Without Permit | <input type="checkbox"/> Damaged Handrail/Guardrail |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unauthorized Additions | <input type="checkbox"/> Pest/Rodent/Insect Infestation |

**Disclaimer: this is not the full list of what Austin Code inspectors will be looking for. These are only the top 20 violations.*

APPLICATION PROCESS

TO APPLY FOR/RENEW AN OPERATING LICENSE

The Austin Code Department requires an annual application, fee, inspection of property and a certificate of occupancy, prior to issuance of an operating license.

1. Submit Application

- Fees:
 - Initial and Annual Renewal fee per property \$308
 - Plus \$11.00/per unit (room)
 - Fees are subject to change, per City Council
 - An invoice will be mailed to you after submitting application

2. Submit Application for Reasonable Accommodation (if Applicable)

3. Inspection of Property

- An inspection is required prior to obtaining an annual operating license
- To make an appointment with a Code Inspector, call 3-1-1

4. Certificate of Occupancy

- A Certificate of Occupancy is required to obtain an annual operating license
- To obtain your Certificate of Occupancy please call the Development Services Department at 512-978-4000

5. Applications and fees may be submitted

- By Mail: City of Austin – Austin Code Department, Attn: Finance, PO Box 1088, Austin, TX 78767.
- In person: 1520 Rutherford Lane, Bldg. 1, Austin, TX 78754 between 8:00am – 3:00pm.

6. If you have any questions, please call the Licensing & Registration Office at 512-974-9144.

QUESTIONS?

Operating License Application

- Austin Code (AustinTexas.Gov/Rooming-and-Boarding)
- To Schedule Appointment (call 3-1-1)

Certificate of Occupancy

- Development Services Department (call 512-978-4000)

Reasonable Accommodations

- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Office (call 512-974-3256)



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