

1 **Allowing Long-Term Room Rentals in Private Homes**

2 For the purpose of establishing a regulatory framework permitting rooming houses (boarding
3 houses) as long-term rentals in private residences; providing for licensing, operational standards,
4 and zoning approval; ensuring compliance with applicable Maryland state law and the City of
5 Annapolis housing code; updating definitions and use tables in Title 21 to include “rooming
6 house”; and generally relating to rooming houses.
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10 **City Council of the**
11 **City of Annapolis**

12 **Ordinance 11-26**

13
14 **Introduced by: Alderman Schandelmeier**

15 **Co-sponsored by:** Alderwoman Contee, Alderman Huntley, Alderman Savidge and
16 Alderwoman Allsup-Johnson
17

18 **Referred to:**

- 19 ● Planning Commission,
 - 20 ● Economic Matters Committee, and
 - 21 ● Rules and City Government Committee
- 22

23 **AN ORDINANCE** concerning

24 **Allowing Long-Term Room Rentals in Private Homes**
25

26 **FOR** the purpose of establishing a regulatory framework permitting rooming houses (boarding
27 houses) as long-term rentals in private residences; providing for licensing, operational
28 standards, and zoning approval; ensuring compliance with applicable Maryland state law
29 and the City of Annapolis housing code; updating definitions and use tables in Title 21 to
30 include “rooming house”; and generally relating to rooming houses.
31

32 **WHEREAS,** Housing affordability is a significant concern for the City of Annapolis, and
33 expanding options for room rentals can create affordable housing opportunities
34 for working individuals, students, seniors, and individuals with modest incomes,
35 while preserving the residential character of neighborhoods; and
36

37 **WHEREAS,** Rooming houses offer an additional level of residential rental accommodation for
38 individuals who benefit from shared living arrangements; and
39

40 **WHEREAS,** A licensing and inspection framework serves the public interest by ensuring that
41 rooms and rooming houses offered for long-term rental meet minimum health,

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1 safety, and habitability standards in accordance with applicable Maryland law and
2 the City of Annapolis building, fire, and housing codes; and
3

4 **WHEREAS,** The City Council recognizes that owner-occupied rooming houses provide a form
5 of affordable housing that benefits the community, and that such uses align with
6 the objectives of Annapolis Ahead: Annapolis Comprehensive Plan 2040; and
7

8 **WHEREAS,** The City Council finds that rooming houses regulated under this ordinance must
9 carry an active Maryland Homestead Property Tax Credit under Md. Tax-
10 Property Code Ann. § 9-105, which independently verifies owner-occupancy
11 through the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation, providing
12 an objective, externally maintained, and continuously monitored eligibility
13 criterion that is enforceable without reliance on self-certification by the applicant;
14 and
15

16 **WHEREAS,** Maryland Public Safety Code Ann. § 12-203 authorizes political subdivisions to
17 adopt and enforce minimum livability standards, and the City of Annapolis
18 housing code, Chapter 17.40, substantially conforms to the Maryland Minimum
19 Livability Code (COMAR 09.12.54), including the rooming house standards set
20 forth in Section 404 of the International Property Maintenance Code (2012
21 edition); now, therefore,
22

23 **BY** repealing and reenacting with amendments the following portions of the Code of the City
24 of Annapolis, 2026 Edition:

- 25 ● **Section 17.44.010**
- 26 ● **Section 17.44.030**
- 27 ● **Section 17.44.110**
- 28 ● **Article VI, Chapter 17.40**
- 29 ● **Section 17.40.670**
- 30 ● **Section 17.40.680**
- 31 ● **Section 17.40.690**
- 32 ● **Section 17.40.700**
- 33 ● **Section 21.48.010**
- 34 ● **Section 21.48.030**
- 35 ● **Section 21.72.010**
- 36

37 **BY** enacting the following portions of the Code of the City of Annapolis, 2026 Edition:

- 38 ● **Section 17.44.085** (Rooming House Operating Standards)
- 39

40 **SECTION I: BE IT ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY**
41 **COUNCIL** that the short title of this Ordinance shall be the "Bedrooms for People Act."
42

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1 **SECTION II: BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED BY THE ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL**
2 that the Code of the City of Annapolis shall be amended to read as follows:

3
4 **Title 17 – BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION**
5 **Chapter 17.44 – Rental Unit Licenses**
6

7
8 **Section 17.44.010 License Required.**

9 A. ~~A current rental operator's license approved and issued by the Department is required before a person shall~~
10 ~~rent for occupancy or use any of the following types of premises, as these types are defined in Chapter 21.72~~
11 ~~of the Code:~~

12 1. ~~Dwellings, including:~~

13 a. ~~Single family attached and detached dwellings;~~

14 b. ~~Multiple and two family dwellings;~~

15 c. ~~Multifamily dwellings; and~~

16 d. ~~Dwellings above the ground floor of commercial and maritime uses;~~

17 2. ~~Dwelling units, including efficiency units;~~

18 3. ~~Bed and breakfast homes; and~~

19 4. ~~Hotels, motels and inns.~~

20 B. ~~A person who rents or continues to rent for occupancy or use any unlicensed premises is guilty of a municipal~~
21 ~~infraction and subject to a fine as established by resolution of the City Council. Such fine shall be assessed on~~
22 ~~a per unit, per day basis, after an initial 15 calendar day notification period to the owner, until a rental~~
23 ~~operator's license has been obtained, reissued, or revalidated.~~

24
25 **A. Definitions. See § 17.44.110.**

26 **B. License.**

27 1. No individual shall rent any premises listed in § 17.44.030 without first obtaining
28 a rental operator's license from the Planning and Zoning Department
29 (Department).

30 2. No license shall be issued unless the premises meet all of the applicable
31 requirements pursuant to this chapter and Chapter 17.40 (Residential Property
32 Maintenance Code).

33 **C. Penalties.**

34 1. Any individual or entity that rents or continues to rent any premises that is not
35 licensed shall be deemed to have committed a municipal infraction. It shall be
36 subject to a fine as determined by resolution of the City Council.

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affected tenants in securing adequate substitute housing pursuant to § 17.44.080(A).

Section 17.44.110 Definitions.

For the purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases have the meanings indicated; and any terms not defined in this section shall have the meanings specified in Chapters 17.04 and 17.40.

1. ~~—"Applicant" means someone who executes the forms required for obtaining a rental operator's license pursuant to this chapter.~~
2. ~~—"Host" means any person who is the licensee of a primary residence and offers a dwelling unit, or portion thereof, for short term rental.~~
3. ~~—"Hosting Platform" means a manner through which a host may offer a dwelling unit, or portion thereof, for short term rental. A hosting platform includes but is not limited to, an internet based platform that allows a host to advertise and potentially arrange for temporary occupation of the dwelling unit, or portion thereof, through a publicly searchable website, whether the short term renter pays rent directly to the host or to the hosting platform.~~
4. ~~—"Licensee" means a person who obtains a rental operator's license from the City as described in Section 44.090 of this Title.~~
5. ~~—"Local Property Manager" means a person who acts as the legally authorized representative and agent of a licensee and who has a primary residence or office at a physical location in the City that is appropriately licensed to allow the operation of a business and that is correctly registered as an active business entity in Maryland.~~
6. ~~—"Neighborhood" means, for the purposes of this chapter, an area within one block or a group of residences within 500 feet of each other, whichever is less.~~
7. ~~—"Nuisance" means the following:~~
 - a. ~~—An act or condition created, performed, or maintained on private property that constitutes a code violation and that:~~
 - i. ~~—Significantly affects other residents of the neighborhood;~~
 - ii. ~~—Is harmful to public health, safety, or welfare of neighboring residents;~~
 - b. ~~—A property where the tenant, owner, or other occupant has been found in violation of tax provisions of Chapter 6.04 of the City Code about the property; or~~
 - c. ~~—A property to which police or other law enforcement agencies have responded to complaints or calls for service three or more times within 180 days.~~

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- 1 ~~8. "Owner" means any person who alone, jointly, or severally with other individuals~~
2 ~~holds legal or equitable title to any premises.~~
- 3 ~~9. "Person" means:~~
- 4 ~~a. An individual; or~~
- 5 ~~b. Any legal entities where the individual has an ownership or beneficial interest;~~
6 ~~and~~
- 7 ~~c. Any separate legal entities that share common owners or beneficiaries in whole or~~
8 ~~part.~~
- 9 ~~10. "Premises" means only those types of dwellings, dwelling units, bed and breakfast~~
10 ~~homes, hotels, motels, and inns listed in Section 17.44.010 that are required to be~~
11 ~~licensed pursuant to this chapter.~~
- 12 ~~11. "Rental operator's license" means a license required pursuant to Section 17.44.010 for a~~
13 ~~premises.~~
- 14 ~~12. "Short term licensee" means a person who:~~
- 15 ~~a. Has applied for and received a license to operate a short term rental under the~~
16 ~~requirements of this chapter; and~~
- 17 ~~b. Is either:~~
- 18 ~~i. A resident of the City; or~~
- 19 ~~ii. A non resident of the City who employs an Annapolis based property manager;~~
20 ~~and~~
- 21 ~~c. Meets this chapter's licensee requirements; and~~
- 22 ~~d. Is not an owner of any other short term license property in the City.~~
- 23 ~~13. "Tenant" means a person who pays rent or other consideration for the temporary use or~~
24 ~~occupation of another's premises under a lease or similar arrangement.~~
- 25 ~~14. "Short term rental" means a residential dwelling unit or accessory building that is~~
26 ~~rented to transient guests for compensation for a period of not more than 90~~
27 ~~consecutive days for any single tenant. A short term rental provider shall not combine~~
28 ~~time limits for short term rentals.~~
- 29 ~~15. "Unlicensed premises" means premises that is required to be licensed pursuant to~~
30 ~~Section 17.44.010, but for which a valid rental operator's license has not been obtained~~
31 ~~or renewed.~~

32 For purposes of this chapter, the following words and phrases have the meanings indicated; any
33 term not defined in this section shall have the meaning specified in Chapters 17.04, 17.40, or
34 21.72.

- 35 1. "Apartment Hotel." See § 21.72.010.

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- 1 2. “Applicant” means a person who executes the forms required for obtaining a rental
2 operator’s license pursuant to this chapter.
- 3 3. “Bed and Breakfast Home.” See § 21.72.010.
- 4 4. “Boarding House.” See “Rooming House.”
- 5 5. “Dwelling(s),” including single-family attached and detached dwellings, multiple and
6 two-family dwellings, multifamily dwellings, dwellings above the ground floor of
7 commercial and maritime uses, and dwelling units (including efficiency dwelling units),
8 are defined in § 21.72.010.
- 9 6. “Homestead Tax Credit” means the Maryland Homestead Property Tax Credit
10 established under Md. Tax-Property Code Ann. § 9-105, which requires that the property
11 be the owner’s principal residence. For purposes of this chapter, a property carries an
12 active homestead credit when State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT)
13 records reflect a current, approved homestead credit designation for that property.
- 14 7. “Host” means any person who is the licensee of a primary residence and offers a dwelling
15 unit, or portion thereof, for short-term rental.
- 16 8. “Hosting Platform” means any means through which a host may offer a dwelling unit, or
17 portion thereof, for short-term rental, including any internet-based platform that allows a
18 host to advertise and potentially arrange for temporary occupation of the dwelling unit
19 through a publicly searchable website, whether the short-term renter pays rent directly to
20 the host or to the hosting platform.
- 21 9. “Hotel.” See § 21.72.010.
- 22 10. “Inn.” See § 21.72.010.
- 23 11. “Licensee” means a person who obtains a rental operator’s license from the City as
24 described in § 17.44.030.
- 25 12. “Local Property Manager” means a person who acts as the legally authorized
26 representative and agent of a licensee and who maintains a primary residence or office at
27 a physical location in the City that is appropriately licensed for business operations and
28 correctly registered as an active business entity in Maryland.
- 29 13. **Responsible Party.**
30 “Local Responsible Party” (LRP) means the owner of the licensed Rooming House who
31 shall:
 - 32 a. Be able to respond in person to the premises within two hours of notification by
33 the City or any tenant at any time;
 - 34 b. Be available by telephone 24 hours a day, seven days a week, to respond to
35 complaints, emergencies, or requests from the City;

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1 **Section 17.40.690 - Bathroom facilities—NumberReserved.**

2 **Section 17.40.700 - Bathroom facilities—Rooms. (Repealed)Reserved.**

3 Note: The rooming house standards formerly contained in Article VI (Sections 17.40.670–
4 17.40.700) are superseded the rooming house provisions of Chapter 17.40 generally, which
5 substantially conform to Section 404 of the International Property Maintenance Code (2012
6 edition) as adopted by the Maryland Minimum Livability Code, COMAR 09.12.54, pursuant to
7 Md. Code, Public Safety Art. § 12-203.
8
9

10 **Title 21 – PLANNING AND ZONING**
11 **Division VI – General Terms and Rules of Measurement**
12 **Chapter 21.72 – Terms and Definitions**

13 **Section 21.72.010 Terms.**

14 [The following definitions in § 21.72.010 are added or amended to read as follows (existing
15 definitions not amended by this Ordinance remain in effect). Insert into existing definitions
16 in alphabetical order.]

17 “Rooming House,” also referred to as “Boarding House,” means:

- 18
- 19 a. An owner-occupied dwelling in which up to four sleeping rooms are rented to
20 individual tenants for periods of more than 90 consecutive days, without
21 individual cooking facilities in the sleeping rooms, and in which the non-
22 corporate owner-occupant maintains the premises as their residence year-round
23 and, in that capacity, manages the rental relationships in the dwelling on a daily
24 basis.
- 25 b. A rooming house does not include a short-term rental or a bed and breakfast home
26 as defined in this section.

27 “Short-term Rental.” See § 17.44.110.
28
29

30 **Title 21 - PLANNING AND ZONING**
31 **Division III - BASE DISTRICT REGULATIONS**

32 **Chapter 21.48 USE TABLES**

33 **Section 21.48.010 Table of Uses—Residential Zoning Districts.**

34 P = Permitted Use; S = Special Exception Use; -Std = Use Subject to Standards (Chapter 21.64); A =
35 Accessory Use; Blank = Not Permitted.

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1 A use, including a special exception use, that is not normally permissible as a permitted use or use subject to
 2 standards in a zoning district may be permitted in that district as a planned development use pursuant to Section
 3 21.24.020.

4 **[After “Rest homes and nursing homes” and before “Schools, private, elementary, middle, or**
 5 **high” insert the following:]**

Uses	District R1A	District R1B	District R1	District R2	District R2-NC	District R3	District R3-NC	District R3-NC2	District R3-R	District R4	District R4-R
<u>Rooming house</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>

6
7

8 **Section 21.48.030 Table of Uses—Office and Mixed Use Zoning Districts.**

9 P = Permitted Use; S = Special Exception Use; -Std = Use Subject to Standards (Chapter 21.64); A =
 10 Accessory Use; Blank = Not Permitted.

11 A use, including a special exception use, that is not normally permissible as a permitted use or use subject to
 12 standards in a zoning district may be permitted in that district as a planned development use pursuant to Section
 13 21.24.020

14 **Important.** The notes at the end of the table are as much a part of the law as the table itself.

15

16 **[After “Retail goods store” and before “Schools, commercial, trade, vocational, music, dance**
 17 **or art” insert the following:]**

Uses	District P	District MX	District PM	District C2P
<u>Rooming house</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>P</u>

18

19 **SECTION III: AND BE IT FINALLY ESTABLISHED AND ORDAINED BY THE**
 20 **ANNAPOLIS CITY COUNCIL** that this ordinance shall take effect upon passage.

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