



WORKBOOK

Being a Great Neighbor

& PREVENTING NUISANCE COMPLAINTS

CHAPEL HILL
STRA

BEING A GOOD NEIGHBOR MATTERS.

Guests love short-term rentals (STRs) for their home-like experience and the opportunity to live like a local. But we can't forget that they're temporarily living amongst locals, our neighbors. Being a good neighbor – for both hosts and guests – is simply the right thing to do.

It's also smart business. Complaints from neighbors are red flags for police and Chapel Hill Town Council, which can often be a fast track to getting your permit revoked or, worse, severe STR limits or bans townwide. Instead, proactively protect your business and your property with the strategies and good neighbor practices throughout this guide.

COMMUNICATE WITH YOUR NEIGHBORS PROACTIVELY

First things first, informing neighbors of the usage of your home as an STR before you begin welcoming guests is the best (and only) way to respectfully and proactively foster positive relationships with your neighbors. When you apply for your STR permit, town staff will notify neighbors of your property's use as an STR – best to do this personally as well.

EXTEND YOUR HOSPITALITY TO NEIGHBORS

Your neighbors can be your STR's best allies. Invite them over or offer your home up to them for when they need extra space for friends or family. By making this kind gesture, you are proactively extending your hospitality – and we are in the hospitality business! Empowering a neighbor to see an STR as an asset is important as they, too, care about the neighborhood.

CREATE WIN-WINS

A great way to show your commitment to neighbors is to create win-win situations. For example, if they don't have a lawn cutting service, consider offering to have your landscaping team extend their mowing and lawn care over to their lawn as well. This will demonstrate your interest in keeping positive relations with the community, and as a win for you, your guests will be impressed not just with your lawn but also the well-kept yard next door.

#1 STRATEGY: PROACTIVELY MANAGE NUISANCE ISSUES

It is no longer acceptable to wait for a call from a neighbor, the town or police to notify you of a disturbance at your rental. Putting nuisance prevention and management plans in place and informing your neighbors of those plans is a great way to give them peace of mind and inspire their trust that **you** will be responsible if an issue arises. Setting this expectation and meeting it is the most important element to fostering great neighbor relations.

The top three issues that cause nuisances for neighbors are noise, trash, and parking. The following sections of this guide cover management plans for each.

NOISE MANAGEMENT PLAN

Noise accounts for approximately 75% of neighbor nuisance complaints, and one bad experience for your neighbors can ruin your reputation as a conscientious host or manager. Furthermore, it is far more effective and cheaper to **prevent nuisance issues** from the start with a Noise Management Plan than it is to rectify a problem after it occurs.

If you don't live on site at your STR, use technology like a **noise monitoring system** to head off neighbor disruption before it happens. Noise monitoring solutions will alert you or your property manager when noise levels begin to become worrisome, and data shows that responding quickly to a simple noise alert will have guests quieting down within 15 minutes about 80% of the time.

If guests don't respond quickly, it will be time to go to plan B, which usually involves activating a friend, family member, or contracted service provider who can show up on site to check in on the property. **Chapel Hill's STR ordinance requires every host to have a Designated Responsible Party, someone who can respond to issues at the property (which can be you.)** In the case of nuisance issues, think of this as the equivalent of the front desk manager heading up to a hotel room to knock on the door when phone outreach doesn't solve a noise issue. Because noise issues can occur at any hour, 24-hour coverage is necessary, as is having a person at the property in a reasonable amount of time..

Additionally, ensuring guests are familiar with quiet hours and expectations is critical. This can be done with pre-arrival messaging, on-site messaging and signage, as well as in-person check-ins or welcome phone calls upon arrival.

MY NOISE MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Noise Monitoring Solution:

Town Quiet Hours : 11 pm - 7 am

Town Noise Citations: Up to \$500

Property Quiet Hours: _____

Designated Responsible Party:

Name: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Quiet hours and expectations are shared with guests through at least two of the following:

- Property description
- House rules
- Rental agreement
- Pre-arrival messaging
- Guestbook
- In-house signage
- In-person check-in or welcome call

PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN

The average group of short-term renters is 3+ guests, some of whom have to bring more vehicles than a property has parking spaces for. In some areas, this may not be an issue, but often the spillover of excess cars can irritate and negatively affect neighbors and cause guests to run the risk of [parking violations](#).

A good Parking Management Plan begins with communication. For groups that may be bringing multiple cars to the STR, ensure that the home can handle all of the expected cars in the driveway or garage. **Chapel Hill's STR ordinance requires 1 space/bedroom + 1 parking space for each STR unit.**

Cars should not be blocking sidewalks or taking up an inordinate amount of street parking. While it may not be illegal to use street parking, it can be a nuisance to neighbors, especially if guest cars crowd their driveways or block commonly accessed things like mailboxes, alleys or trash cans.

An effective Parking Management Plan should include alternate locations where guests can park excess cars during their stay. Providing information about the parking limitations on-site and the location, contact info and rates for nearby overnight parking lots is a great way to provide thoughtful information to your guests – and it may keep them out of trouble as Chapel Hill enforces parking regulations strictly.

Lastly, leveraging technology like doorbell cameras or street-facing security cameras is a smart backup for making sure guests follow expectations. While no one wants to prevent guests from having a five-star experience, neighbors will appreciate that your guests bring only as many cars that can be accommodated, which helps enable you to continue renting your home long into the future.

MY PARKING MANAGEMENT PLAN:

of On-Site Parking Spaces: _____

Location: _____

Nearby Parking Alternatives & Costs:

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Town Parking Citations: \$15 - \$250

Doorbell/Exterior Camera Solution:

– Parking options and rules are shared with guests through at least two of the following:

- Property description
- House rules
- Rental agreement
- Pre-arrival messaging
- Guest book
- In-house signage
- In-person check-in or welcome call

TRASH MANAGEMENT PLAN

Trash is not often the first thing that comes to mind when thinking of nuisance issues, but it's critical to have a plan in place for managing the storage and disposal of waste. It's also safe to assume that some guests will not properly follow instructions for how to deal with trash on check-out day. For guests, the last day of a stay is usually filled with people departing at different times and performing different parts of checkout procedures, which can result in simple mistakes or worse, unsightly piles or invitations for wild animals. To prevent this, put in place these elements of a Trash Management Plan:

- ✓ **Communicate the Rules:** In pre-arrival information, in house manuals and especially in your check-out communications, make sure to let guests know the detailed information about how to properly deal with trash and recycling.
 - ✓ **Communicate the Penalties:** Chapel Hill has fines and fees associated with improper trash disposal. Find out these rules and penalties and make sure guests know the consequences as well. Some permits with three strike rules can be revoked for simple trash violations.
 - ✓ **On Site Signage is a Must:** Guests may come from all over the world and have very different recycling and trash processes at home. Use signage so they don't have to guess when it comes to properly managing trash.
 - ✓ **Private Trash Collection:** For homes with a high capacity, it's likely guests' trash will at some point exceed what Chapel Hill or county trash collection allows. Have a solution in place to dispose of trash through a local contact or an on-call third-party vendor.
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MY TRASH MANAGEMENT PLAN:

Trash & Recycling Bin(s) Location:

Pickup Day, Time and Location:

Other Trash/Recycling Rules to Know:

Improper Disposal Penalties:

Private Trash Collection:

Trash procedures and rules are shared with guests through at least two of the following:

- House rules
- Rental agreement
- Pre-departure messaging
- Guest book
- In-house signage
- In-person check-in or welcome call

HOSTING NEIGHBORLY GUESTS

Good responsible renting practices mean nothing if guests don't know about them. As we've outlined in the preceding nuisance management plans, educating guests across multiple touchpoints is an essential step in preventing disruptions to your neighbors.

The following page is a customizable and printable **Good Neighbor Guidelines** sheet that combines all of the key info from the noise, parking and trash management plans you just created into an easy-to-digest format.

HOW TO USE

Fill in the applicable information for your property, then print the page to display in your home and/or copy and paste into your guidebook, house rules, or other communication areas. You can even use this simply as inspiration to create your own Good Neighbor Guidelines document.

Welcome to our rental!

We're happy you're here. As a part of living like a local in Chapel Hill, we ask all guests to read and follow our Good Neighbor Guidelines.

PARKING: All vehicles must park in the designated parking spaces provided.

Parking Location: _____ Maximum Vehicles Allowed: _____

Alternative Parking Options: _____

Please note the town may issue tickets for parking violations up to \$250.

OCCUPANCY: This home has a maximum capacity of ___ guests.

NOISE: Please be considerate of our neighbors' right to the quiet and peaceful enjoyment of their home by observing quiet hours from _____ to _____.

Please note the town can issue a fine up to \$500 for noise ordinance violations.

GARBAGE & RECYCLING:

Receptacle(s) Location: _____

Pickup Day, Time and Location: _____

PETS: Please clean up after pets, prevent excessive barking, and follow the leash law.

24-HOUR CONTACT INFORMATION

For questions or assistance, please contact:

Name: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY

In case of an emergency requiring 911 dispatch, this home's address is

A FIRST AID KIT IS LOCATED IN _____

Thank you for keeping Chapel Hill such a wonderful place to visit, live, work and play!



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A PROUD SUPPORTER OF THE CHAPEL HILL STRA

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