

REAL ESTATE



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Q | What should I consider before renting my home to short-term guests on Airbnb or similar websites?

A | You should be aware of a number of issues before renting your home to short-term guests. First and foremost: taxes. You are required to pay state and local retail sales tax on income from renting to tenants occupying a unit for less than a month. You may also be required to pay Washington's B&O tax. These taxes are ultimately your responsibility, even if a rental company promises to withhold them for you.

You should also consider city ordinances. Many Washington cities are revisiting their short-term rental laws, so these laws are in flux. And you should make sure that short-term rentals are not prohibited by covenants or homeowners' association restrictions that affect your property. Finally, you'll need to comply with the website's terms of service and speak to your insurance provider to be sure you have adequate coverage.