

DAR UPDATE

COVID -19 Guidance for Short-term Rentals

Authoritative guidance for agents handling short-term rentals has been issued. If this State of Emergency extends into the season of “check-in” for short-term rentals, DAR will obtain additional guidance for this process as it sometimes involves in-person contact.

We are coordinating with the Delaware Apartment Council to provide guidance for agents handling year-round rentals, and we should have those guidelines to pass along to you within the next couple of days.

The full text of the guidelines is included below:

Short Term Rental Guide to Safe Practices for Real Estate Agents in Delaware to Comply with the State of Emergency declared for our safety by Governor Carney. This has been reviewed through the Division of Small Business which has the authority to issue clarifications of the Declaration of Emergency. Your actions impact your neighbors and your neighbors’ actions impact you It is your duty to protect yourself, your clients and customers.

1. We have the privilege of continuing a limited amount of real estate practice. With privilege comes responsibility. It is **your** responsibility to follow these guidelines. If you do not, we risk all being shut down completely.
2. **YOUR OFFICE IS CLOSED.** You can work from home. **DO NOT ALLOW PUBLIC ACCESS TO YOUR OFFICE.** Managers, bookkeeping, administrative, and maintenance staff might need to be in the office occasionally. Call center employees may need to be in the office to handle the current volume of calls for cancellations and the occasional new rental. However, if there are others in the office, practice physical distancing and CDC guidelines. Follow your broker’s rules about limiting office access.
3. Do everything you can to keep yourself healthy and teach others how to stay healthy. Follow CDC guidelines.
4. Complete paperwork electronically except when necessary to have a “wet” signature.
5. It is recognized that the field of short-term rentals has very little physical contact with the public. However, for the rare occasion when a prospective renter wants to physically see a property, prescreen to make sure they have a need to look at the property now rather than waiting.
6. Encourage the use of virtual tools such as high-quality photographs of rentals, virtual tours, and interactive floor plans so that virtual showings can minimize the number of properties that must be viewed in person.
7. While showing a rental, wash your hands, wear gloves if available, do not use the bathroom facilities, and only spend enough time for the renters to view what they need to in the property. Go outside or in an open garage and stand apart to have conversations about the property.
8. You may continue your property management functions such as accepting deposits, arranging for maintenance, cleaning, etc. and allowing those contractors access to properties. However, arrange to provide keys without contractors coming into your office space.

9. Don't socialize face to face with your clients and others in the transaction. Keep your time together to a minimum. Be social by phone and other electronic means.
10. Use social media responsibly and not to entice people to leave their homes. Remember they are subject to an order to "shelter in place of residence".
11. For owners who want to rent their homes, you can take new rental listings or property management agreements. If that process involves meeting with the owner at the property, follow CDC guidelines.
12. For renters who want to rent, you can negotiate new lodging/rental agreements.
13. Display a positive attitude to help people through this. Do not panic, stay informed, and use your best judgment and common sense. (APT 3.24.2020)

A PDF of the information above can be accessed [here](#). We encourage you to share this information.

If you have specific questions, please consult with your broker or legal counsel.

Delaware Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program

Homeowners may qualify for DSHA's Delaware Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program (DEMAP) if they are 90 days or more delinquent on the mortgage of their primary residence. More info is available at: www.destatehousing.com.

Tax Filing Deadline Extended

The Delaware Division of Revenue (DOR) has extended the deadline for taxpayers to file their 2019 Delaware personal income tax returns to July 15, 2020. DOR and the Internal Revenue Service remain open, and taxpayers are encouraged to continue to file their state and federal returns electronically or by mail. Taxpayers with questions about the status of their refund may use their online tool by [clicking here](#) or email DOR_PublicService@delaware.gov. Individuals who are unable to meet the July 15 filing deadline may file an extension request online on or before July 15 by email to DOR_PublicService@delaware.gov, or through their tax preparer. Taxpayers who have an outstanding balance and need assistance should contact DOR_Collections@delaware.gov. For additional information and updates about DOR's response to the COVID-19 crisis, [please click here to visit their website](#).

Reminder: COVID-19 Forms

As a reminder, the following forms related to COVID-19 transactions are now available for your use:

COVID-19 Addendum to Listing: Available in dotloop, ZipForms, and the [DAR website](#)

COVID-19 Addendum to Agreement of Sale: Available in dotloop, ZipForms, and the [DAR website](#)

COVID-19 Certification for Property Showings/Visits: Available currently only from the [DAR website](#)

We expect to have detailed guidance available for long-term rental agents very soon.

As we move forward, DAR will continue to issue updates via email and other channels as necessary and as information becomes available to us.

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