

Direct Booking Readiness Checklist

Stay Okemo - Example Host Resource

SAMPLE TEMPLATE - FOR BRAINSTORMING ONLY. This is not legal advice and is not a finished contract. Have a Vermont attorney review any agreement before using it with paying guests.

Everything Airbnb quietly does for you that a Vermont host has to set up once to take a direct booking. Most hosts finish this in a weekend.

Taxes - Vermont

- Open a Vermont Business Tax account at MyVTax.gov and get your Meals & Rooms Tax (MRT) account number.
- Collect 9% rooms tax + 3% STR surcharge on every direct stay under 30 nights, plus your town's 1% local option tax if it has one (Ludlow does).
- File the MRT return monthly (even a zero return) and post your MRT number on every listing and ad.

Money

- A payment account in the business name (Stripe is the common choice - about 2.9% + 30c per booking, vs. a 14-16% guest service fee on the platforms).
- Decide the deposit route: card hold, refundable deposit, or a per-stay damage-protection plan.
- Decide your cancellation policy and put it in the rental agreement.

Calendar safety

- Pick one calendar of truth (a PMS like OwnerRez, Lodgify, or Hospitable, or a shared iCal feed) so Airbnb, Vrbo, and direct can never double-book.
- Note: connecting Airbnb by API switches you to its 15.5% host-only fee; iCal sync keeps the split-fee model.

Guest trust

- Your own rental agreement (see the sample) and house rules sheet.
- A plan for guest problems at 10 PM - you, a co-host, or a local caretaker - with the number in the house.
- Smoke and CO alarms, a fire extinguisher, and STR insurance that actually covers short-term renting (a normal homeowner's policy often does not).

Then list it

- Add your direct link to your Stay Okemo listing page (example), put a 'book direct next time' card in the house, and give past guests the link when they ask to come back.