

September 24, 2014

Tourist Accommodations Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-2 Inspection Guidance

A. **General Information:** The amended Chapter, 511-6-2, Rules and Regulations for Tourist Accommodations, places an emphasis on the minimum standards necessary for operators or owners to provide essential services, facilities, and maintain sanitary conditions in order to protect tourists' health and safety. Environmental Health Specialists (EHS) should start with a clear understanding of how the chapter defines a tourist accommodation and the operator's responsibilities under the rules. EHS should review the statute, O.C.G.A. 31-28 Tourist Courts and the chapter on a frequent basis to help improve inspection performance and outcomes.

B. **Inspection Process:** The permit holder is responsible for the facility's ability to comply with the rules in the chapter. In order to determine compliance, Tourist Accommodations are subject to inspection at a reasonable hour and in a reasonable manner at least two times a year. The operator or person in charge will be given an opportunity to accompany the EHS on the facility's inspection. This will afford both an opportunity to ask questions and dialog immediately about the operation of the facility. EHS should always reiterate the goal of the inspection process which is to intervene on areas of critical public health risk before any illness or injury to tourists or guests may arise. EHS should also refer to the general guidelines below when conducting an inspection:

1. **Inspection Time:** EHS should inspect a tourist accommodation between core business hours or at an appropriate time to assess a specific operation. Between 8:00 am to 3:00 pm is suggested. EHS may vary inspection times to ensure all operations are evaluated in the facility. During each unannounced visit, EHS should inspect the accommodations and services provided by the facility such as continental breakfast, laundry room operations and garbage collection.

2. **Information Gathering:** Upon entry into the facility, EHS must identify themselves, by showing proper identification, and stating the purpose of the visit. During the orientation with the person in charge, the EHS should verify the facility's permit information: owner(s) name, name of facility, business license and if there are any changes to the facility. This may also be a good opportunity to review the previous routine inspection report with the operator.

**Tourist Accommodations Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-2
Inspection Guidance**

3. Room Assessments: EHS should request a list of clean and available rooms from the operator to select for inspection. Use the table below as guide to determine the minimum number of rooms to randomly inspect. Select rooms from different floors, occupancy categories and housekeeping zones. There is no limit on the number of rooms an EHS can inspect if the preliminary findings warrant further investigation. More room observations maybe required to identify systemic problems within a facility such as infestations or unsanitary conditions. If the minimum number of rooms is not available or if there is a need to verify information, it is acceptable to inspect a few rooms that are in the cleaning process. The following table recommends a sample size based on the room population in the facility.

Tourist Rooms Selection Chart

Total # of rooms, dwellings or spaces on the premises	# of rooms, dwellings or spaces to inspect
<20	All available tourist rooms up to a maximum of 5
21-150	10% of the tourist rooms or a minimum of 5 tourist rooms, whichever is greater
151-250	10% of the tourist rooms
>250	Minimum of 35 tourist rooms

4. Occupied Rooms: Generally an occupied room should not be inspected. However, it may be necessary to inspect a “rented” room if the situation warrants such action. Such situations may be related to a complaint on a specific room, a particular sanitary or safety issue in the facility that requires further investigation, or if rooms are consistently documented as being unavailable during the random room selection process during routine inspections. EHS should consult with their county manager before this action is taken during an inspection. When this action is necessary, it should be done with the person in charge or owner present and preferably when the room is

Tourist Accommodations Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-2 Inspection Guidance

unoccupied by the current tourist. If access is denied by the operator, an inspection warrant may be obtained as authorized in Article 2 of O.C.G.A. Chapter 31-5. Local legal counsel or public safety advice and support may also be necessary in some instances.

5. Premises: During the assessment, EHS should observe the entire premises and evaluate ancillary facilities such as laundry rooms, storage areas, hallways, and grounds for compliance with the chapter. The EHS must verify the frequency and types of services provided in the tourist rooms by asking questions about specific operations. EHS should observe and document how operations are monitored or delivered in the facility. An EHS assessment should answer questions such as how does the facility clean and sanitize glassware; where do they store and launder linen; what is the facility's policy on linen exchange and do they serve food in compliance with the continental or bed and breakfast meal requirements?

6. Gas Fired Equipment: The gas fired equipment inspection is required once every calendar year. Not observed should be marked if the inspection has not been performed before the first annual routine inspection and not applicable should be marked if the facility has no gas fired equipment on the premises. The intent of the gas fired equipment inspection is to ensure that non-regulated equipment is inspected by a qualified individual. To meet this requirement, an operator can select a state licensed contractor (heating or plumbing) and in some circumstances gas equipment representatives to inspect and correct the equipment's deficiencies. EHS should request the operator to present a signed evaluation report on the contractor's company letterhead or complete the DPH Gas Fired Inspection Form.

In some cases, potable water heating equipment may be regulated as a boiler and fall under the jurisdiction of the Office of Insurance and Safety Fire Commissioner. Equipment inspected under their jurisdiction and regulatory inspection schedule will not be subject to this rule. Under Chapter 120-3-26, a water heater used to supply potable hot water and exceeding either of the following: a heat input of 200,000 BTU per hour; a water temperature of 210 degrees Fahrenheit; and a nominal water containing capacity of 120 gallons falls under their jurisdiction. The EHS should document this finding on the inspection record.

Tourist Accommodations Rules and Regulations, Chapter 511-6-2 Inspection Guidance

7. Report Documentation: EHS must ensure the inspection report adopted by the department is filled out completely; identifying the observations, violations and corrective actions required for compliance. Your signature attests that you have conducted the tourist accommodation inspection using the applicable rules and regulations, guidance and sound professional judgment. The report should accurately reflect the Tourist Accommodation's condition on the date recorded. However, permitted foodservice facilities and public pools on the premises are not subject to the Tourist Accommodation Chapter.

8. Report Findings: EHS communication should emphasize explaining the inspection findings and corrective actions simply and accurately. Discussing the benefits of preventing hazardous conditions, reducing harborage for pests and providing tourist with sanitary accommodations will be valuable service to the owner. EHS should continuously articulate the purpose/requirements of the chapter and communicate the public health rationale to the operator.

If you have any comments, please contact the DPH, Environmental Health Section, Tourist Accommodations Program at 404-657-6534.