

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS GABRIELA COLETTA ZAPATA , SHARON DURKAN, RUTHZEE LOUIJEUNE, BREADON, FITZGERALD, FLYNN, MEJIA, MURPHY, SANTANA, WEBER, AND WORRELL



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING REGARDING ONGOING CHALLENGES WITH THE CITY OF BOSTON'S OVERSIGHT OF SHORT-TERM RENTALS

WHEREAS, The City of Boston adopted a short-term rental ordinance intended to regulate the use of residential units as AirBnBs and other short-term rentals to preserve housing stock, prevent nuisance activity, and protect neighborhood quality of life; *and*

WHEREAS, The ordinance allows certain exemptions, including residential units contracted for hospital or medical stays, but requires compliance with strict licensing, residency, and operating conditions; *and*

WHEREAS, The property located in the North End has been the subject of repeated complaints from abutters and neighbors, who report that the owner does not reside at the property and that the units are frequently rented to visitors for vacation purposes rather than for medical stays as permitted; *and*

WHEREAS, Constituents have reported a constant turnover of guests at, as well as related quality-of-life issues including excessive noise, improper trash disposal, and neighborhood disruption, despite the owner holding active licenses under the “Residential Units Contracted for Hospital Stays” exemption; *and*

WHEREAS, Additionally, another property located in East Boston has also been the subject of ongoing complaints, where a unit in the building has allegedly been operating illegally without a license, and a second unit continues to be listed and rented as an “Entire Home” despite only having been issued a limited share license; *and* despite documentation, site visits, and repeated complaints by neighbors and the District Council office, Inspectional Services Department (ISD) enforcement has been limited to issuing a small number of fines, without clear next steps or recurring penalties, leaving constituents frustrated with a lack of meaningful action to stop ongoing violations; *and*

WHEREAS, A second property in East Boston has been the subject of repeated constituent complaints regarding illegal short-term rental activity and broader unpermitted work, including the operation of an unapproved third-floor apartment, unpermitted roof and driveway work, electrical and HVAC installations without

permits, sidewalk obstructions, and sump pump discharge into neighboring yards;
and

WHEREAS, While ISD has issued a citation addressing short-term rental activity, neighbors report that the property continues to demonstrate a pattern of tenant turnover consistent with illegal rentals, alongside unresolved construction and safety concerns, leaving residents frustrated with the lack of comprehensive enforcement or resolution; *and*

WHEREAS, Despite documentation, site visits, and repeated complaints by neighbors, Inspectional Services Department (ISD) enforcement has been limited to issuing a small number of fines, without clear next steps or recurring penalties, leaving constituents frustrated with a lack of meaningful action to stop ongoing violations; *and*

WHEREAS, The lack of clear, transparent, and timely enforcement has left neighbors without adequate recourse, raising broader concerns about the City's capacity to monitor, investigate, and ensure compliance with the ordinance across all neighborhoods;
and

WHEREAS, The City Council has a responsibility to ensure that the short-term rental ordinance is enforced fairly, consistently, and in alignment with its original intent to protect Boston's housing stock and residential communities; **NOW,**
THEREFORE BE IT

ORDERED: That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to examine the City of Boston's oversight and enforcement of short-term rentals, with particular focus on (1) the process for investigating alleged misuse of medical stay exemptions, (2) the adequacy of interdepartmental coordination between the Inspectional Services Department, Code Enforcement, and the Boston Police Department, (3) how complaints from neighbors and elected officials are tracked and resolved, and (4) potential legislative or administrative reforms to strengthen accountability and protect neighborhood stability. Representatives from the Inspectional Services Department, Code Enforcement, and other relevant stakeholders will be invited to testify.

Filed on: September 10, 2025