

# County of San Luis Obispo

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## COUNTY SEEKS TO LEVEL PLAYING FIELD FOR VACATION RENTALS

SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA—The County of San Luis Obispo will hire a firm to provide services that would allow for equal enforcement of regulations across all vacation rentals operating in the unincorporated areas of the county, including those without a valid lodging business license.

The Board of Supervisors approved a service agreement on Tuesday with Host Compliance LLC to make it easier to collect Transient Occupancy Taxes (TOT) from residential property owners who rent out their homes or secondary dwellings. The services would also allow the County to enforce important building codes. [The agreement](#) was proposed by County Planning and Building Director James A. Bergman and County Auditor-Controller-Treasurer-Tax Collector James P. Erb.

“Unlike licensed lodging businesses operating in the county, unlicensed vacation rentals don’t comply with land-use regulations and aren’t collecting or reporting required TOT and related assessments,” Erb said. “Allowing them to operate this way puts legally established vacation rentals in a competitive disadvantage, while also presenting code enforcement challenges.”

The agreement with Host Compliance will cost the County nearly \$72,000 for the first year, but as a result the County could potentially receive \$150,000 in increased TOT each year. Host Compliance’s services will also allow the County to enforce building codes related to these types of rentals. Currently, there are 1,147 licensed lodging businesses operating in the unincorporated areas of the county. Of these licensed lodging businesses, 1,022 are vacation rentals. Last fiscal year, licensed lodging businesses reported and remitted more than \$9.2 million in TOT to the County General Fund.

With the growing vacation rental industry and associated online vacation rental platforms that offer booking for vacation homes, the number of available rentals in the county has increased. However, these rental platforms do not share information about the property (i.e., property owner name or address) with local governments. For unlicensed vacation rentals, becoming licensed is usually a simple and inexpensive three-step process, which can typically cost under \$100. [The steps to obtaining a license can be found on the County’s website.](#)

Host Compliance will work for the County to identify all potential vacation rentals in the unincorporated areas using proprietary software; provide statistics on vacation rental activity in the area; monitor compliance for vacation rentals by notifying unpermitted rentals that they need to obtain permits and licenses; help ensure TOT compliance; and provide a 24/7 complaint hotline for neighbors.

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### ABOUT THE COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

The County of San Luis Obispo is one of the largest employers in the area with more than 2,800 individuals working to serve the community with pride to enhance the economic, environmental and social quality of life here. Established in 1850 as one of the original counties of California, the County has 24 departments all working collaboratively to provide essential services that benefit local citizens. Elected representatives, including a five-member Board of Supervisors, work with employees to create a safe, healthy, livable, prosperous and well-governed community. For more information, visit [www.slocounty.ca.gov](http://www.slocounty.ca.gov).