

The Scottsdale Resident’s Playbook

Navigating Code Enforcement & Short-Term Rentals

Scottsdale's neighborhood character shouldn't be compromised by recurring party houses, unpermitted construction, or neglected properties. Arizona law limits how cities can regulate short-term rentals (STRs), which means proactive resident reporting through the right channel is the most effective tool available. This guide walks through exactly who to contact, in what order, and how to document a problem so it holds up.

The Regulatory Landscape, in Plain English

State preemption. Arizona state law (A.R.S. § 9-500.39) significantly restricts cities' authority to ban or heavily regulate short-term rentals outright. Scottsdale cannot simply prohibit STRs in most residential areas — but it can require licensing, an emergency contact, liability insurance, and adherence to nuisance and noise ordinances that apply to every property, rental or not.

What Scottsdale actually requires. Licensed short-term rentals must maintain a 24-hour local or regional emergency contact, carry liability insurance, and comply with the same noise, parking, trash, and occupancy rules as any residential property. Violating those requirements — not the fact of being a rental — is what's enforceable.

The Two-Track System

Reporting in Scottsdale runs through two different tracks depending on what's happening. Getting the right one on the first call saves time and gets a faster response.

Situation	Track	Who to Contact
Active party, noise, disturbance happening right now	Police / Non-Emergency	Rental's emergency contact first, then Scottsdale Police Non-Emergency: 480-312-5000
Unlicensed operation, trash, unpermitted construction, property neglect	Code Enforcement	ScottsdaleEZ online portal, or Code Enforcement: 480-312-2546
Immediate danger to life or safety	Emergency	Call 911

Source: City of Scottsdale, “Good Neighbor Guide for Residents” and Code Enforcement program page, verified August 2026.

Step-by-Step: What To Do, In Order

1. Try the emergency contact first

Every licensed STR is required to post a 24-hour emergency contact. Look up the property at STR.ScottsdaleAZ.gov and try that number before calling the city — many issues get resolved fastest this way.

2. Active party or noise disturbance? Call Police Non-Emergency.

If the emergency contact doesn't resolve it, call the Scottsdale Police Non-Emergency Line at 480-312-5000. Note that nuisance calls aren't treated as high-priority emergencies, so response time can vary — document what you can while you wait (see Page 3).

3. Property maintenance, unlicensed rental, or code violation? Use Code Enforcement.

File online through the ScottsdaleEZ portal (search “EZ” at ScottsdaleAZ.gov) to create a trackable case number, or call Code Enforcement directly at 480-312-2546. Typical response time is within two business days.

4. Chronic or repeated violations? Escalate.

If the same address generates repeat complaints, bring it to your HOA board and copy the Scottsdale City Council at citycouncil@scottsdaleaz.gov. A documented pattern carries far more weight than a single incident.

A Note on Emergency Response

A noise or party complaint is not a 911 emergency. Reserve 911 for situations involving immediate danger to a person's life or safety. Everything else routes through the non-emergency line or Code Enforcement above.

Documenting a Violation the Right Way

A well-documented complaint is far more likely to lead to enforcement action, and it protects you if a case ever goes to an administrative hearing or municipal court.

What Helps

- Date and time of every incident, logged as it happens rather than from memory later.
- Audio or video recordings and, where possible, a decibel reading — the City's Good Neighbor Guide specifically notes these help police investigations.
- Case or reference numbers from any call or online report, so you can follow up and show a pattern.
- Photos taken only from public rights-of-way — your own property line, the sidewalk, or the street. Do not enter private property to document a violation.

Legal Boundaries to Keep in Mind

Document from public space only. Never trespass, confront occupants directly, or record audio/video in a way that violates Arizona's consent laws. The goal is a clean, defensible record — not a confrontation.

Building an Incident Log

Use the tracking log on the following page for every incident at a problem address. A pattern of dated, specific entries is what turns individual complaints into effective escalation — whether to Code Enforcement, your HOA, or the City Council.

Printable Incident Tracking Log

Photocopy this page or keep a running digital copy. Bring it to your HOA board or the City Council if a pattern develops.

Date	Time	Nature of Disruption	Photos (Y/N)	Police Case #	Inspector / Case #

Key Contacts & Escalation Directory

Contact	Use For	Number / Link
911	Life-threatening emergency	911
Scottsdale Police Non-Emergency	Active noise, party, nuisance	480-312-5000
Code Enforcement	Maintenance, unpermitted work, unlicensed STR	480-312-2546
ScottsdaleEZ Portal	File a trackable online report	eservices.scottsdaleaz.gov
STR Property Lookup	Find a rental's required emergency contact	STR.ScottsdaleAZ.gov
Scottsdale City Council	Escalate a documented, repeat pattern	citycouncil@scottsdaleaz.gov
Coalition of Greater Scottsdale	Questions, or to report a citywide pattern	coalitionofgreater-scottsdale.org

Sources verified against City of Scottsdale official pages, August 2026: Code Enforcement program page, "Good Neighbor Guide for Residents" (Short-Term Rentals), and the ScottsdaleEZ service portal. COGS is an independent, nonpartisan resident organization and is not affiliated with the City of Scottsdale.