

**ORDINANCE 2024-001 OF THE TOWN OF LAWRENCE, WISCONSIN
TO CREATE CHAPTER 40, FINANCE AND TAXATION, SECTION 40-1 – 40-13
HOTEL, MOTEL, AND ROOM TAX ORDINANCE**

Purpose: The purpose of this Ordinance is to create a room tax in the Town of Lawrence, and establish the collection process, use of funds by the Town and the penalties for evading the tax.

The Town Board of Supervisors of the Town of Lawrence does ordain as follows:

Section 1: Town of Lawrence Ordinance Chapter 40 – Finance and Taxation, Section 40-1 thru 40-3 reserved for future use. Section 40-4 thru 40-13 (Hotel, Motel and Room Tax) is hereby created to read as follows:

40-1 Reserved for future use.

40-2 Reserved for future use.

40-3 Reserved for future use.

40-4 Definitions

The following words, terms and phrases, when used in this article, shall have the meanings ascribed to them in this section, except where the context clearly indicates a different meaning:

Customer means any person residing for a continuous period of time less than one month in a hotel, motel or furnished accommodation available to the public.

Gross receipts means, insofar as applicable, as defined in Wis. Stats. § 77.51(4)(a), (b) and (c).

Hotel or motel means a building or group of buildings in which the public may obtain accommodations for a consideration including, without limitation, inns, motels, hotels, tourist rooms, tourist houses or courts, lodging houses, rooming houses, summer camps, apartment hotels, resort lodges and cabins and any other building in which accommodations are available to the public, except accommodations including mobile homes as defined in Wis. Stats. § 66.0435(1)(d), rented for a continuous period of more than one month and accommodations furnished by hospitals, sanitariums or nursing homes or by corporations or associations organized and operated exclusively for religious, charitable or educational purposes, provided no part of the net earnings of such corporations and associations inure to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

One month means a calendar month or thirty (30) days, whichever is less, counting the first day of the rental and not counting the last day of the rental.

Person responsible means the sole owner of the business subject to this article; the partners if a partnership owns the business subject to this article, the corporate president or designated general manager or agent if a corporation owns the business subject to this article.

Transient means any person residing for a continuous period of less than one month in a hotel, motel or other furnished accommodations available to the public.

Such other definitions as contained in s 66.0615.

40-5 Tax Imposed

Pursuant to Wis. Stats. § 66.0615 (1m)(a), a tax is imposed on the privilege of furnishing at retail rooms or lodging to customers by hotelkeepers, motel operators, and other persons furnishing accommodations that are available to the public, irrespective of whether membership is required for the use of the accommodation. Such tax shall be at the rate of eight (8) percent of the gross receipts from such retail furnishing of rooms or lodging. Such tax shall be collected from the customer when the customer's bill is paid, and shall be paid by the person responsible to the Financial Custodian as directed by the Town Clerk-Treasurer on a monthly basis. Such tax shall not be subject to the selective sales tax imposed by Wis. Stats. § 77.52(2). The proceeds of such tax shall be remitted to and received by the Financial Custodian monthly on or before the 20th day of the following month.

- (A) Such tax shall be distributed as provided by resolution of the Board.

40-6 Permit

Every person furnishing room(s) or lodging under section 40-5 shall file with the Clerk-Treasurer an application for each place of business. Every application shall be made upon a form prescribed by the Clerk-Treasurer and shall set forth the name under which the applicant intends to transact business, location of the place of business and such other information as the treasurer requires. The application shall be signed by the owner, if a sole proprietor, or, if not a sole proprietor, by the person responsible who is authorized to act on behalf of the business.

40-7 Tax Number

The Clerk-Treasurer shall issue to each applicant a separate number for each place of business within the Town. Such number is not assignable and is valid only for the person in whose name it is issued and for the collection of the room tax at the place designated therein.

40-8 Records Retention

Every person liable for the tax imposed by this article shall keep or cause to be kept such records, receipts, invoices, and other pertinent papers in such form as required by the Clerk-Treasurer and the State of Wisconsin.

40-9 Filing Returns

- (A) *Returns to be filed.* Returns shall be filed with the Clerk-Treasurer by person(s) subject to section 40-5 on or before the day such tax is due and payable. The return shall show the gross receipts from such retail furnishing of rooms or lodging of the preceding calendar month, the amount of tax imposed and such other information as the treasurer deems necessary for administrative purposes. An annual return shall be filed within ninety (90) days of the close of each calendar or fiscal year and shall contain such information as the Clerk-Treasurer requires to administer this section. Each return shall be signed by the person required to file a return or an authorized agent but need not be verified by oath. The Clerk-Treasurer may for good cause extend the time of filing any return, but not longer than thirty (30) days from the filing date.

- (B) *Failure to file.* If any person required to make a return fails, neglects or refuses to do so for the amount and in the manner, form and time prescribed herein, the Clerk-Treasurer, according to their best judgment, shall determine the amount of the tax due the Town and make a doomsage assessment upon the person who fails to file and pay on a timely basis. Each person whose tax is determined by the Clerk-Treasurer shall pay the amount determined plus interest at the rate of one percent per month on the unpaid balance. No refund or modification of the payment as determined by the Clerk-Treasurer may be granted until the person files a correct room tax return and permits the Clerk-Treasurer or an authorized agent to inspect and audit the records of the business required to be kept in Section 40-8.
- (C) *Late filing fee.* In addition to any other forfeiture provided herein, whether imposed or not, a forfeiture of \$100.00 shall be imposed upon and collected from any person each time such person fails to file the return required in subsection (A) of this section on a timely basis.

40-10 Clerk-Treasurer's Right of Inspection, Audit, and Cure.

- (A) Whenever the Clerk-Treasurer has probable cause to believe that the correct amount of room tax has not been assessed upon and collected from customers or that the tax return is not correct, the Clerk-Treasurer may cause an inspection and audit of the financial records of any person subject to Section 40-5 to determine whether or not the correct amount of room tax is assessed, collected and paid according to Sections 40-5 and 40-9.
- (B) If any person subject to Section 40-5 fails to comply with a request by the Clerk-Treasurer or an authorized agent to inspect and audit the person's financial records as in subsection (a) of this section, such person shall be subject to a forfeiture in the amount of five (5) percent of the tax due the Town at the time of the audit.
- (C) If any person subject to Section 40-5 fails to comply with a request by the Clerk-Treasurer or an authorized agent to inspect and audit the person's financial records as in subsections (A) or (B) of this section, such person shall be subject to any other forms of cure identified below and as permitted under Wisconsin Statutes applicable at that time.

40-11 Confidentiality

Information obtained under this article shall be confidential, except the Clerk-Treasurer may provide information to persons using the information in the discharge of duties imposed by law, the duties of their office, such as the duties of the office of room tax commissioner, or by order of a court. The Clerk-Treasurer may publish statistics classified so as not to disclose the identity of particular returns. Any person(s) who violates any provision of this section shall forfeit not less than \$100.00 nor more than \$500.00.

40-12 Administration and Payment of Taxes

This section shall be administered by the Clerk-Treasurer. The tax imposed for the month is due and payable on the 20th day of the month following the collection of the tax from the customer under Section 40-5.

40-13 Failure to Pay Tax When Due

- (A) *Forfeitures.* In addition to the forfeitures provided in this chapter and the tax due under this article, a forfeiture of twenty-five (25) percent of the room tax due for the previous year under Section 40-5 or \$5,000.00, whichever is less, shall be imposed upon any person or business that allows the monthly tax imposed to be delinquent under this article.
- (B) *Delinquent taxes.* The tax imposed by this article shall become delinquent if not paid within thirty (30) days after the due date of the return or within thirty (30) days after the expiration of an extension prior if one has been granted. If a return is filed late or there is no return filed, the due date for the taxes imposed is the due date of the return.
- (C) *Security may be required.* In order to protect the revenue of the Town, the Town Clerk-Treasurer shall require any person(s) liable for the tax imposed by this section, who fails to pay the tax as herein required, to file with the Clerk-Treasurer before or after the permit is issued such security not in excess of \$5,000.00 cash or a surety bond equal to the prior months tax as the Town Clerk-Treasurer may refuse or revoke its permit. If any taxpayer is delinquent in the payment of the taxes imposed by this section, the Town Clerk-Treasurer may, upon ten (10) days' notice and after giving the taxpayer an opportunity to confer, recover the taxes, interest and penalties from the security or surety placed with the Town Clerk-Treasurer by such taxpayer. No interest shall be paid or allowed by the Town to any person for the deposit of such security.

Section 2: Severability

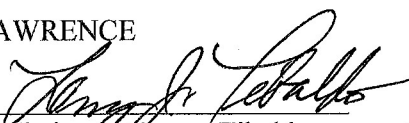
If any provision of this ordinance is found invalid or unconstitutional, or if the application of this Ordinance to any person or circumstances is invalid or unconstitutional, such invalidity or unconstitutionality shall not affect the other provisions or application of this Ordinance which can be given effect without the invalid or unconstitutional provision or application.

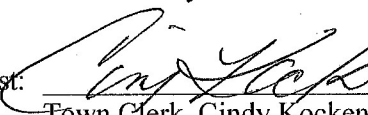
Section 3: This amendment to existing, and creation of new, ordinances shall be effective upon passage and publication as provided by Law.

Dated at Town of Lawrence, Wisconsin on this 12th day of February 2024.

Introduced by: Supervisor Frigo
Seconded by: Supervisor Vannieuwenhoven
Vote: 5-ayes, 0-nay

TOWN OF LAWRENCE


Town Chairman, Lanny Tibaldo

Attest: 
Town Clerk, Cindy Kocken

