

THE VALUE OF CORPORATE HOUSING IN CANADA



CORPORATE HOUSING
PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Corporate housing is fundamentally different from other types of short-term rentals. This well-organized industry provides a valuable service to businesses, employees, and others in need of temporary housing while having a sizable economic impact on the communities where it operates. It is important that policymakers and officials understand the industry's importance and are cognizant of its particular characteristics and value when creating and implementing short-term rental policies. Corporate housing providers support fair and reasonable regulations.

INTRODUCTION

The short-term rental industry has existed for decades, serving a variety of clients and needs. With the peer-to-peer sharing economy explosion in recent years, short-term rental industries of all types have become a household subject. The different, distinct short-term rental industries, however, are commonly confused. With rapid gains in accessibility and popularity of short-term rentals, both individuals and organizations dedicated to protecting housing communities are concerned. In an effort to control these new industries and protect constituents, policymakers are enacting broad regulations that could inadvertently or negatively impact other short-term rental industries, including corporate housing.

As an established and growing rental market, corporate housing serves a valuable and specific business purpose. It is important that those policymakers and government officials creating new short-term rental regulations are cognizant of the corporate housing industry, its economic significance, and both its similarities to and differences from other types of short-term rentals. As legislators attempt to keep up with the demand for regulation of the sharing economy, corporate housing industry leaders caution against knee-jerk policy responses that could unintentionally inhibit or prohibit necessary short-term rental housing.

Corporate housing is a different industry from other short-term rentals in that it provides unique benefits to the business community as well as a measurable economic impact to cities nationwide. The annual estimated corporate housing room revenue in Canada in 2017 was \$248 million.ⁱ While corporate housing often goes unnoticed, it is making significant economic contributions to communities in which it operates. It is a business-to-business model for professionally managed units with an average length of stay of 54 days, which is substantially longer than other short-term rental units.ⁱⁱ Corporate housing is a fundamental part of many businesses' operations and an important comfort to employees, among others, in transition. This type of housing differs from other short-term rentals in its clientele, how it is managed, and how it functions in the community. Because of these differences, it is much less likely to create the nuisance and disruption that so many communities are trying to eliminate through new regulations and should be protected from unnecessary and potentially damaging regulations intended to solve problems created by unexpected challenges in other short-term rental industries. Corporate housing is a vital industry that deserves thoughtful regulatory consideration.

Many Names, Many Uses

The industry is known by a number of different terms such as:

- Corporate Housing
- Furnished Apartments
- Temporary Housing
- Serviced Apartments
- Executive Suites
- Executive Rentals

SHORT-TERM RENTAL INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

There are a variety of short-term rental industries that serve different purposes and different clientele. In contrast to corporate housing, the short-term rental industry model is usually defined as units rented for less than one year that include furnishings and house wares and provide a more home-like environment than a hotel. Short-term rental housing can often serve the needs of families and large groups by providing more space than average hotel rooms and including kitchens so that clients can cook their own meals. These properties are often located in residential areas, affording the client access to residential areas they would not otherwise experience.

Arguably, the most commonly known type of short-term rental is a vacation rental: a privately owned home rented out to vacationers by the day, week, or month for leisure purposes.ⁱⁱⁱ This rental industry has changed drastically in recent years with the explosion of the peer-to-peer model. It is becoming increasingly easy and popular to rent one's own primary residence out as a vacation rental, and many communities across the country are rising in opposition to the practice due to the nuisance that can sometimes accompany its participants who routinely self-manage as opposed to using professional management services.



Vacation rentals are typically privately owned homes used for leisure purposes.

Local officials are scrambling to answer policy and regulatory questions that have arisen due to the popularity of and ensuing opposition to this practice. The most prominent community concerns surrounding short-term vacation rentals are allegations of over-occupancy, ill-behaved guests, large gatherings, revolving doors of different guests with very short stays, failure to run criminal background checks and general lack of accountability.

The fundamental characteristics of the corporate housing business model obviate the problems and community opposition that can come with other types of short-term rentals, but this can be lost in the groundswell of political pressure and haste that can often surround these new regulations.

CORPORATE HOUSING OVERVIEW & BENEFITS



As a full-service solution, corporate housing offers the comforts of home coupled with full-service amenities and handled through the convenience of a committed professional.

Corporate housing provides rented furnished housing to individuals, military personnel, and corporations, primarily for longer than 30 days and less than one year. It generally consists of apartments, condos, and single-family homes for people to use on a temporary basis while traveling for work-related purposes. For an employee being transferred to a new city, staying among local residents is of particular value in determining where in the city he or she will want to live permanently. An additional benefit for a corporate housing client is the ability to leave one's personal items intact when returning home for weekends, or traveling back and forth.

This type of lodging is more than just a place to stay; it is a much-needed service provided for employees experiencing a training or transition. It in turn helps employers achieve their business goals by cultivating more engaged and focused employees. It is estimated that the annual inter-provincial migration volume for Canada is 280,847, many of these are

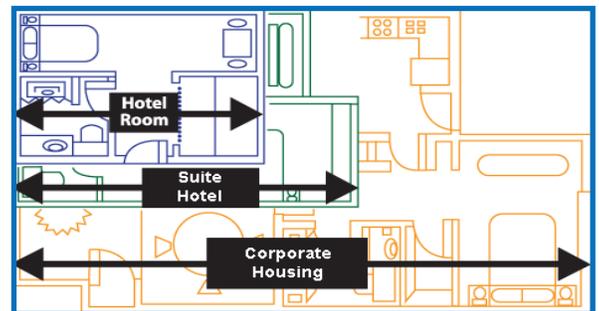
related to employment. On average, organizations allow their employees 31 days to complete a transfer once accepted, almost necessitating interim housing for a smooth transition.^{iv} Oil and gas and insurance are the largest generators of corporate housing demand by industry.^v In addition to regular corporate clients like relocated employees, consultants, and employees in training, clients also include medical professionals, film and entertainment crews, patients receiving specialized care away from home, and those displaced by fire or natural disaster, among others.

Corporate housing has a positive impact on communities in a variety of ways, both direct and indirect. Property owners benefit by collecting dependable rental income from tenants comprised of vetted professionals and their families. Immediate neighbors of corporate housing benefit from living near well-kept and closely managed residences.

Local economies also benefit from the strong economic impact that this often-unseen industry makes. This impact includes both the rental dollars paid for market-rate (often luxury) units, as well as visitor spending. The relocation industry directly contributes over \$2.5 billion to Canada's economy and employs thousands of people across many diverse industry groups. In 2015 the average cost to relocate an employee within Canada was approximately \$57,000.^{vi} The Canadian inventory of corporate housing is estimated at over 6,700 units.^{vii} It is a high-demand form of accommodation whose supply is rising faster than its nearest competitor, upscale extended stay hotels.^{viii}

CORPORATE HOUSING DIFFERENCES

Corporate housing providers are professional and operate as business entities. They do not function on the peer-to-peer platform that is currently causing challenges for legislators issues for permanent residents. The professional, business-to-business model precludes the tax collection issues common to non-professional models—corporate housing providers are familiar with and pay hotel occupancy tax and other financial obligations, as required. In addition to abiding by appropriate tax codes, corporate housing providers comply with property zoning laws, health and safety codes, apartment community lease restrictions on minimum stay and other local regulations as they relate to short-term stays.



Corporate housing is typically larger than a hotel room or extended stay hotel.

The model generally functions such that rental units are leased to a provider who then fills them as needed. Often, the corporate customer will engage in twelve-month leases or lease match with building owners and property managers who are familiar with the corporate housing model. The vast majority of units are leased by the provider and then re-rented to the client, as opposed to individual leases with many different clients. Corporate housing units are usually leased directly from the building owner, though on occasion providers also lease from one another.

Frequent changes in guests are unusual in a corporate housing situation, as evidenced by an industry standard of a minimum 30-day stay and an average stay of 54 days.^{ix} The average stay for a short-term vacation rental, for example, is just under 6 nights.^x Corporate housing's longer stays translate into a less boarding house-like feeling for nearby neighbors. Clients may sometimes be individuals visiting for a conference or training but are more likely to be an employee and his or her family recently transferred or considering a move from another employer location. This model is really a business-to-business relationship. Employee relocations and project assignments make up 61% of corporate housing rentals in Canada.

Corporate housing does not attract the bad behavior that poorly vetted short-term rentals can sometimes draw, like large gatherings and over-occupancy. Vacation rentals tend to attract larger groups, with two-thirds of all stays involving at least three people, and more than one third involving at least five.^{xi} Corporate housing clients are professionally vetted, are typically housed for employment reasons, and are often accompanied by their families.

Experienced management ensures consistent contact for property neighbors. The standards for service for professional managers minimize the risk that an occupant will create a disturbance because, in addition to being accountable for client behavior to property neighbors, the professional manager is accountable for client behavior to the professional organizations that set industry norms and expectations. Many corporate housing industry professionals have industry designations and credentials highlighting their experience and knowledge.

CORPORATE HOUSING PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION

The Corporate Housing Providers Association (CHPA) is the professional trade association committed to supporting providers of corporate housing all around the world. It has represented this business-to-business industry for more than 20 years, setting standards for service, providing a professional certification program, holding annual and regional conferences, and providing a code of ethics to help providers maintain the high standards of service necessary for the industry to remain viable and competitive with other types of accommodations. CHPA's 300+ member companies include corporate housing providers as well as important industry partners.

Corporate housing providers have a standard expectation that includes everything from furniture to Internet service to welcome packages, ensuring high levels of service and accommodation. Corporate housing companies frequently meet standards that include:

- Health, Safety, Security and Environment (HSSE) Compliance;
- Payment Card Industry (PCI) Compliance;
- Safety and emergency plans in place with trained staff;
- 24-hour emergency lines;
- A standardized product regardless of location;
- Centralized management with professional offices;
- Background checks, security precautions, and insurance carried by professional providers;
- Clear options for recourse so that if a client is unsatisfied they can be moved to another location; and
- Compliance with federal, provincial and local regulations.

This set of standard requirements keeps corporate housing providers competitive and also helps keep communities and clients more secure.

CONCLUSION

It is integral that municipalities and provincial governments support the longstanding and growing corporate housing industry so that the industry can continue to support business and people in transition. One important way to do this is to make sure that policymakers are aware of the specific impacts of corporate housing so that legislation is properly scoped to avoid negative externalities. Education of policymakers is particularly important given the wave of new regulations aimed at other types of short-term rentals.

The corporate housing industry's focus on professional management, a 30-day minimum length of stay, and high standards and level of organization set it apart from other types of short-term rentals.

Corporate housing is good for business and good for communities.

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About CHPA



CORPORATE HOUSING
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CHPA is the only trade association dedicated exclusively to the corporate housing industry. The association advances the highest standards in business and professionalism; provides valuable insight, knowledge and resources to the industry; and increases visibility among related industries. Along with networking, education, certification, and information sharing, CHPA members grow their business and expand their reach through an international network of partners. Find out more about corporate or furnished apartments at www.chpaonline.org.