



Official Signed Letter from Chelan County Board of Commissioners, Open Letter to Vacation Rental Professionals (Click here to read signed version)

March 26, 2020

Chelan County Commissioners

Open Letter to Vacation Rental Professionals in Response to Covid 19

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Chelan County Vacation Rentals Professionals
940 US Highway 2
Leavenworth, WA 98826

March 26, 2020

SENT VIA Email: dan@destinationleavenworth.com

Dan,

We are writing to you with the hope that you will share this letter with members of the Chelan County Vacation Rental Professionals. The Board of Chelan County Commissioners is seeking many options to provide the best protection to the citizens of Chelan County from the COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic, and we seek your assistance on a difficult issue that has arisen.

On March 17, Chelan County adopted and enacted Resolution 2020-32 declaring an emergency in order to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. This resolution listed findings and conclusions supporting the emergency declaration and the county's response to the outbreak, including reliance on Governor Inslee's COVID-19 proclamations and the activation of the county's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan. Since that resolution was adopted and enacted, Governor Inslee has issued further proclamations related to the COVID-19 emergency including Proclamation 20-25 which directs Washingtonians to stay at home and refrain from vacation travel.

As you may know, the number of persons infected with COVID-19 continues to increase statewide and in Chelan County. Since the COVID-19 emergency was declared by Governor Inslee on February 29, there has been an influx of people

coming to Chelan County from urban centers and counties. We have heard anecdotal information that some expect better access to medical and other public facilities, groceries, and services by relocating to Chelan County during the emergency period. This assumption is inaccurate as Chelan County has fewer hospital beds available per capita than is needed and other public facilities are short in supply on a per capita basis.

People coming to Chelan County to avoid COVID-19 emergency directives and recommendations in other communities have the potential to negatively impact the public health, safety, and welfare in Chelan County and are also disregarding Governor Inslee's Proclamation 20-25 by not staying home. As such, we are trying to be proactive in protecting our citizens, and seek your help in this effort.

Under our county's Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan, we are focused on the following emergency response actions; residential relocation and shelter-in-place actions, restricted public facility access, and the relocation and/or evacuation of residents as necessary.

Should this need arise, we must ensure that service workers who need isolation or respite from home have access to local housing. Vacation Rentals may be able to provide a direct service to our community by making your homes available to service providers and possibly local citizens who are displaced because of COVID-19 isolation needs.

During this acute time period, we respectfully ask that owners and operators of Vacation Rentals in Chelan County cooperate in not promoting rentals to people from outside Chelan or Douglas Counties during the emergency. This request is intended to assist the first responders and medical personnel in Chelan and Douglas Counties who need alternative residential accommodations due to their risk of exposure to COVID-19. Their daily work prompts their need to reduce the risk of exposure to their own families. In short, your rentals may be needed for those professionals who are providing service to our community, and are at risk themselves. This action also reduces the risk of introducing pathogens to Chelan County, thereby alleviating impacts to our first responders.

The Vacation Rentals Professionals have promoted an ability to self-regulate to meet the greater needs of the County, and we believe this is an opportunity for you to demonstrate that ability. We recognize that this is an inordinate request, but these are inordinate times. Thank you for considering this need for our community.

Sincerely,

Board of Chelan County Commissioners

Doug England, Chairman

Bob Bugert, Commissioner

Kevin Overbay, Commissioner

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