

# QUEBEC TAKES STRONGER MEASURES AGAINST ILLEGAL SHORT-TERM ACCOMMODATION



Revenu Québec, the public authorities, handed out fines totaling almost \$5 million to illegal short-term landlords in one year. On average, each case resulted in a fine of approximately \$4000.

"The convictions are related to the Tourist Accommodation Act. This law states that any individual or business operating a tourist accommodation without being registered can be fined between \$2,500 to \$25,000 for individuals and \$5,000 to \$50,000 for businesses," explained the spokesperson for Revenu Québec, Mylène Gagnon.

Public authorities obtained 1205 convictions between 1 April 2022 and 28 February 2023. They were fined \$4.9 million, for an average fine of \$4000. Since 2018, Revenu Québec has been granted the authority to inspect tourist accommodations.

Nearly 40% of convictions (457) come from Montreal, followed by Montérégie (120), Laurentians (110), Outaouais (80), and Quebec City (68).

This is an increase compared to previous years:

- 2021-2022: 1099 convictions, \$4.3 million in fines
- 2020-2021: 142 convictions, \$598,677 in fines

## Just a drop

It's important to remember that the 1205 convictions are just a tiny portion of the many illegal ads found on transactional sites such as Airbnb. The Ministry of Tourism discovered that most landlords needed to follow the Tourist Accommodation Act, with only 30% of ads on two major sites compliant with the law.

Tourism Minister Caroline Proulx introduced a bill last week to directly target transactional sites rather than each ad individually.

"I was hopeful that tourist accommodation platforms would be good corporate citizens. I really believed that they would respect the laws of Quebec and promote and market ads only with a registration number. I was wrong; unfortunately, it was not the case," she explained.

"If this bill passes, platform operators that do not comply with the law will face fines of up to \$100,000 per ad that does not comply with the law. So if Airbnb shows 10 non-compliant listings, that's 10 fines; if it runs 15 listings that aren't compliant, that's 15 fines, and so on. So, if the platform does not display a number: fine. If the platform has not validated the registration number: fine," she explained.

It should be noted that short-term landlords will also be subject to the law and will still be able to

receive fines if they rent units without a registration number.

If individuals who refuse to follow the law attempt to illegally rent out their homes on platforms like Kijiji, LesPAC, or Facebook, those platforms may be subject to legal consequences by ministerial order.

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