

Singaporean Airbnb hosts fined over unauthorised rentals

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Two Singaporean Airbnb hosts were Tuesday fined Sg\$60,000 (\$45,800)

each for letting out apartments without official permission, the first such case in the city-state under new rules against short-term rentals.

Housing agents Terence Tan En Wei and Yao Songliang had previously pleaded guilty to illegally renting out four apartments in a luxury private condominium in central Singapore.

Prosecutors said the pair had listed the apartments on Airbnb, which allows homeowners to share their homes for a fee by marketing them online, and other vacation rental sites.

The duo made Sg\$19,000 (\$14,500) from renting the apartments between May 15 and June 21 last year, according to [court documents](#).

They were charged under regulations introduced last May banning homeowners from leasing property for less than three months without approval from authorities.

Housing is a sensitive issue in rich but land-starved Singapore because more than 80 percent of the population lives in government-subsidised properties.

When the men were first charged, an Airbnb spokesman said rules in the city-state do not reflect how Singaporeans use their homes and travel, and the company hoped to work with [local authorities](#) to find a way forward.

Airbnb has become a popular and often cheaper alternative to hotels for many travellers.

But the company has faced mounting criticism that it worsens [housing](#) shortages and squeezes the long-term rental sector, with cities including New York, Miami and Berlin cracking down on the service.

In central Paris, rentals are limited to 120 days a year and apartments must be registered with city authorities. A similar limit applies in London.

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