

# Cassels

April 4, 2024

Via E-Mail: [phc@toronto.ca](mailto:phc@toronto.ca)

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Attention: Nancy Martins, Committee Administrator  
Members of Planning and Housing Committee

**Re: Item PH11.9 - Short-Term Rental By-law Implementation Update  
Planning and Housing Committee Meeting – April 5, 2024  
The Governing Council of the University of Toronto**

We are the solicitors for The Governing Council of the University of Toronto (the “University”).

On behalf of the University, we are writing to support the request for further amendments to Chapter 547 of the Municipal Code, Licensing and Registration of Short-Term Rentals (the “Licensing By-law”) to explicitly exclude premises owned or operated by post-secondary schools from the definition of Short-Term Rental.

## Background

Consistent with other post-secondary institutions, the University offers short-term rental of rooms within its various student residence buildings during off-peak seasons as an incidental but important source of additional revenue. Online platforms, such as Bookings.com, are used to advertise the availability of these rooms.

We understand that online platforms verify the registration of host properties with the City’s Municipal Licensing and Standards division and the lack of an explicit exemption in the Licensing By-law is negatively impacting the University’s ability to continue to use these platforms to offer these under-utilized spaces for short-term use. Online booking platforms have now become standard in the market, making it virtually impossible to offer these spaces without them.

## The Licensing By-law

While it is undisputed that the Licensing By-law does not apply to the short-term rental of rooms within a student residence, which are not “dwelling units” nor units within a “principal residence” and therefore not “short-term rentals”, the lack of an explicit exemption in the Licensing By-law, as is currently provided for hotels or motels, is creating inadvertent but significant financial

impacts. In our view, clarity is needed within the Licensing By-law to avoid negatively impacting post-secondary institutions.

## **Requested Amendment**

On behalf of the University, we urge the City to adopt the following amendment to the Licensing By-law to explicitly exempt premises owned or operated by post-secondary schools:

“SHORT-TERM RENTAL – All or part of a dwelling unit used to provide sleeping accommodations for any rental period that is less than 28 consecutive days in exchange for payment, and includes bed and breakfasts but does not include premises owned or operated by a post-secondary school, hotels or motels.”

We thank the Committee in advance of its consideration of this request. Please do not hesitate to contact the undersigned with any questions.

Yours truly,

Cassels Brock & Blackwell LLP



Signe Leisk  
Partner

SL/MK