

## Transient Occupancy Tax FAQ

### What is Transient Occupancy Tax?

Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) is a tax imposed on guests who rent a room in your hotel or a portion of your property for the purpose of lodging on a short-term basis (30 consecutive days or less). TOT is collected in addition to the room charges paid for “the privilege” occupancy.

### What is the City’s Transient Occupancy Tax Rate?

For the privilege of occupancy, El Cajon's TOT rate is 10% of the total rent charged to a guest. The taxable rent includes: room rate and other charges directly associated to the room.

### Who collects TOT?

TOT is collected by the operator at the same time rent is collected from the guest. The operator is the owner, property manager, host or lessee providing lodging on a short-term basis.

### Long-Term Guests

A guest is a transient unless they reach the 31st day and no longer owe TOT going forward, or there is documentation that indicates otherwise. Such documentation can be a reservation or lease agreement indicating the start and end dates of the stay are more than 30 day apart. If no such document exist, the guest shall pay TOT for the first 30 days.

### Are Resort Fees, Late Check-in, Late Check-out, and Cancellations taxable as part of TOT?

If you choose to charge a fee such as a “Resort Fee” and it is a **standard charge to all guests**, the fee should be included in taxable rent. Excluding resort fees, and other fees that are clearly part of the “privilege of occupancy” at this hotel.

### Who is exempt from paying TOT?

Any guest who rents for 30 consecutive days or more is exempt from paying TOT. Any exemptions should be kept on record.

Officers of a government or a tax-exempt organization on official business may also be exempt.

Government exempt businesses who show proof of tax exemption.

Insurance Agents, Federal Credit Union Employees, and Red Cross employees when on official business and paid with an Agency voucher or Agency credit card.

Foreign officials with U.S. State Department “Tax Exempt Card” and photo identification are also exempt.

### When do I file my TOT?

Operators collect the tax and file with the Lodging Tax Processing Center on a quarterly basis. TOT Returns are filed regardless if rent was collected during the period. The due date for filing TOT is on the first day of April, July, October and January. Penalties and interest apply to late payments.

### How do I file TOT?

The City has contracted with HdL Lodging Tax to collect and process TOT Returns. Registered Operators can file their TOT Returns through the Lodging Tax Processing Center using the following methods:

- Online <https://ElCajonCA.hdlgov.com>
- By phone (619)393-7108
- By mail City of El Cajon  
Lodging Tax Processing Center  
8839 N Cedar Ave #212  
Fresno, CA 93720