



SANTA ROSA POLICE DEPARTMENT

Vacation Home Check Guidelines

VIPS, trained volunteers from the Santa Rosa Police Department, will perform a thorough inspection of your property while you are away on vacation. Vacation checks entail a visual check of your home, outbuildings, vehicles, gates, and lighting, in accordance with the request. Whenever a vacation check reveals something suspicious, volunteers are trained to leave the immediate area and request response from a patrol officer to further investigate. Vacation checks will be performed, as staffing allows, with the goal of checking the home two to three times each week while the resident is gone or once a week for vacations longer than 30 days. Upon your return, you will receive a letter detailing the dates and times your home was checked along with any notations made by the volunteers.

VIPS work in pairs, drive specially marked police vehicles and wear uniforms that clearly identify them as police volunteers. They will park a discreet distance from your home whenever possible and will walk in to the property. Vacation checks are a free service which could not be offered by the Santa Rosa Police Department without assistance from the VIPS volunteer team.

Program Guidelines:

- For City of Santa Rosa residents only.
- For vacations of a minimum 5 days and a maximum of 90 days (or 3 months).
- For residential properties only. Business locations, vacant properties, homes for sale and homes with a house sitter or other guest(s) staying in the home are not eligible for vacation checks.

Applications must be submitted at least one week before your vacation.

- You may personally deliver the application to the City of Santa Rosa Police Department or mail it to 965 Sonoma Avenue, Santa Rosa, California 95404.
- You may email the application to smcclelland@srcity.org Telephone requests for vacation checks **cannot** be accepted.
- To report that you are home early or if you wish to extend your vacation check (90 days or 3 months maximum), please call VIPS Coordinator Sheila Mc Clelland at (707) 543-3683.
- Attached is a list of tips to remember before leaving on vacation. Please fill-out the attached application as **completely and as detailed as possible**. The information you provide will help us reach you or your *Emergency Contact/Local Key Holder* should we run into a problem. Knowing these details will help us verify information and identify others who have access to your home. The information you provide will be safeguarded and kept confidential.

For additional questions about this program, contact VIP Coordinator **Sheila McClelland** by email smcclelland@srcity.org or call (707) 543-3683.



**SANTA ROSA POLICE DEPARTMENT
VACATION HOME CHECK APPLICATION**

Vacation Departure Date: _____ Return Date: _____

Homeowner/Resident Name(s) _____

Address _____, Santa Rosa. Cross Street: _____

Telephones: Home: _____ Cell: _____ Vacation (if known): _____

Persons to contact in case of an emergency or problem at your home:

Name: _____ Phone/cell phone: _____

Name _____ Phone/cell phone _____

Persons Authorized on Property: Name & Phone #: _____ / _____

Check the Yes or No Response to the Following Questions:

No / Yes

- Does anyone else have keys to your home? Name and Phone _____
- Are all Gates locked?
- Is Address Visible on Home?
- Lights or Radio Left on, or on Timers?
- Newspapers, Deliveries, Mail stopped?
- Any Vehicles Left on Property? Make, model, color and License Plate Number(s): _____
- Alarm installed? If so, Company name and phone number: _____
- Pets/Animals on Property? Number _____ Breed _____ Name(s) _____
- Are all Doors and Windows Closed and Locked on Home and Garage?

I understand that vacation checks/safety patrols will be performed on a random basis as staffing and time permits. Any application may be denied for safety reasons. My signature on this form releases the City of Santa Rosa, the Santa Rosa Police Department, and the Volunteers of all liability for any loss of property or damage that may occur during the aforementioned time period.

Submit Request Form to: Santa Rosa Police Department, Attn: VIPS Coordinator, 965 Sonoma Ave., Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Print Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____

All vacation home check forms **MUST** be received by the Police Department at least one week prior to vacation date.



SANTA ROSA POLICE DEPARTMENT
VOLUNTEERS IN POLICE SERVICE (VIPS)
HOME CHECK PROGRAM

RELEASE AND WAIVER

I, _____ “Releasor,” whose principal residence is located at _____, Santa Rosa, California (“Residence”) hereby give permission to the VIPS volunteers of the Santa Rosa Police Department to enter the Residence property for the purposes of checking the exterior of the Residence and outbuildings between the dates of _____ and _____. I understand that this permission does not create any duty on the part of the City of Santa Rosa Police Department to check or secure the Residence and further understand the service is subject to the availability of VIPS volunteers.

For and in consideration of the Residence check by VIPS volunteers, **Releasor** voluntarily releases, discharges, waives, and relinquishes all claims of liability against the **City of Santa Rosa, and its officers, employees and volunteers**, including but not limited to, any and all actions or causes of action for personal injury, death, or property damage that may arise from, or relate to, any Residence check, or in any activities incidental thereto, wherever or however any such injury, death, or property damage may occur.

Releasor does for himself or herself, and his or her heirs, executors, administrators, personal representatives, and assigns, release, waive, discharge, and relinquish any action or cause of action for personal injury, death, or property damage that may arise from, or relate to, any Residence check, and agrees that under no circumstance will **Releasor** prosecute or present any claim for personal injury, death, or property damage against the **City of Santa Rosa** or any of the **City of Santa Rosa’s** officers, employees, or volunteers for personal injury, death, or property damage arising from, or related to, any Residence check.

Releasor acknowledges that he or she has read this release, and that if not the property owner, is authorized to enter into this release on behalf of property owner, and that he or she is fully aware of the legal consequences of signing this Release.

Printed Name of Owner/Tenant: _____
Signature of Owner/Tenant¹: _____
Date: _____

Printed Name of Owner/Tenant: _____
Signature of Owner/Tenant: _____
Date: _____

Witness (Printed Name): _____
Witness (Signature): _____
Title: _____

¹ If more than one owner or tenant, all must sign.

VACATION TIPS

Preparations

- Don't advertise vacation plans beyond those who need to know.
- Have a friend pick up your mail and newspapers, or have them held.
- Set up timers on lamps in more than one room. Get timers that can operate for two or more intervals a day to simulate morning and evening routines.
- Consider putting a TV or talk-radio channel on a timer to simulate human voices and presence.
- Turn your telephone ringer off or down low (long, loud rings say "nobody's home.") or, use call-forwarding.
- If you have an answering machine, keep the outgoing message vague: "We can't come to the phone right now; please leave a message." Never leave specifics indicating how long you'll be gone.
- Unplug most electrical appliances.
- Securely lock all windows and doors.
- Do not leave an extra key beneath the mat, over the door frame, or under a convenient rock. Any place you can think of, crooks can think of too. Leave the key with a trusted contact who will look in on your house while you are gone.

Have a Trusted Contact

Your most effective step is to arrange for trusted relatives, friends, or neighbor to house sit, or to check your home on a daily basis while you are gone. They can help with:

- Picking up mail, newspapers, unsolicited ads, etc. daily. (If that's not convenient, arrange for your newspapers and mail to be held until you return.)
- Taking care of pets.
- Parking a spare car in the driveway or in front of the house.
- Turning on lights that aren't on timers at different times of day.
- Opening and closing curtains.
- Mowing the lawn, watering the yard, raking leaves, shoveling snow.
- Make sure your contact knows how to reach you in an emergency. And make sure you have your contact's number in case you forgot something.
- If you have an alarm system, make sure your contact knows how to set or reset it. They should also know your itinerary, such as where you'll be staying and your expected date of return.

**If you return home early please call us at (707) 543-3683 or email
Sheila McClelland, VIP Coordinator at smcclelland@srcity.org**