

# Airbnb in Kentucky: A \$580M economic engine for local communities

By [Airbnb](#) · February 24, 2025  
• [Company](#)

## Key Takeaways

- In 2023, Airbnb hosts welcomed more than one million guests to Kentucky.
- 8,600 tourism jobs supported by Airbnb hosts welcoming guests, which in turn generated approximately \$354 million in income for local workers in 2023.
- By enabling guests to stay closer to the Kentucky Bourbon Trail they came to experience, Airbnb helps fill the accommodation gap, ensuring that visitors also spend time in—and money at—family-owned restaurants, local shops, and nearby attractions.



## Supporting Kentucky's financial resilience

Airbnb hosts are a critical part of Kentucky's growing tourism industry and help generate valuable revenue for the local economy. In 2023, Airbnb hosts welcomed more than one million guests to Kentucky<sup>1</sup>, who contributed an **estimated \$588 million annually to the Commonwealth's GDP**<sup>2</sup>, including:

- 8,600 tourism jobs supported by Airbnb hosts welcoming guests<sup>3</sup>, which in turn generated approximately \$354 million in income for local workers in 2023<sup>4</sup>
- \$161M generated by Airbnb hosts in total total tourism tax in Kentucky in 2023<sup>5</sup>
- \$16.5 million in local occupancy taxes collected and remitted by Airbnb on behalf of hosts in Kentucky in 2023<sup>6</sup>

## The Airbnb host community in Kentucky

In Kentucky, Airbnb is an important economic tool for residents who share their homes to earn extra money, the vast majority of hosts share just one home<sup>7</sup>. By welcoming guests who spend money at small businesses, local restaurants and natural attractions, hosts across Kentucky help support their local economies.

- 76% approximate percentage of hosts with only one entire home listing<sup>8</sup>
- 61% approximate percentage of women hosts<sup>9</sup>
- 1 in 5 hosts over the age of 60<sup>10</sup>
- 15% approximate percentage of hosts who work in healthcare and education<sup>11</sup>

## A source of supplemental income

The majority of hosts in Kentucky share their home occasionally—approximately 58 nights per year—to supplement their income<sup>12</sup>. For many people in Kentucky, the income they earn by sharing their home on Airbnb has allowed them to keep up with the rising costs of living and stay in their home.

- 58 approximate nights a typical listing was hosted in 2023<sup>13</sup>
- 40% of hosts confirm Airbnb has helped them cover rising costs of living<sup>14</sup>
- 33% of hosts confirm Airbnb has helped them stay in their home<sup>15</sup>
- 83% of hosts confirm they use Airbnb as a second form of income<sup>16</sup>

## Distilling bourbon tourism across the Bluegrass State

From Bardstown to Clermont and beyond, the Kentucky Bourbon Trail offers a uniquely Bluegrass experience—history, scenic small towns, and world-renowned distilleries. Many of these iconic distilleries are located in areas with few or no hotels, making short-term rentals vital to supporting local tourism and driving economic vitality for rural communities. By enabling guests to stay closer to the distilleries they came to experience, Airbnb helps fill the accommodation gap, ensuring that visitors also spend time in—and money at—family-owned restaurants, local shops, and nearby attractions.

In 2022 alone, hosts in communities with few or no hotels welcomed thousands of guests, highlighting the important role short-term rentals play in dispersing travel across the state<sup>17</sup> and fueling Kentucky’s bourbon industry:<sup>18</sup>

- **Frankfort (Buffalo Trace)**
  - Nearly **80%** of census tracts in Frankfort have Airbnb listings but no hotels
  - Hosts in these neighborhoods welcomed over **6,000** guests, earning more than **\$900,000**
- **Versailles (Woodford Reserve)**
  - More than **70%** of census tracts in Versailles are home to Airbnb listings but no hotels

- Hosts in these neighborhoods welcomed over **3,000** guests, earning nearly **\$700,000**
- **Bardstown (BEAM and Heaven Hill)**
  - More than **70%** of census tracts in Bardstown have Airbnb listings but no hotels
  - Hosts in these neighborhoods welcomed over **2,500** guests, earning more than **\$400,000**
- **Lawrenceburg (Wild Turkey)**
  - **100%** of census tracts in Lawrenceburg are home to Airbnb listings but no hotels
  - Hosts welcomed nearly **3,000** guests, earning more than **\$400,000**
- **Shelbyville (Diageo)**
  - More than **40%** of census tracts in Shelbyville have Airbnb listings but no hotels
  - Hosts in these neighborhoods welcomed over **4,500** guests, earning more than **\$250,000**

<sup>1</sup>Airbnb data from January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>2</sup>Economic contribution metrics are generated using IMPLAN's input-output model using multipliers from the 2022 data year (the latest available at the time of analysis) for Kentucky, and are reported in 2023 dollars. Model inputs are host earnings & guest spending, where spending is based on a survey of Airbnb guests staying in Kentucky.

<sup>3</sup>Estimated number of full-time, part-time and seasonal jobs supported by the output generated by Airbnb activity. This metric includes direct, indirect, and induced effects.

<sup>4</sup>Labor income includes both Proprietor Income (e.g. for small business owners that benefit from guest spending), but also Employee Compensation (e.g. cleaners, employees of small businesses). More details [here](#).

<sup>5</sup>Estimated total tax revenue associated with economic activity generated by Airbnb stays. This includes the total value of taxes associated with hosts' income and spending, and the economic activity stemming from guests visiting local businesses.

<sup>6</sup>Local transient occupancy taxes collected and remitted by Airbnb on behalf of hosts in Kentucky in 2023.

<sup>7</sup>Airbnb data from January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>8</sup>Airbnb data from January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>9</sup>Based on data from Hosts who self-reported their gender from January 1 – December 31, 2023.

<sup>10</sup>Based on data from Hosts who self-reported their age from January 1 – December 31, 2023.

<sup>11</sup>Self reported through survey to Airbnb Hosts January 1- December 31, 2023  
Airbnb data from January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>12</sup>Airbnb data from January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>13</sup>Self reported through survey to Airbnb Hosts January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>14</sup>Self reported through survey to Airbnb Hosts January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>15</sup>Self reported through survey to Airbnb Hosts January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>16</sup>Self reported through survey to Airbnb Hosts January 1- December 31, 2023.

<sup>17</sup>Census tracts are small, statistical subdivisions used by the US government with an average of 4,000 people. Active ever booked listing as of January 1, 2023.

<sup>18</sup>Guest spending by those who use Airbnb for accommodations at the local communities such as restaurants, shops, etc.

## About Airbnb

Airbnb was born in 2007 when two hosts welcomed three guests to their San Francisco home, and has since grown to over 5 million hosts who have welcomed over 2 billion guest arrivals in almost every country across the globe. Every day, hosts offer unique stays and experiences that make it possible for guests to connect with communities in a more authentic way.