

Controversial VRBO fees boost vacation rental costs

By Ellen Creager, Detroit Free Press

Vacation rentals are suddenly more expensive, thanks to a new guest service fee tacked on to the rental price by the big sites VRBO and HomeAway.com.

Travelers looking for a place to stay will pay up to \$499 a week extra now that the sites have instituted a 4 percent to 9 percent service fee on all vacation rentals.

How does the fee impact travelers? A look at the VRBO site shows that a typical vacation condo that rents for \$1,420 a week is subject to a new 9 percent guest service fee of \$121, a \$124 cleaning fee and taxes of \$163, putting the actual rental price at more than \$1,800.

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