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Unincorporated Pitkin County vacation rental checklist

Pitkin County, Colorado | Rules checked November 8, 2026

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Outside Aspen and Snowmass Village, Pitkin County licenses short-term rentals, but new licenses are hard to get: current rules favor homes with rental history from 2017 to 2022, and most rural and remote areas are off limits. The county is studying a rewrite. Only about 73 rentals are licensed.

> The county code amendment we read sets a four-night minimum stay and a 120-night yearly cap, but we couldn't confirm it has been adopted; an August 2026 report describes the current rules differently and says a rewrite, possibly with a lottery, is being studied. Confirm the current rules with the county before you apply.

> Fines run up to $1,000 per occurrence.

Licensing steps

STATE OF COLORADO

- [ ] **Get a state sales tax license**
  If you rent rooms or a home for stays under 30 days, Colorado requires a sales tax license from the Department of Revenue. Platforms like Airbnb collect the state and state-administered taxes on their bookings; you file for anything booked directly.
  MyBiz Colorado: https://mybiz.colorado.gov/
- [ ] **Check for home-rule city taxes**
  Many cities and mountain towns collect their own sales and lodging taxes. Platforms aren't required by the state to collect these, so you may need a separate city tax license and returns.
- [ ] **Get your county or city rental license**
  Most Colorado mountain counties and towns, and Denver, require a short-term rental license or permit, often with an inspection, an occupancy limit, posted information, and a local responder. Pick your area for the rules.

PITKIN COUNTY, COLORADO

- [ ] **Get a state sales tax license**
  Every rental owner needs one unless a platform covers all your taxes. In Aspen and Snowmass Village, platforms don't collect the town taxes, so you'll file with the town too.
- [ ] **Then your town or area**
  Towns set their own rental licenses and collect their own taxes, and the county's rules cover only areas outside town limits. Pick your area.

UNINCORPORATED PITKIN COUNTY

- [ ] **Check whether you can get a license**
  Ask the county licensing office whether your property qualifies. Current standards look for rental history from 2017 to 2022, most rural and remote properties can't be licensed, and deed-restricted or employee housing never qualifies.
- [ ] **Apply with a parking plan**
  The application asks for the home's size, bedrooms and bathrooms, lot size, zoning, and a parking plan. Guests can't park on county roads or block access easements.

- [ ] **Set up safety and posted notices**
  Keep working smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and fire extinguishers, clean fireplaces and wood stoves, and tell guests about fire bans. Post the license and a renter notice (noise, trash, parking, animals, Pitkin Alert sign-up) inside the front door, and put the license number in every ad.
- [ ] **Taxes on each stay**
  Stays under 30 days owe 2.9% state sales tax plus 3.6% Pitkin County sales tax and any special-district taxes. Airbnb and other platforms collect the state and state-administered taxes on their bookings; for direct bookings, file with the Colorado Department of Revenue. Pitkin County has no county lodging tax.

Inspection checklist

- [ ] **Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.** Working, and checked periodically.
- [ ] **Fire extinguishers.**
- [ ] **Fireplaces and wood stoves.** Cleaned and maintained.

House rules for guests

Guests: Two per bedroom

Responder: Immediate response to emergencies
Complaints answered within 24 hours.

Parking: Not on county roads

Unincorporated Pitkin County asks for drawings with your application.
Make the site sketch, floor plans, and evacuation maps to scale from your measurements at FireEscapePlan.com.

Official sources

Colorado Department of Revenue: Sales & Use Tax Topics: Rooms & Accommodations-
. https://tax.colorado.gov/sales-use-tax-topics-rooms-accommodations

Colorado Department of Revenue: Sales Tax Guide and Colorado Sales/Use Tax Rates (DR 1002)-
. https://tax.colorado.gov/sites/tax/files/Sales%2011.pdf

Aspen Public Radio: Pitkin County's short-term rentals lag behind neighbors. Is that a problem? (August 19, 2026)-
. https://www.aspenpublicradio.org/housing/2026-08-19/pitkin-countys-short-term-rentals-lag-behind-neighbors-is-that-a-problem

Pitkin County: Pitkin County Code Section 6.50, Short Term Rentals (code amendment text)-
. https://pitkincounty.com/DocumentCenter/View/29276/STR-Code-Amendment