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Sewall’s Point vacation rental checklist

Martin County, Florida | Rules checked November 4, 2026

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Sewall’s Point doesn’t allow rentals shorter than 180 days, so nightly and weekly vacation rentals aren’t permitted. Longer rentals need a yearly town rental permit, expiring September 30, and a responsible party who lives in Martin County.

> The 180-day rule is in Ordinance 369 (June 12, 2012), which replaced a similar 2009 article (Ordinance 352). Florida law (509.032(7)) only protects local limits on rental duration adopted before June 1, 2011. If you plan to challenge the rule, talk to a lawyer first; the town enforces it.

Licensing steps

STATE OF FLORIDA

- [ ] **Get the DBPR vacation rental license**
  Apply online to the Division of Hotels and Restaurants as a Vacation Rental – Condominium or Vacation Rental – Dwelling, listing every unit address. Approval usually takes one to two business days and the license is emailed. There is no inspection before it’s issued, but DBPR can inspect afterward. Post the license (or a copy) in the unit.
  DBPR vacation rental licensing guide: https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/hotels-restaurants/licensing/vrtsp-guide/

- [ ] **Renew every year by your district’s date**
  Licenses renew on a set date for each DBPR district. Brevard, Volusia, Indian River, St. Lucie, Orange, Osceola, Lake, and Seminole (District 4) renew April 1, with the half-year rate from October 1. Duval, Nassau, Clay, Flagler, St. Johns, Levy, Alachua, Marion, and the rest of District 5 renew June 1, with the half-year rate from December 1. Bay, Walton, Okaloosa, Escambia, Santa Rosa, Gulf, Franklin, and the rest of District 6 also renew June 1. Martin, Palm Beach, and Broward (District 2) renew December 1, with the half-year rate from June 1. Miami-Dade and Monroe (District 1) renew October 1, with the half-year rate from April 1. Collier, Lee, Sarasota, Charlotte, Manatee, and the rest of District 7 renew December 1, with the half-year rate from June 1. Pinellas, Hillsborough, Pasco, Polk, Hernando, Citrus, and the rest of District 3 renew February 1, with the half-year rate from August 1. If you won’t rent until after the next renewal date, waiting to apply can save paying twice.

- [ ] **Register for Florida sales tax if you collect rent yourself**
  Whoever receives the rent collects and pays the tax. Airbnb and VRBO collect Florida’s 6% tax and the county surtax on bookings made through them, so if every booking goes through them you don’t need your own sales tax account. If you take direct bookings, or a property manager collects rent for you, you or the manager register with the Department of Revenue and file. You stay responsible if a platform or manager doesn’t pay it.
  Florida Department of Revenue: https://floridarevenue.com/

- [ ] **Meet the state fire safety rule**
  Florida Administrative Code 69A-43.018 asks rental homes for smoke alarms powered by the house wiring plus one in every bedroom, NFPA 10 extinguishers, one hour of battery emergency lighting to the main exit, a posted floor diagram showing the primary and secondary exits, and fire safety information for guests.
  Florida rental fire safety checklist (FireEscapePlan.com)-
  : https://fireescapeplan.com/guides/florida-vacation-rental-fire-safety-requirements

- [ ] **Balcony inspection for taller buildings**
  Buildings three or more stories tall must file a Certificate of Balcony Inspection with DBPR every three years. Condo units are exempt when the balconies and stairs are common elements and you give DBPR proof.

- [ ] **Keep up the state operating rules**
  Keep the unit clean, safe, and free of pests; change sheets and pillowcases between guests or weekly; use cribs that meet federal safety standards; and sanitize dishes between guests or post DBPR's exception notice.
- [ ] **Then the county and town**
  Most rules that affect day-to-day operation, like registration, inspections, occupancy, and parking, are set by the county and the town. Pick your town for its full checklist.

MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA

- [ ] **Open a tourist tax account, even if you only use Airbnb or Vrbo**
  Apply to the Martin County Tax Collector for a tourist development tax account and choose a filing schedule. Sign up for Tourist Express to file online. If a rental agent files a combined return for you, you don't need your own account, unless you also rent the property yourself.
  Tourist tax FAQ (Martin County Tax Collector)-
  : https://martintaxcollector.com/tourist-development-tax/faq-tourist-development-tax/
- [ ] **Ask about a business tax receipt**
  Ask the Tax Collector whether your rental needs a Martin County business tax receipt. Jupiter Island requires one for its permit. In the unincorporated county, a new receipt starts with a $180 zoning review and fire inspection from Growth Management.
- [ ] **Know which rules cover you**
  Jupiter Island and Sewall's Point regulate rentals. Stuart, Indiantown, Ocean Breeze, and the unincorporated county, including Jensen Beach, Hutchinson Island, Hobe Sound, and Palm City, have no rental registration, so the state license, tax accounts, and your condo or HOA rules apply.
- [ ] **Then your town**
  Pick your town for its full checklist.

TOWN OF SEWALL'S POINT

- [ ] **Plan on stays of 180 days or more**
  Town code defines a short-term rental as an initial term under 180 days and bars owners from entering one or letting a short-term tenant occupy any part of a home. A DBPR vacation rental license doesn't change that.
- [ ] **Get a town rental permit before you lease**
  Apply to the town clerk with the address, the local responsible party's 24/7 contact, the owner's contact, proof of ownership, tenant names, the lease term, and the fee. Attach the permit to the lease and add the town's one-family and permit clauses to the lease.
- [ ] **Report each new lease**
  Within 10 days of a lease starting, send the town clerk the tenants' names and the other details the code asks for.

Who to contact

Tax Collector: 772-288-5600

Official sources

Florida DBPR, Division of Hotels and Restaurants: Vacation rental and timeshare project licensing guide-
. https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/hotels-restaurants/licensing/vrtsp-guide/

Florida Department of Revenue (Florida Administrative Code): Rule 12A-1.061, sales tax on transient rentals (registration in part (9)).
https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=12A-1.061

State Fire Marshal (Florida Administrative Code): Rule 69A-43.018, fire safety for one- and two-family homes licensed as public lodging.
https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleNo.asp?id=69A-43.018

Florida DBPR: Certificate of Balcony Inspection (DBPR HR 7020)-
. https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/hr/forms/documents/dbpr_hr_7020_certificate_of_balcony_inspection.pdf

Martin County Tax Collector: FAQ: tourist development tax. https://martintaxcollector.com/tourist-development-tax/faq-tourist-development-tax/

Martin County Growth Management: Business tax receipts. https://www.martin.fl.us/business-tax-receipts

Town of Sewall’s Point (Municode): Code Chapter 14, Article V, rental of dwelling units (§§ 14-162 to 14-167)-
. https://library.municode.com/fl/sewall's_point/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH14BU_ARTVREDWUN

Town of Sewall’s Point: Top code enforcement issues-
. https://www.sewallspoint.org/community/information-for-residents/top-code-enforcement-issues