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Marathon vacation rental checklist

Monroe County, Florida | Rules checked November 4, 2026

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Marathon allows vacation rentals of 7 to 28 nights with a city vacation rental license, issued after a city fire inspection: $1,200 to $2,200 new depending on bedrooms. Owners or local contacts who manage their own rental need a $500 agent license and the city's training. Up to 2 guests per bedroom plus 2, and every ad must show the city's VACA number.

> City Code Chapter 8, Article II. In March 2026 the council raised fees $100 for rentals of two bedrooms or fewer and $200 for larger ones; local news reported a one-bedroom renewal of $1,100, while the city form lists $850. Confirm the renewal fee with the city.

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.

MONROE COUNTY, FLORIDA (THE FLORIDA KEYS)

- [ ] **Get a county business tax receipt**
  The Tax Collector requires a local business tax receipt for every rental property, whatever the length of stay. Your city may require its own as well.
  Monroe County rental property requirements: https://monroetaxcollector.com/services/rental-properties/

- [ ] **Open a tourist development tax account and file monthly**
  Apply for a tourist tax account, then file a return every month, even when you had no rentals. Tax is due the 1st and late after the 20th. The 5% applies to the room rate and mandatory fees such as cleaning, pet, and service fees, but not damage deposits. Filing online through TouristExpress by the 20th earns a 2.5% discount on the first $1,200 of tax (up to $30).
  Monroe County tourist development tax: https://monroetaxcollector.com/services/tdt/

- [ ] **Then your city**
  Each city in the Keys has its own rules, and the unincorporated Keys require a county special vacation rental permit. Pick your city for its checklist.

CITY OF MARATHON

- [ ] **Get the state license and county tax accounts**
  Every Florida vacation rental needs the DBPR license and a state sales tax certificate. In Monroe County you also need a county business tax receipt and a tourist development tax account, and you file the 5% tourist tax yourself every month, because Airbnb and Vrbo don't pay it. See the Florida and Monroe County pages.

- [ ] **Take the vacation rental training**
  If you manage your own rental or are its 24-hour contact, complete the city's training course and notarized certification, then register in the portal for your agent (VRA) license.
  Vacation rental training course: https://www.ci.marathon.fl.us/codecompliance/page/vacation-rental-training-course

- [ ] **Apply online for the vacation rental license**
  Upload your deed or property record, county business tax receipt, DBPR license, state sales tax certificate, tourist tax account, a measured site plan (property lines, driveway, parking, drain field, docks), and a floor plan with square footage and rooms. Paper applications aren't accepted.
  Marathon vacation rental portal: https://marathonfl.viewpointcloud.com/categories/1076/record-types/6432

- [ ] **Pass the fire inspection**
  Inspectors schedule through the portal once everything is in, usually within 1 to 2 weeks. If it fails, you can't rent or advertise until the items are fixed.

- [ ] **Post the sign and the rules**
  Post a sign readable from outside with the manager's 24-hour number (6 square feet or less). Every adult guest signs the rules, and guests must leave under a mandatory hurricane evacuation.

Fees

New license, 1 bedroom $1,300 for 2 bedrooms, $1,400 for 3, $1,600 for 4, then $100 more per bedroom to $2,200 for 10. Includes one fire inspection.	**$1,200**
Renewal, 1 bedroom Up to $1,850 for 10 bedrooms; $200 more per bedroom beyond 10.	**$850**
Fire reinspection	**$150 each**
Transfer of agent	**$75**
Vacation rental agent license	**$500 a year**

House rules for guests

Maximum guests: 2 per bedroom + 2

Quiet hours: 10 p.m. to 7 a.m.

Trash: Covered containers
At the street only from 6 p.m. the day before pickup through pickup day.

Phone: A working landline

Who to contact

Fire Rescue (vacation rentals): 305-743-5266
Code Compliance: 305-743-0033
Tourist tax collections: 305-295-5058

Marathon 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

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

Monroe County Tax Collector: Rental property requirements. https://monroetaxcollector.com/services/rental-properties/

Monroe County Tax Collector: Tourist development tax. https://monroetaxcollector.com/services/tdt/

City of Marathon Fire Rescue: How to apply for a vacation rental license (March 2026).
https://www.ci.marathon.fl.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/fire_rescue/page/32392/how_to_apply_for_a_vacation_rental_license_march_17_2026.pdf

City of Marathon: Vacation rental application, renewal, and transfer (new fees, March 2026).
https://www.ci.marathon.fl.us/sites/default/files/fileattachments/code_compliance/page/3381/vacation_rental_application_renewal_transfer_-_new_fees_-_3-10-

City of Marathon Fire Rescue: Vacation rental signage requirements-
. https://www.ci.marathon.fl.us/fireRescue/page/vacation-rental-signage-requirements

City of Marathon Fire Rescue: Vacation rentals. https://www.ci.marathon.fl.us/fireRescue/page/vacation-rentals