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Fernandina Beach vacation rental checklist

Nassau County, Florida | Rules checked November 5, 2026

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Fernandina Beach requires a Resort Rental Dwelling Permit for rentals under 30 days ($300 new, $200 renewal). Short-term rentals are permitted in R-3 zoning; in R-1 and R-2 only grandfathered rentals that existed before October 2000 qualify, and everywhere else the minimum is 30 days. You need a yearly inspection, a responsible party who responds in person within 30 minutes, and one guest per 150 square feet.

> Code § 26-101 (Ordinances 2000-16, 2006-46, 2011-23) and LDC § 4.02.05 and Table 2.03.02. The R-1/R-2 limit dates to 2000, before the 2011 state law.

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.

NASSAU COUNTY, FLORIDA

- [ ] **Register for the tourist tax (Amelia Island)**
  Register with the Nassau County Tax Collector and file every month.
  Nassau tourist tax: https://nassautaxes.com/Content/TouristDevelopmentTax
- [ ] **Then your area**
  Pick your area for its checklist.

CITY OF FERNANDINA BEACH

- [ ] **Confirm your zoning qualifies**
  Only R-3, or grandfathered R-1/R-2 properties, can rent for under 30 days.
  Fernandina Beach resort rentals: https://www.fbfl.us/792/Resort-Rentals
- [ ] **Get the state license and county tourist tax account**
  Every Florida vacation rental needs the DBPR license. On Amelia Island (ZIP 32034), register with the Nassau County Tax Collector and file the 5% tourist tax yourself every month; Airbnb doesn't collect it. Mainland Nassau has no tourist tax.
- [ ] **Apply for the permit at least 30 days ahead**
  Apply with the Building Department and file the permit with your HOA or condo association within 10 days. Have the unit inspected at least yearly (by the city, DBPR, or a licensed home inspector using the city checklist).
- [ ] **Follow the operating rules**
  Keep a guest registry and written guest agreement, show the permit number in ads, and use the roll-out trash service. A first violation is a $1,000 fine.

House rules for guests

Maximum guests: 1 per 150 sq ft

Parking: 1 off-street space per 4 guests
The LDC says 1 per 2 occupants; ask the city.

Who to contact

Building Department: 904-310-3135
Planning: 904-310-3480
Tax Collector TDT: 904-491-7420

Fernandina Beach 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
Nassau County Tax Collector: Amelia Island tourist development tax. https://nassautaxes.com/Content/TouristDevelopmentTax
City of Fernandina Beach: Resort rentals. https://www.fbfl.us/792/Resort-Rentals
City of Fernandina Beach (Municode): Code section-
. https://library.municode.com/fl/fernandina_beach/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH26BU_ARTVREREDWPE
City of Fernandina Beach (Municode): Code section-
. https://library.municode.com/fl/fernandina_beach/codes/land_development_code?nodeId=CH2ZODIUS_2.03.02TALAUS