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Haines City vacation rental checklist

Polk County, Florida | Rules checked November 5, 2026

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Haines City allows short-term rentals only in four approved communities: Balmoral Estates, Southern Dunes, Calabay Park, and Villa Sorrento. Since March 1, 2026, each one must register with the city every year ($100 per property), with fire extinguishers, smoke and CO detectors, a guest information binder, and an emergency poster on each bedroom door.

> Fines can reach $250 a day (news, January 2026). Occupancy follows the city's property maintenance code.

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.

POLK COUNTY, FLORIDA

- [ ] **Register for the tourist tax and business tax**
  Open a tourist tax account with the Tax Collector (filings in Phenix Online) and get a Class B business tax receipt for each rental location.
  Polk tourist tax: https://www.polktaxes.com/services/tourist-development-tax/
- [ ] **Then your area**
  Many “Davenport” and “Kissimmee” addresses are in unincorporated Polk. Pick your area.

CITY OF HAINES CITY

- [ ] **Confirm you’re in an approved community**
  Outside the four communities, operating a short-term rental violates the city’s land development regulations.
- [ ] **Get the state license and county tourist tax account**
  Every Florida vacation rental needs the DBPR license. Airbnb collects Polk County’s 5% tourist tax on its bookings; for direct bookings and other sites, register with the Polk County Tax Collector and file monthly (due by the 20th). Rentals of six months or less also need a county Class B business tax receipt for each location.
- [ ] **Register online**
  Register through the city’s online portal with your DBPR license, DOR registration, and tourist tax account (or proof a platform remits). A new owner or a change in bedrooms needs a new registration and fee.
  Haines City STR hub: https://www.hainescity.com/534/Short-Term-Rental-Information-Hub
- [ ] **Equip and post**
  A 5 lb ABC extinguisher near the bedrooms on each floor and a Class K by the kitchen; working smoke and CO detectors; a guest information binder (noise, trash, parking, hospitals); and an emergency poster with the 24/7 contact on the main exit and each bedroom door.

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

Polk County Tax Collector: Technical Advisory TA 05-01: real estate and property rentals-
. https://www.polktaxes.com/services/ta-05-01-real-estate-property-rentals/

City of Haines City: Short-term rental information hub. https://www.hainescity.com/534/Short-Term-Rental-Information-Hub

City of Haines City: Ordinance 26-2141, short-term rental registration-
. https://www.hainescity.com/DocumentCenter/View/2993/Ordinance-No-26-2141---Short-Term-Rental-Registration

City of Haines City (Municode): Code section-
. https://library.municode.com/fl/haines_city/codes/land_development_regulations?nodeId=CH5ZO_ART6SCDIRE_S5.6.2.5SHTERESTOVZO