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Lake Helen vacation rental checklist

Volusia County, Florida | Rules checked November 2, 2026

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Lake Helen allows short-term rentals of single-family homes and duplexes in all residential zones. You need a short-term vacation rental business tax receipt from the city, an inspection before it's issued and every year after, and no more than 10 guests.

> The code doesn't list the business tax receipt amount. Ask the city.

Licensing steps

STATE OF FLORIDA

- [ ] **Get the DBPR vacation rental license**
  Apply to the Division of Hotels and Restaurants as a vacation rental condo or vacation rental dwelling. There is no state inspection before the license is issued, but DBPR can inspect after a complaint. Renew it every year.
  DBPR online services: https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/

- [ ] **Register for Florida sales tax**
  Register with the Florida Department of Revenue to collect the 6% state tax and the county surtax on bookings you take directly. Booking platforms collect it for stays booked through them.
  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.

- [ ] **Balcony inspection for taller buildings**
  Buildings three or more stories tall need a balcony inspection by a qualified inspector every three years.

- [ ] **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.

VOLUSIA COUNTY, FLORIDA

- [ ] **Open a county tourist tax account**
  Register with Volusia County Treasury and Billing using the county's application, after you have your Florida sales tax number. File and pay online by the 20th of each month (quarterly if you collect less than $1,000 a year). Cleaning and other required fees are taxable too.
  Tourist tax application (PDF): https://www.volusia.org/file/5938/TDT-Paper-Application.pdf

- [ ] **Know what the platforms cover**
  VRBO (since January 2020) and Airbnb (since February 2020) collect and send the county tax for bookings made through them. Other sites don't, and direct bookings are always yours to file.

- [ ] **Outside a city? The county's 30-day minimum applies**
  In unincorporated Volusia, single-family homes and condos in residential zoning can't be rented for less than 30 days. See the unincorporated Volusia page.

- [ ] **Then your city**
  Each city sets its own registration, inspection, and zoning rules. Pick your city for its checklist.

CITY OF LAKE HELEN

- [ ] **Get the state license and county tax account**
  Every Florida vacation rental needs the DBPR license and sales and Volusia tourist tax registrations. See the Florida and Volusia County pages.
- [ ] **Check your septic permit**
  If the home is on septic, give the city the Volusia County Health Department permit and its application, showing capacity for the guests you want.
- [ ] **Apply for the short-term rental business tax receipt**
  Apply to the City of Lake Helen with an affidavit that you meet the standards below. The city inspects before issuing the receipt.
- [ ] **Pass the yearly inspection**
  Keep the home up to the standards below; it's inspected every year.

Inspection checklist

- [ ] **Smoke and CO alarms.** Interconnected and hardwired, per Florida Building Code R314 and R315.
- [ ] **Fire extinguisher.** 2A:10B:C on each floor, wall-mounted in an open common area or a marked cabinet, maintained per NFPA 10.
- [ ] **Emergency lighting.** Battery powered, at least one hour, lighting the primary exit automatically when the power goes out.
- [ ] **Sleeping rooms.** Meet the Florida Building Code minimums for one- and two-family homes.
- [ ] **Pool, spa, or hot tub.** Meets the Residential Swimming Pool Safety Act (F.S. ch. 515).

House rules for guests

Occupancy: No more than 10
1 per 150 sq ft, 2 per sleeping room plus 2 in a common area, or the septic limit, whichever is least.

Quiet hours: 10 p.m. to 8 a.m.

Parking: 1 off-street space per 3 guests
Garage spaces count if guests can use them. No on-street parking.

Posted notice: One page by the door or on the fridge
Responsible party contact, maximum occupancy, quiet hours, vehicle limit with a parking sketch, trash days, nearest hospital. Homes with 3+ floors need evacuation maps by each upper bedroom door.

Responsible party: On site within 2 hours
Reachable 24/7, checks the home weekly.

Who to contact

Treasury and Billing (tourist tax): 386-943-7085

Lake Helen 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: Vacation rentals and timeshare projects (form HR 5025-753)-. https://www2.myfloridalicense.com/hr/forms/documents/5025_753.pdf

Florida Department of Revenue: Discretionary sales surtax rates (DR-15DSS). https://floridarevenue.com/Forms_library/current/dr15dss_26.pdf

State Fire Marshal (copy hosted by Bay County): Florida Administrative Code 69A-43, fire safety for public lodging-. https://www.baycountyfl.gov/DocumentCenter/View/16357/69A-43-FAC

Volusia County: Tourist and convention development tax-
. https://www.volusia.org/services/financial-and-administrative-services/revenue-services/tourist-and-convention-development-tax/
Volusia County: Tourist tax frequently asked questions.
https://www.volusia.org/services/financial-and-administrative-services/revenue-services/tourist-and-convention-development-tax/frequently-asked-questions.stn
Ormond Beach Observer: Volusia County Council votes to keep short-term rental ordinance as is (May 2021)-
. https://www.observerlocalnews.com/article/volusia-county-council-votes-to-keep-short-term-rental-ordinance-as-is
City of Lake Helen (Municode): Land Development Code § 4.02.01, short-term vacation rentals-
. https://library.municode.com/fl/lake_helen/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTILADECO_ART4ACUSST_4.02.01SHRMVARE