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# Tybee Island vacation rental checklist

Chatham County, Georgia | Rules checked November 6, 2026

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Tybee Island requires a yearly short-term rental registration and occupation tax certificate, and limits rentals in its R-1, R-1-B, and R-2 residential zones. New rules adopted in August 2026 divide the island into sectors with caps and take effect January 1, 2027. Stays pay 7% sales tax plus Tybee's 7% room tax.

> The 2026 proposal discussed caps of up to 60% of homes in the east and south zones and 30% in the west and north. We could not confirm the final numbers; ask the city.

> The code we read online is the May 2026 version and does not yet show the August 2026 amendments.

## Licensing steps

### STATE OF GEORGIA

- [ ] **Know what the platform collects**
  Airbnb collects state and local sales tax, the $5-a-night state hotel-motel fee, and the local hotel-motel tax on its Georgia bookings. Ask any other platform what it collects, and keep records either way.
- [ ] **Register for direct bookings**
  If guests book and pay you directly, register for sales tax with the Georgia Tax Center and file the local hotel-motel tax with your city or county. If your city or county requires a business license or occupation tax for the rental, the DOR treats you as an innkeeper and you also owe the $5 state fee on direct bookings.
  Georgia Tax Center: https://gtc.dor.ga.gov/
- [ ] **Check your city or county**
  Most of the rules are local: short-term rental permits, business licenses (occupation tax), zoning limits, and caps. Some cities ban rentals in residential zones. Pick your area.

### CHATHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

- [ ] **Then your city or area**
  Permits, zoning, and the hotel-motel tax are set by each city, and by the county outside city limits. Pick your area.

### CITY OF TYBEE ISLAND

- [ ] **Check the 2027 rules first**
  Tybee revised its rental ordinance in August 2026 and is setting up a new permit process for 2027, with caps that differ by part of the island. Check the city's STR page and its fall workshops before you buy or list. Eligible properties could still apply for a 2026 license.
  Tybee short-term rentals: https://www.cityoftybee.org/466/Short-Term-Rentals
- [ ] **Register and get an occupation tax certificate**
  Register each rental with the city every year (due January 1) with the regulatory fee. List the bedrooms, maximum occupancy, parking, insurance, and a local agent who can fix problems within an hour. Operating unregistered costs $500 a month.

☐ **Taxes on each stay**
Stays here owe 7% sales tax, the local hotel-motel tax, and the $5-a-night state fee. Airbnb collects all three on its bookings. For direct bookings, file sales tax (and the $5 fee, if you need a local license) with the Georgia Tax Center. Tybee's room tax is 7%. For direct bookings, file it with the city Finance Department by the 20th, and send a return every month even if no tax is due.

## House rules for guests

**Street sign: Agent's name and phone**
18 by 24 to 24 by 24 inches for houses; 8.5 by 11 inches near the door for multifamily units.

**Location ID number: In every ad**

**Minimum use (residential zones): 60 rental days a year**
Or the rental is presumed abandoned.

## Who to contact

**STR help (code compliance):** 912-472-5089

## Official sources


Airbnb: Occupancy tax collection and remittance by Airbnb in Georgia. https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2745

Georgia Department of Revenue: Rule 560-13-2-.01 amendment notice (2025)-
. https://dor.georgia.gov/document/document/notice-fet-2025-01-rule-560-13-2-01-state-hotel-motel-feepdf/download

City of Tybee Island: Short term rentals. https://www.cityoftybee.org/466/Short-Term-Rentals

Tybee Island (Municode): Code section.
https://library.municode.com/ga/tybee_island/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_APXALADECO_ART4ZODI_S4-051SHRMRE

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WTOC: City of Tybee Island amends short-term vacation rental rules (August 28, 2026)-
. https://wtoc.com/2026/08/28/city-tybee-island-amends-short-term-vacation-rental-rules