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Decatur vacation rental checklist

DeKalb County, Georgia | Rules checked November 6, 2026

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Decatur treats short-term rentals as overnight lodging: you file an application with the city and follow occupancy, parking, and noise standards. Rentals are allowed in accessory dwellings but not in sheds, RVs, or tents. Stays pay 8% sales tax plus the city's 8% hotel-motel tax.

> We didn't confirm the zoning districts or the fee. Ask the city.

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.

DEKALB COUNTY, GEORGIA

- [ ] **Find out who governs your address**
  DeKalb's county license covers only unincorporated areas. If you are in a city, that city's rules and hotel-motel tax apply instead. Pick your area below.
- [ ] **Know what the platform collects**
  Airbnb collects state and local sales tax, the $5 state fee, and the local hotel-motel tax on its bookings.

CITY OF DECATUR

- [ ] **Check your zoning**
  Overnight lodging is allowed only where the use table lists it as a limited use. Ask Decatur Planning whether your address qualifies.
- [ ] **Apply to the city**
  File the overnight lodging application with a description, the required affidavits, and the fee. Every guest room must meet building and fire codes, and parking must meet the city standard.
- [ ] **Taxes on each stay**
  Stays here owe 8% 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. Decatur's hotel-motel tax is 8%. For direct bookings, file it with the city.

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 Decatur (Municode): Code section. https://library.municode.com/ga/decatur/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIVUNDEORDEGE_ART6USPR_S6.5COUS_6.5.7OVLO

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