LICENSEDRENTAL.COM

Clarkesville vacation rental checklist

Habersham County, Georgia | Rules checked November 6, 2026

Scan for the latest version

Clarkesville adopted a short-term rental ordinance in April 2024. Under the final draft, rentals are allowed downtown (not on the ground floor) and in the highway business district, need a conditional use permit in most residential zones, and must be at least 1,500 feet from another rental.

We read the February 2024 final draft; the council adopted the ordinance on April 8, 2024, and the adopted text may differ. Confirm the rules with the city clerk.

The city manager said rentals already operating would be grandfathered.

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.

HABERSHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

- [ ] **Then your city or area**
  Permits, zoning, and the hotel-motel tax depend on whether you're inside a city. Pick your area.

CITY OF CLARKESVILLE

- [ ] **Check your zoning and spacing**
  In residential districts you need a conditional use permit, and in a subdivision only if the covenants allow rentals (or, with no HOA, a signed majority of homeowners). Ask the city whether another rental is within 1,500 feet.
- [ ] **Apply and attest to safety**
  Certify your insurance, that no covenants prohibit rentals, and that the home meets the building and fire codes and NFPA 101 (by you or a third-party inspector). Give the clerk a local contact who responds within 2 hours, 24/7.
- [ ] **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. Clarkesville charges a 5% hotel-motel tax; file it with the City of Clarkesville and display the tax certificate at the property.

House rules for guests

Check-in and checkout: Between 3 p.m. and 10 p.m.
(draft)

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 Clarkesville: Planning Commission work session agenda with final draft of zoning sections 731–736, short-term rentals (February 13, 2024).
https://d3n9y02raazwpg.cloudfront.net/clarkesvillega/af7e7967-c5fc-11ee-8fe8-0050569183fa-fbc547f9-878e-421c-a905-8181fdc79c05-1707340835.pdf

Georgia Department of Community Affairs: Hotel/motel excise tax rates and revenue report-
. https://dca.georgia.gov/document/document/hotel-motel-tax-revenue-report/download

Now Habersham: Clarkesville council approves short term rental ordinance (April 9, 2024)-
. https://nowgeorgia.com/clarkesville-council-approves-short-term-rental-ordinance/