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Social Circle vacation rental checklist

Walton County, Georgia | Rules checked November 6, 2026

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Social Circle allows a short-term rental only as an accessory use of an owner-occupied home. You need an occupation tax certificate, and you must list on a platform that collects the hotel-motel tax, such as Airbnb.

> Ask the city which zoning districts list short-term rentals in its accessory use table (§2.4).

> Social Circle extends into Newton County.

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.

WALTON 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 SOCIAL CIRCLE

- [ ] **Get an occupation tax certificate first**
  Apply with proof that you meet the use standards, and name a 24-hour contact for complaints.
- [ ] **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. Social Circle's 5% hotel-motel tax applies inside city limits; the city requires you to book through a platform that collects it.

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 Social Circle (Municode): Code section-
. https://library.municode.com/ga/social_circle/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_APXAUNDECO_ART3USST_S3.3COUS

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