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Georgetown vacation rental checklist

Georgetown County, South Carolina | Rules checked November 6, 2026

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The City of Georgetown requires a yearly short-term rental permit ($500 for a whole home, $250 owner-occupied; $250 to renew), a business license, insurance, a local agent, neighbor notice and inspections. The city caps short-term rentals at 250. Guests pay 11% in tax.

> Three code violations at a property within 12 months suspend its permit for 12 months.

> Permits expire May 1 each year and aren't prorated.

Licensing steps

STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

- [ ] **Get a retail license for direct bookings**
  If you take bookings yourself, you need a SCDOR retail license for each rental property and must file and pay electronically through MyDORWAY. If you rent only through a property manager or an online travel company that takes the payment, they remit the state tax and you don't need a license. Rent no more than one week a quarter and you can file once a year instead.
  MyDORWAY: https://mydorway.dor.sc.gov/
- [ ] **Know what the platform collects**
  Airbnb collects the 5% sales tax, 2% accommodations tax, and the local sales taxes the state collects, on its bookings. It also collects some county and city accommodations taxes, but only in the places it lists. Everything else is yours to file.
- [ ] **Register for local taxes**
  Many counties and cities charge their own accommodations tax (up to 3%), a hospitality tax, or a beach preservation fee. They collect these directly, so you register with the county or city even if a platform pays your state tax.
- [ ] **Check your property tax rate**
  A home that is your legal residence keeps the 4% assessment ratio only if it is rented out 72 days or less a year. Rent it more and it is taxed as a 6% rental property. Ask your county assessor.
- [ ] **Then your county and city**
  Business licenses, rental permits, and zoning are where South Carolina towns differ most. Pick your area.

GEORGETOWN COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

- [ ] **Then your town or area**
  The City of Georgetown requires a permit, Pawleys Island has its own 3% tax, and the rest of the county files with the county. Pick your area.

CITY OF GEORGETOWN

- [ ] **Get a city business license first**
  The property owner needs their own City of Georgetown business license; a rental company's license doesn't count. If you use an agent, they need one too. The permit can't be issued until the license application is in.

- [ ] **Apply for the short-term rental permit**
  Submit the application (one per unit) with proof of ownership, proof of insurance showing short-term rental use, a copy of your guest rental agreement, your agent's signed certification, and the fee. Owner-occupied applicants add proof of homestead exemption or a sworn affidavit. Email planning@georgetownsc.gov, mail to P.O. Drawer 939, or bring it to City Hall, 420 S. Hazard St.
  Georgetown STR permit: https://www.georgetownsc.gov/how_do_i_/apply_for/short_term_rental_permits.php
- [ ] **Notify your neighbors**
  Give the adjacent property owners written notice of the street address, on-site parking and maximum occupancy, either hand-delivered with their signature or by certified mail, and include copies with your application.
- [ ] **Plan parking and pass inspections**
  Homes with 4 or more bedrooms need a parking plan (a diagram of the spaces). After zoning approval, the Building and Fire Departments inspect the unit before the license is issued.
- [ ] **Register for state and local taxes**
  The state-collected tax on stays here is 8% (state sales and accommodations tax plus local sales taxes). Airbnb collects it on its bookings; for direct bookings, get a SCDOR retail license and file through MyDORWAY. File the 3% city local accommodations tax with the City of Georgetown monthly, quarterly or yearly. Airbnb doesn't list a Georgetown city tax among those it collects.

Short-term rental permit fees

Initial application, non-owner-occupied	**$500**
Initial application, owner-occupied or ADU	**$250**
Annual renewal (all types)	**$250**
Penalty if you operated illegally the prior year On top of the permit fee.	**$500**

House rules for guests

Maximum guests: 4 for 1–2 bedrooms; 2 per bedroom for 3+

Bedrooms: No more than 6 per parcel

Quiet hours: 11 pm to 7 am

Post inside: License, owner/agent contact, maximum occupants

Who to contact

Building & Planning Department: 843-545-4010
City Hall: 843-545-4000
Georgetown County Finance (accommodations tax): 843-545-3002

Georgetown 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

South Carolina Department of Revenue: Accommodations tax. https://dor.sc.gov/tax/accommodations

Airbnb: Collection and remittance by Airbnb in South Carolina. https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2328

South Carolina Department of Revenue: Revenue Ruling #15-4: vacation rentals of a residence-
. https://dor.sc.gov/resources-site/lawandpolicy/Advisory%20Opinions/RR15-4.pdf

City of Georgetown: Short Term Rental Permit. https://www.georgetownsc.gov/how_do_i_/apply_for/short_term_rental_permits.php

City of Georgetown: Short-Term Rental Application (2026).
https://www.georgetownsc.gov/Planning%20&%20Community%20Development/Applications/Short%20Term%20Vacation%20Rental%20Application%202026.

City of Georgetown: Local Hospitality / Local Accommodations Tax Return-
. https://www.georgetownsc.gov/City%20of%20Georgetown%20Local%20ATAX%20HTAX%20Fillable%20Form.pdf
City of Georgetown: Unified Development Ordinance, Article X (Residential Use Standards), §1008 Short-Term Rentals.
https://www.georgetownsc.gov/Planning%20&%20Community%20Development/UNIFIED%20DEVELOPMENT%20ORDINANCE/10%20Article%20X%20Res