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Clemson vacation rental checklist

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

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Clemson limits short-term rentals to 25 rental days per year per home, a limit the city tied to football and graduation weekends. You register yearly ($125), pass an inspection, and display a city sign or decal while renting.

> Longer-term rentals fall under Clemson's separate rental housing permit ($125, July 1 to June 30).

> Part of Clemson is in Anderson County, where the county's 3% fee applies instead of Pickens County's. Ask the city which county fee applies to your parcel.

> Airbnb collects the state-collected tax on its bookings here, but its South Carolina tax article doesn't list this area's county or city accommodations tax. File that one yourself for every booking.

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.

PICKENS COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA

- [ ] **Register for the county fee**
  File the county accommodations fee with Pickens County monthly, quarterly, or yearly depending on your volume. Inside a city it's 1.5%, and the city may add its own tax.
- [ ] **Then your city or area**
  Pick your area.

CITY OF CLEMSON

- [ ] **Register with Planning & Development**
  All owners sign the registration form and report last year's rental days. If you don't live there, name a person in charge within 50 miles of Clemson.
  Clemson rental housing: https://www.clemsoncity.org/252/Rental-Housing

- [ ] **Pass the yearly inspection**
  Inspections run January 1 to April 14. You need smoke detectors in every bedroom, hallway, and common area, a 2.5-lb ABC extinguisher, a CO detector with gas or an attached garage, an evacuation plan on each bedroom door, and pool gates.

- [ ] **Show the city sign or decal**
  Display it where it's visible from the street on every rental day. Tenants must park on site on paved or improved surfaces, even on game days.

- [ ] **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 city's 2% accommodations tax monthly with the City of Clemson, and the Pickens County fee with the county.

Who to contact

Planning & Development: 864-653-2050
Finance (accommodations tax): 864-653-2036

Clemson 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

Pickens County (Municode): Code section.
https://library.municode.com/sc/pickens_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=COOR_CH10BU_ARTIVLOAC

City of Clemson: Rental Housing (short term rentals). https://www.clemsoncity.org/252/Rental-Housing

City of Clemson (enCodePlus): Code of ordinances, ch. 13, art. IV: short-term residential rentals-
. https://online.encodeplus.com/regs/clemson-sc/doc-viewer.aspx?secid=929

City of Clemson: Hospitality & Accommodations Taxes. https://www.clemsoncity.org/214/Hospitality-Accommodations-Taxes