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Harker Heights vacation rental checklist

Bell County, Texas | Rules checked November 8, 2026

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Harker Heights requires short-term rentals to register with the city after fire marshal and building walk-throughs. You submit a site plan showing parking (one space per bedroom) and post exit routes in every bedroom. Stays owe 6% state, 7% city, and 2% county hotel tax, which you file yourself.

Licensing steps

STATE OF TEXAS

- [ ] **Know who pays the hotel tax**
  Airbnb collects and pays the 6% state hotel tax on its bookings. If guests pay you directly or through a site that doesn't collect, register with the Comptroller and file the state tax yourself.
  Texas hotel occupancy tax: https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/hotel/

- [ ] **Register for local hotel tax**
  Your city (and in some places your county) charges its own hotel tax, filed with that city or county, not the state. Airbnb pays it only in the places on its list; everywhere else you register and file it yourself, even for Airbnb bookings.

- [ ] **Check your city's rules**
  Many Texas cities require a short-term rental permit or registration, and some require an inspection, a local contact, or posted rules. Outside city limits there's usually no permit, but deed restrictions and HOA rules often limit rentals. Pick your area for the local rules.

BELL COUNTY, TEXAS

- [ ] **Then your city**
  Texas counties can't zone, so rental rules come from the city your home is in. Outside city limits there's usually no permit, but deed restrictions and HOA rules may limit rentals. Pick your city.

- [ ] **Hotel taxes on each stay**
  Stays of 29 nights or less owe the 6% state hotel tax, which Airbnb collects on its bookings. If guests pay you directly, file it with the Texas Comptroller. Bell County reports a 2% hotel tax; Airbnb doesn't collect it. Around Lake Belton and Stillhouse Hollow outside city limits, ask the county how to file.

CITY OF HARKER HEIGHTS

- [ ] **Fill out the registration form**
  Complete the notarized form with ownership proof, business papers, a 24-hour local contact, bedrooms, and occupancy. Send a site plan showing one off-street parking space per bedroom.
  Harker Heights STR form: https://www.harkerheights.gov/images/PDF/ShortTermRentals-BB-Form-2023.pdf

- [ ] **Schedule both walk-throughs**
  Call the Fire Marshal (254-699-2688) and the Building Official (254-953-5600). They check interconnected smoke alarms, CO detectors on each floor, exit ladders in upstairs bedrooms, extinguishers, a first aid kit, and posted exit routes.

- [ ] **Hotel taxes on each stay**
  Stays of 29 nights or less owe the 6% state hotel tax, which Airbnb collects on its bookings. If guests pay you directly, file it with the Texas Comptroller. Harker Heights's 7% hotel tax isn't on Airbnb's collection list, so register with the city and file it yourself, Airbnb bookings included.

Inspection checklist

- [ ] **Exit routes and site plan posted in common areas and bedrooms.**
- [ ] **Interconnected smoke alarms.**
- [ ] **CO detector on each floor.**
- [ ] **Exit ladder in each upstairs bedroom.**
- [ ] **5 lb extinguisher on each floor; Class K or stovetop product in the kitchen.**
- [ ] **First aid kit.**

Who to contact

Planning & Development: 254-953-5600
Planning email: planning@harkerheights.gov
Fire Marshal: 254-699-2688

Harker Heights 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

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts: Hotel Occupancy Tax FAQs: Airbnb. https://comptroller.texas.gov/taxes/hotel/airbnb-faq.php

Airbnb: Occupancy tax collection and remittance by Airbnb in Texas. https://www.airbnb.com/help/article/2331

Texas Legislature: County zoning authority (Local Government Code ch. 231). https://statutes.capitol.texas.gov/Docs/LG/htm/LG.231.htm

Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts (data.texas.gov): Local Hotel Occupancy Tax Reporting 2025. https://data.texas.gov/d/er34-v24h

City of Harker Heights Planning & Development: Short Term Rental and Bed & Breakfast Registration Form (2023)-
. https://www.harkerheights.gov/images/PDF/ShortTermRentals-BB-Form-2023.pdf