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Jamaica Beach vacation rental checklist

Galveston County, Texas | Rules checked November 8, 2026

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Jamaica Beach requires a short-term rental registration with a $250 application fee and a $250 annual operation fee. The application needs a floor plan sketch of the bedrooms and a property sketch of guest parking, and occupancy is two per bedroom plus two. Stays owe 6% state plus 9% city hotel tax; Airbnb collects both.

> Renting without an approved registration number brings an immediate citation.

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.

GALVESTON COUNTY, TEXAS

- [ ] **Then pick your city**
  Texas counties can't zone, so rental permits and the local hotel tax are set by each city. Pick your city, or the unincorporated page if you're outside city limits.
- [ ] **Expect a business personal property account**
  Since May 2024 the Galveston County Appraisal District treats short-term rentals as businesses and values their furnishings and fixtures for property tax. If you disagree with the value, protest by the deadline on your notice.

CITY OF JAMAICA BEACH, TEXAS

- [ ] **Draw the floor plan and parking sketch**
  Sketch the floor plan to show which rooms count as bedrooms (each must have a window and be inside the appraisal district's living area), and sketch the property to show the parking spaces for guests. The city uses these to set your maximum occupancy and parking on the certificate.
- [ ] **Apply for the registration**
  Submit the Short-Term Rental Registration Application with the sketches and a 24-hour contact, and pay the $250 nonrefundable application fee. Once approved, pay the $250 annual operation fee.
  Register a short-term rental: https://www.jamaicabeachtx.gov/node/3291
- [ ] **Post the certificate and list the maximum**
  Post the registration certificate at the rental and put the city's approved maximum occupancy in every ad and rental agreement.

☐ **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. Jamaica Beach's hotel tax is 9%; Airbnb collects it. For direct bookings, file quarterly by the 15th after each quarter and email the report and receipt to the city.

Fees

$500 the first year, $250 a year after

Application fee Nonrefundable.	**$250**
Annual operation fee	**$250**

Who to contact

Hotel tax (Caydie Farmer): cfarmer@jamaicabeachtx.gov

Jamaica Beach 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

Community Impact: As short-term rentals bloom, Galveston County, Bay Area cities scramble to regulate them (August 1, 2024).
https://communityimpact.com/houston/pearland-friendswood/real-estate/2024/08/01/as-short-term-rentals-bloom-galveston-county-bay-area-cities-scramble-to-

City of Jamaica Beach: Frequently Asked Questions: Short-Term Rental Ordinances-
. https://www.jamaicabeachtx.gov/sites/g/files/vyhlif7236/f/pages/faq_short_term_rentals_0.pdf

City of Jamaica Beach: Pay Hotel Occupancy Tax (HOT) Quarterly-
. https://www.jamaicabeachtx.gov/services/short-term-rentals/pages/pay-hotel-occupancy-tax-quarterly