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Unincorporated Louisa County vacation rental checklist

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Louisa County, Virginia | Rules checked November 7, 2026

Louisa County allows short-term rentals by right in its agricultural zones, and by right with conditions in the growth-area residential (R-1, R-2) and resort (RD) zones where most Lake Anna waterfront homes are: you file your contact details, put county rules in every rental contract, and meet health and building codes. Other zones need a conditional use permit. Stays pay 5.3% sales tax plus a 7% lodging tax.

> Lake Anna's Spotsylvania shore is in another county, and part of the Orange County side is covered on the Orange County page.

> County officials counted more than 460 short-term rentals before the rules were adopted. An earlier draft with a two-guests-per-bedroom cap and septic inspections was shelved; the adopted ordinance has neither.

Licensing steps

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA

- [ ] **Know who pays the tax**
  When a platform like Airbnb books the stay, it collects and pays the state sales tax and the local lodging tax for you. If guests pay you directly, register with Virginia Tax for sales tax and with your county or city for the transient occupancy tax.
  Register a business with Virginia Tax: https://www.tax.virginia.gov/registering-new-business
- [ ] **Register with your locality if it has a registry**
  Many counties and cities require short-term rental hosts to register every year. Registration is a simple filing (your name, each address, and the owner's permission if you lease the home), but listing an unregistered rental can cost up to $500 per violation.
- [ ] **Check your zoning**
  Counties and cities keep their power to decide where short-term rentals are allowed and whether you need a zoning or use permit. HOA and condo rules still apply on top. Pick your area for the local rules.

LOUISA COUNTY, VIRGINIA

- [ ] **Register for the lodging tax**
  Give the Commissioner of the Revenue your rental and contact information. For direct bookings, file and pay the 7% transient occupancy tax with the county. Airbnb collects it on its bookings.
- [ ] **Then your town or area**
  Zoning rules are set by the county outside town limits and by each town inside them, and towns can add their own lodging tax. Pick your area.

LOUISA COUNTY (UNINCORPORATED AREAS)

- [ ] **Look up your zoning**
  Use the county's Determine Your Zoning District tool or ask Community Development. GAOD means the parcel is in a growth area. If you can't meet the conditions below, or your zone isn't listed, you need a conditional use permit from the Board of Supervisors.
  Louisa short-term rental ordinance: https://www.louisacounty.gov/3224/Short-Term-Rental-Ordinance

- [ ] **File your contact information**
  Give Community Development the owner's and any property manager's contact details (a manager can file with a power of attorney), register with the Commissioner of the Revenue for the lodging tax, and give the same contacts to your HOA or POA.
- [ ] **Add the county rules to your rental contract**
  Link to or attach the county's noise (Chapter 51) and solid waste (Chapter 62) chapters and the definitions of special occasion facilities and gatherings, and tell guests that events aren't allowed. A confirmation message counts.
- [ ] **Meet health and building codes**
  Follow your Virginia Department of Health permits (septic and well) and the Virginia building code, and stay within the home's certificate of occupancy.
- [ ] **Taxes on each stay**
  Stays under 90 days owe 5.3% sales tax, and stays under 30 days also owe the local transient occupancy tax. Airbnb collects both on its bookings. If guests pay you directly, file sales tax with Virginia Tax. Louisa County's transient occupancy tax rose from 2% to 7% on January 1, 2024. For direct bookings, file it with the county Commissioner of the Revenue.

Official sources

Virginia Tax: Guidelines for sales tax on accommodations (P.D. 21-116)-
. https://tax.virginia.gov/laws-rules-decisions/rulings-tax-commissioner/21-116

Virginia General Assembly: Short-term rental registries (Va. Code § 15.2-983). https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/15.2-983/

Louisa County Community Development: Short-Term Rental Ordinance. https://www.louisacounty.gov/3224/Short-Term-Rental-Ordinance

Lake Anna Life (Tammy Purcell, Engage Louisa): Will Cost More To Rent A Home In Louisa County In 2024. https://lakeannalife.com/?p=1375

Lake Anna Life (Tammy Purcell, Engage Louisa): Short Term Rental Owners Required To Register By Louisa County-
. https://lakeannalife.com/short-term-rental-owners-required-to-register-by-louisa-county/

Engage Louisa (Tammy Purcell): Supervisors to hold public hearing on rules for short-term lodging (2023)-
. https://tammypurcell.substack.com/p/supervisors-to-hold-public-hearing