



Town of Seabrook Island

2001 Seabrook Island Road
Seabrook Island, SC 29455
(843) 768-9121

June 22, 2018

Dear Property Owner or Manager:

On May 22, 2018, Seabrook Island Town Council adopted Ordinance No. 2018-04, which amended the Business License Ordinance for the Town of Seabrook Island. Ordinance 2018-04 added the following requirement for all owners or agents offering a residential unit for rent or lease in the Town:

Section 8-30(c). All owners or agents placing commercial advertisements offering a residential unit in the Town of Seabrook Island for rent or lease shall clearly display the current business license number for that residential unit in the text of such advertisement. No owner or agent may advertise a residential unit in such a way that would result in the violation of this Chapter.

Ordinance No. 2018-04 included a delayed effective date of 60 days to allow for notification to be provided to owners and managers of rental properties. Please note that that the requirement to display a current business license number on all commercial advertisements for rental properties will go into effect on **July 21, 2018**.

For your convenience, we have included a list of frequently asked questions on the reverse side of this letter.

If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact us by phone at (843) 768-9121 or by email at jcronin@townofseabrookisland.org.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph M. Cronin
Town Administrator

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Why is this ordinance necessary?

The town believes that a number of property owners are renting their properties without obtaining a business license from the town. This is unfair to owners and agents who comply with the town's business license ordinance, and deprives the town of necessary revenue. Ordinance No. 2018-04 will make it easier for the town to monitor and ensure that all owners and management companies comply with the town's business license ordinance.

What types of advertisements must include a business license number?

Any commercial advertisement which offers a residential unit within the town for rent or lease must clearly display the current town business license number for that unit in the text of the advertisement. This requirement applies to any and all types of advertisements, including, but not limited to:

- Printed ads in newspapers, magazines, brochures, posters, flyers, displays, etc.
- Online and mobile-based ads on platforms such as DiscoverSeabrook.com, Airbnb, Home Away, VRBO, Craigslist, Facebook Marketplace, real estate and management company websites, and similar sources

A business license number is not required on advertisements offering properties "for sale" or for the general services of a management company, unless the advertisement also markets one or more residential units for rent.

Are there any requirements regarding how my business license number should appear in an advertisement?

The business license number may be included anywhere within the text of the advertisement, and should be plainly visible to the viewer. A simple reference such as "BL # 2018XXXX" or "Business License # 2018XXXX" within the advertisement will satisfy the requirement of the ordinance.

Does my business license number have to be displayed each time I run an advertisement?

The business license number must be included in each and every advertisement.

Whose business license number must appear in the advertisement?

Individuals who advertise their own property should use their individual business license number. Management companies who advertise units on behalf of property owners may use the management company's business license number, the business license number for the individual unit (if the agency purchases licenses for each unit), or both.

What if I advertise multiple rental units in a single advertisement?

If all units listed in an advertisement fall under the same business license, then a single business license number may appear on the advertisement. If individual units fall under more than one business license, the business license number for each individual unit should be listed on the advertisement.

Business licenses are renewed each year. Will there be a grace period to update my advertisements?

Annual business license renewals are due on January 1st of each calendar year. Renewals are considered "late" after February 1st of each calendar year, and may be subject to penalties. Accordingly, all rental advertisements must include an updated business license number by February 1st of each subsequent year.

What happens if I fail to comply?

Failure to comply with any town ordinance may result in a summons to appear in Municipal Court. If a violation is found to occur, a fine of up to \$500.00 may be assessed per occurrence, plus applicable state assessments and surcharges. Repeated violations of any town ordinance may also result in suspension or revocation of a town business license.

Who is responsible if my management company fails to comply with the ordinance?

If a management company advertises a rental property on your behalf, the management company is responsible for ensuring that the advertisement complies with the town's ordinance. Property owners are advised to verify that their management company is complying with the ordinance, as repeated violations may result in a suspension or revocation of the management company's business license.