

CITY OF MARGARET, ALABAMA

ORDINANCE NO. 2026-_____

AN ORDINANCE ESTABLISHING A RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY REGISTRATION, LICENSING, AND INSPECTION PROGRAM FOR THE CITY OF MARGARET, ALABAMA

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MARGARET, ALABAMA, AS FOLLOWS:

SECTION 1. TITLE; AUTHORITY; PURPOSE

1.1 Title

This ordinance shall be known as the **City of Margaret Residential Rental Property Registration and Inspection Ordinance**.

1.2 Authority

This ordinance is adopted pursuant to the authority granted to municipalities under Sections 11-40-10(b), 11-45-1, and 11-45-8, Code of Alabama 1975, and related provisions governing building, housing, fire, and safety regulation.

1.3 Purpose

The purposes of this ordinance are to:

- Protect the public health, safety, and welfare of residents;
- Ensure residential rental structures comply with applicable building, fire, and property maintenance codes;
- Preserve neighborhood stability and housing quality;
- Identify and remediate substandard housing conditions;
- Encourage preventative maintenance by property owners; and
- Establish a fair, uniform, and legally sound system for enforcement of existing codes.

This ordinance does **not** regulate rents, rental rates, evictions, lease terms, or landlord–tenant contractual rights.

SECTION 2. DEFINITIONS

For purposes of this ordinance, the following terms shall have the meanings indicated:

2.1 Residential Rental Property

Any building, structure, or portion thereof containing one or more dwelling units offered for rent or lease for residential occupancy.

2.2 Dwelling Unit

One or more rooms designed for residential occupancy, including provisions for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation.

2.3 Owner

Any person or entity holding legal or equitable title to a residential rental property.

2.4 Local Agent

A person designated by the owner to receive legal notices and coordinate compliance with this ordinance.

2.5 Building Official

The City of Margaret Building Official or authorized designee.

2.6 Certificate of Compliance

A document issued by the Building Official indicating that a dwelling unit is in substantial compliance with applicable City codes.

2.7 Exclusions

The following are excluded from this ordinance:

- Hotels, motels, and transient lodging;
 - Hospitals, nursing homes, and licensed care facilities;
 - Owner-occupied single-family residences;
 - Public housing administered by a housing authority;
 - Emergency or transitional shelters.
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SECTION 3. REGISTRATION REQUIRED

3.1 Annual Registration

No owner shall operate a residential rental property within the City unless each dwelling unit is registered annually with the City.

3.2 Registration Information

Registration shall include:

- Property address and unit identification;
- Owner name, address, and contact information;
- Local agent contact information, if applicable;
- Number and type of dwelling units; and
- A signed certification acknowledging awareness of applicable City codes.

3.3 Registration Term

Registration shall be valid for one (1) calendar year and must be renewed annually.

SECTION 4. INSPECTION AUTHORITY

4.1 Authority to Inspect

The Building Official is authorized to inspect residential rental dwelling units pursuant to the City's adopted building, fire, and property maintenance codes.

4.2 Inspection Triggers

Inspections may occur:

- Upon initial registration;
- Upon vacancy and prior to re-occupancy;
- On a periodic cycle not more frequent than once every three (3) years; or
- In response to complaints or observed violations.

4.3 Third-Party Inspections

In lieu of City inspection, an owner may submit a compliant inspection report prepared by a licensed Alabama home inspector, registered architect, professional engineer, or ICC-certified inspector.

SECTION 5. CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

5.1 Issuance

A Certificate of Compliance shall be issued when a dwelling unit is found to be in substantial compliance with applicable codes.

5.2 Conditional Certificates

A conditional certificate may be issued where no imminent life-safety hazards exist, subject to correction deadlines approved by the Building Official.

SECTION 6. UNLAWFUL ACTS

It shall be unlawful to:

- Operate an unregistered residential rental dwelling unit;
- Refuse a lawful inspection;
- Allow occupancy of a dwelling unit subject to an order prohibiting occupancy.

SECTION 7. ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES

7.1 Enforcement

This ordinance shall be enforced by the Building Official, Code Enforcement, the Police Department, or other officials designated by the Mayor.

7.2 Penalties

Violations shall be punished as provided in the City's general penalty ordinance.

Each day a violation continues constitutes a separate offense.

SECTION 8. APPEALS

Any adverse decision of the Building Official may be appealed to the City Council by filing a written notice of appeal with the City Clerk within ten (10) days of the decision.

SECTION 9. SEVERABILITY

If any provision of this ordinance is held invalid, such holding shall not affect the remaining provisions.

SECTION 10. REPEALER

All ordinances or parts of ordinances inconsistent with this ordinance are hereby repealed to the extent of such inconsistency.

SECTION 11. EFFECTIVE DATE

This ordinance shall take effect upon adoption, approval, and publication as required by law.

PASSED AND ADOPTED this ___ day of _____, 2026.

CITY OF MARGARET, ALABAMA

Matt Tortorice, Mayor

ATTEST:

City Clerk

