

## Questions/Answers for Vacant Property Registration in the City of Atlanta

### Who/What must register

Q. Do commercial, industrial, or institutional properties have to register?

A. No. Only residential buildings or dwelling must register, such as a single-family home, a duplex, a multi-family building (apartment) but not condominiums.

Q. I own and occupy a single-family house. Do I have to register?

A. No. Only vacant residential buildings or dwellings must register.

Q. I own a single-family house which is currently occupied by tenants. Do I have to register?

A. No. Only vacant residential buildings or dwellings must register.

Q. I own an apartment complex with multiple buildings containing multiple dwelling units. Some buildings are completely vacant. Other buildings are fully or partially occupied. Do I have to register all or some of the buildings?

A. So long as a building containing multiple dwelling units with common ownership has at least one unit occupied, no registration of that building is required. However, each building containing multiple dwelling units with common ownership, all of which are vacant, must be registered.

Q. I own a single-family house that is for sale but has been vacant for more than a month. Do I have to register?

A. Yes. Regardless of 'for-sale' status, any residential dwelling that is vacant for more than 30 days must be registered by the owner.

Q. I own a condo which has been vacant for more than 30 days. Do I have to register?

A. No. The vacant property registration ordinance exempts condominium units created pursuant to the Georgia Condominium Act.

Q. I own in fee simple one or more vacant dwelling units in a multi-family building that was subdivided by plat filed in the county land records. Do I have to register?

A. Yes. Unless the unit(s) was created pursuant to the Georgia Condominium Act, you must register each vacant unit of a multi-family building which you own in fee simple.

## Vacancy defined

Q. What does “vacant” mean?

A. Vacant means a building or dwelling which is lacking habitual presence of human beings who have a legal right to be on the premises, or at which substantially all lawful business or construction operations or residential occupancy has ceased for more than 30 days. Evidence of utility non-usage or service disconnect shall be considered evidence of vacancy. If a building or structure containing multiple dwelling units with common ownership has at least one unit occupied with evidence of utility usage, it is not considered vacant.

## When/Where to register

Q. When do I register?

A. Registration begins February 1, 2012. Any residential building or dwelling subject to registration that is not registered by April 1, 2012 is in violation of the Atlanta Housing Code. Thereafter, any residential building or dwelling that becomes vacant for more than 30 days must register within 30 days of vacancy.

Q. My residential dwelling will have been vacant for 30 days on March 2, 2012. How many days from March 2, 2012 do I have to register?

A. You can register anytime after March 2, 2012 but must do so within 30 days of such date or by April 1, 2012.

Q. Where do I go to register?

A. You can register and pay the registration fee: (1) online at [www.atlantaga.gov/vacantproperty](http://www.atlantaga.gov/vacantproperty), (2) by mail, or (3) in person at 55 Trinity Street, Suite 3450, Atlanta, Georgia 30303

To get a copy of a blank registration statement, visit [www.atlantaga.gov/vacantproperty](http://www.atlantaga.gov/vacantproperty).

## Registration Statement

Q. What information is included in the registration statement?

A. The registration statement includes the property information for the registered building; the name, street address (but no post office box), telephone number and email address of each owner of the property; the name, street address, telephone number and email address of the owner's agent for purposes of contact as well as receiving notices and summonses. This agent

must reside or have an office in City limits. If the property owner resides or has an office in City limits, he may designate himself as agent.

### Cost to Register

Q. How much does it cost to register?

A. The registration fee is \$100 per vacant residential building. So, for example, if you own an apartment complex with four residential buildings and two are completely vacant, the fee is \$200.

Q. I own a vacant single-family house with a detached garage/shed. Do I have to register and/or pay an additional \$100 fee for the garage/shed?

A. No. There is no registration fee for accessory structures.

Q. The Ordinance speaks of a \$250 registration fee. Does it apply to my property?

A. The \$250 fee applies at the time of renewal (12 months after initial registration) if the building is both vacant and in violation of any provision of the housing, building or fire code at the time of renewal.

### Duration of registration

Q. Once I register, how long does the registration last?

A. Twelve months from the registration date.

Q. At the end of the twelve-months, must I register again?

A. Yes, you must file a renewal registration for successive twelve-month periods as long as the residential building remains vacant at the time of renewal(s).

Q. I previously registered my vacant residential building but it is now occupied. What do I do?

A. If at any time during the twelve-month registration period the residential building becomes occupied, the owner must file an amended registration statement within 5 days of occupancy notifying the Office of Code Compliance of such occupancy and requesting removal from the registry. The Office will remove the building from the registry within 30 days of the filing of the amended registration statement unless it has reason to believe the building is vacant.

### Changes in ownership/agent after registration

Q. I recently acquired a building for which a registration statement was filed by the previous owner five months ago. Must I do anything?

A. Yes. As the new owner, you must file an amended registration statement, at no cost, within 20 days of becoming the owner, and provide new ownership information and any other information that has changed from the initial registration statement.

Q. I am the owner that filed the original registration statement but my contact and/or agent information has changed. Must I do anything?

A. Yes. You must file an amended registration statement, at no cost, within 20 days of the change in the information provided in the initial registration statement.

#### Duties post-registration

Q. Once I register, is there anything else I have to do for the next twelve months with respect to the vacant residential building?

A. Yes. Within 30 days of registration, you must secure the building from unauthorized entry in accordance with the Housing Code standards; post a sign affixed to the building indicating the name, address and telephone number of the owner and the owner's authorized agent; maintain the building in a secure and closed condition and maintain the sign until the building is again occupied. However, compliance with these requirements of Ordinance 10-O-1457 does not excuse compliance with other applicable code requirements, such as the Atlanta Housing Code.

**DISCLAIMER. The answers above are intended to provide guidance for commonly asked questions. However, they do not cover every scenario and do not replace Ordinance 10-O-1457 which controls.**