



City of Takoma Park Maryland
VACANT PROPERTY REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS
General Information

Takoma Park Code Chapter 6.38 – Vacant Property Registration

The City of Takoma Park requires the registration of all vacant residential, commercial, multi-family, industrial and institutional properties and structures located within the city. The following is a summary of the general requirements for registration. For additional information, please contact the City of Takoma Park’s Housing and Community Development Department at 301.891.7119.

Types of Registration

There are two types of vacant properties that must be registered: *Vacant Property* and *Vacant Distressed Property*.

If a building, structure, or portion of a structure is not used or occupied for over 30 days, it must be registered as a *Vacant Property*. A *Vacant Property* may be registered by the owner of record, or by an agent for the owner provided the agent’s written authorization from the owner is also provided.

If the property has been sold under a tax lien sale or foreclosure, or is in the process of either, the property will need to be registered as a *Vacant Distressed Property*. A “distressed property” can also include one that is vacant as a result of probate or the death of the owner of record. A *Vacant Distressed Property* must be registered by the responsible party or their designee.

Registration Application

The required registration application is available on the City of Takoma Park website. The application form must be completed in its entirety to ensure compliance with City law. A certificate of property insurance must also be provided along with the registration application for all *Vacant Property* registrations.

Both registrations are valid for a twelve-month period beginning July 1 through June 30 of any given year. The registration must be renewed annually until such time as the property is no longer vacant. Failure to register your vacant property will result in the issuance of a municipal infraction citation, a fine, and possibly a court appearance.

Registration Fee

The annual fee for registering a *Vacant Distressed Property* or a *Vacant Property* is \$200. A late fee will be assessed for all payments received after the due date.

Checks are to be made payable to the “City of Takoma Park” and mailed to the Housing and Community Development Department at 7500 Maple Avenue, Takoma Park, MD 20912. Credit card payments are also accepted, but there is an additional processing fee.

Posting of Notices

All registered Vacant Properties and Vacant Distressed Properties must be posted with the name, and a 24-hour contact telephone number of the owner/owner's agent or responsible party, including any local property management company. The notice must be posted so as to be visible from the street in front of the property. The notice may not be illuminated or exceed 8 ½ by 14 inches in size. If possible, the notice should be placed on the inside of a window. If this is not possible, it may be placed on the front door, or some other area that is visible from the street to the front of the property. If the notice is posted outside, it must be printed with weather resistant materials. The owner, owner's agent, or responsible party must inspect the property once per month to ensure the posting is still there.

Additional Authority

The City has the authority to require the lender, mortgagee and/or owner or owner's agent to implement additional maintenance and/or security measures. These include securing doors and windows, security lighting, employing an on-site security guard, or any other measures as may be reasonably required to prevent the deterioration of the property.

Exceptions

If a property remains furnished, has utilities connected, and the property is maintained while the owner is absent, it does not have to be registered unless it is vacant for over one (1) year.

A building or structure under active construction or renovation with a valid permit within six (6) months of being vacated does not have to be registered. If work stops for a period of over thirty (30) days without good cause being shown, the property must be registered.

A building that the owner or owner's agent is actively trying to sell or rent does not have to be registered so long as it does not remain vacant for over six (6) months. There must also be proof that is actively being advertised. This can be a sign posted on the property with contact information, a listing agreement with realty contact information, an MRIS or MLS electronic listing, or some other advertisement for sale or rent. The exemption from registration may be extended for one six (6) month period if proof is shown that the building is still actively for sale or for rent.

The owner or owner's agent is required by law to inform the City of any pending action, such as bankruptcy, probate or other court or other administrative action that would prohibit the owner or owner's agent from taking any actions required by the City. Should a vacant property become occupied at any time after registration, the responsible party or owner must submit an amended registration form with corroborating documentation to request the property be removed from the vacant property registration.

For Additional Information, please contact

Housing and Community Development Department
Housing and Community Services Division
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301.891.7119 / housing@t5akomaparkmd.gov