



# Royal Lakes

www.royallakespoa.com

## Community Standards

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Royal Lakes Property Owners Association, Inc. P.O. Box 7328, Chestnut Mountain, GA 30502

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These Community **Standards** are requirements of all Property Owners as originally adopted 2008-2012, and revised 2018, in accordance with: Section II Article V sections 1-3; Section II Article VI sections 1-16; and Section III Item 5.5 of the **Declaration of Covenants, Conditions, Restrictions, and Easements for Royal Lakes.**



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## Preface

**If there is one truth about being a homeowner, it is that maintenance is never-ending!** A few times a year, take a moment to stand across the street from your property and view it as a visitor to Royal Lakes might. Look at your home and landscape with a ‘critical-eye’, as you would if you were going to place your property on the market for sale, or as if you were a perspective home-buyer closely evaluating our community.

It can be easy to spot problems on neighboring lots, but then not notice issues with our own homes and landscapes. Common things, like: mailboxes that need painting, repair, or are missing numbers; trees that are over-grown and need their branches trimmed; home sides that need pressure-washing due to mildew from excessive shade & moisture; trash containers not properly stored out-of-sight; and etc.

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**Covenants are designed to protect property values**, and to enhance the livability and desirability of a community. **The Royal Lakes Covenants, Restrictions and Standards** were created and adopted in accordance with State of Georgia HOA and POA laws. The **Royal Lakes Property Owners Association, Inc.** (your POA) is a registered non-profit corporation charged with the fiduciary duty of ensuring compliance with the community’s Covenants, Restrictions and Standards for the benefit of the community as a whole, and all property owners.

The mission of your Association is:

***“The Royal Lakes Property Owners Association is committed to providing the highest level of community living with a beautiful, well-maintained, safe and neighborly environment for the common benefit and enjoyment of all property owners.**”*

***We will enforce the Association Bylaws and Declaration of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R’s) while providing ethical and fiscally responsible solutions to promote a strong sense of community, to optimize our property values, and plan for the future.”***

Property Owners whose property does not meet the minimum standards will be cited with an initial notice. A corrective action plan must then be submitted to the POA Board or the Board’s designated agent. All Property Owners have the right to request a violation hearing before the Board of Directors to contest a notice, or to request reconsideration of any fine(s) assessed.

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**The most important thing to keep in mind as property owners**, relative to staying in compliance with the community’s Covenants and Standards, is the following basic requirement:

***“ANY CHANGE OR ADDITION to the home’s exterior, or to the property’s lawn & landscape, **MUST BE APPROVED IN ADVANCE** by the community’s Architectural Standards Committee (the ASC), and/or the Board of Directors, **before the change or addition can be made.**”***



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## Developed Lots - Lawns & Landscapes

### Minimum Appearance & Maintenance – Community Standards

In order to maintain the Community's appearance, market desirability and individual home values, it is very important that all property owners / residents maintain the exterior of their property in a "neat and attractive condition" at all times. The POA, in compliance with the Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions of Royal Lakes, and based upon the existing majority Owners' practices and members' input, has established the below minimum Standards for lawns and landscapes within Royal Lakes. These same Standards also apply to the community's Common Property.

#### 1. Lawn/yard Minimum Standards:

- Lawns/Landscapes areas must be maintained per the original site plan, unless the plans have been amended and approved by the ASC.
- Lawns must be grass covered and the suggested grasses are Bermuda, Zoysia and Fescue. Bare areas of exposed soil within lawns must be sodded or seeded over.
- Lawns must be mowed (with sidewalks-driveways-curbs edged) weekly during the growing season and maintained at a recommended height of 3" or less. However, in no event should the lawn be allowed to exceed five (5) inches on developed lots (with home), or eight (8) inches on undeveloped lots at any time.
- Fertilizer and weed killer should be applied a minimum of two (2) times annually to prevent weeds.
- During the Fall Season, leaves must be removed from lawns, islands & beds on a weekly basis so they do not blow onto neighboring property and/or the Common areas of the Community. Leaves, grass clippings and any other debris CANNOT be: blown onto the streets; dumped onto undeveloped Lots; nor placed down storm drains, as this is in direct violation of Hall County ordinances.

#### 2. Islands & Beds Minimum Standards:

- Island and Bed areas are to be totally covered. Minimum standard: "No Weeds" and "No visible Bare Spots".
- Island and Bed areas are to be covered with the following approved materials: pine straw, wood mulch, bark nuggets, river stone and/or lava rock. Tree leaves are not an acceptable cover and must be removed. There may be "No visible Bare Spots" observable from the street, golf course or neighboring property.
- Recommended replenishments cycles: Pine Straw – twice annually, in the early Spring and late Fall; and Mulch & Bark Nuggets – every 18 to 24 months.
- Flower Beds must either be: (a) planted with flowers and/or other plants; or (b) if left unplanted, must be covered-over with pine straw, mulch or bark nuggets.

#### 3. Shrubs & Trees Minimum Standards:

- Shrubs and trees must be trimmed regularly (and the trimmings removed) as needed to prevent an "unkempt" and/or "overgrown" appearance to the property. Foundation shrubs in front of the home's windows should not be allowed to grow to a height that obscures or covers the windows (this also improves home security).
- Trees, including old-growth trees, should regularly have their lower branches trimmed off as need to prevent an overgrown appearance, and to allow adequate sunlight to reach nearby shrubs and lawn areas.

- Shrubs and Trees: must not overhang or in any way block the sidewalk or street; must not interfere with pedestrian traffic, and; for safety reasons must not impair the line-of-sight vision from vehicles.
- Any dead, dying or diseased shrubs or trees (or their branches/ limbs) must be removed, when they are pruned and/or trimmed as required to maintain both the appearance and health of the trees or shrubs.
- All vegetation must be kept trimmed or cut to comply with all Hall County guidelines and regulations of the Police and Fire Departments, and to comply with access requirements of all Utility providers (Gas, Electric, Water, Telephone and Cable).

**4. Some Examples of Well-Maintained Royal Lakes Lawns and Landscapes**



Well-Maintained: Lawns & Islands



Well-Maintained 'New Growth' & 'Old Growth' Trees with lower limbs removed to allow sunlight to reach the shrubs and lawn.



## UNDEVELOPED LOTS

### Minimum Appearance and Maintenance – Community Standard

In order to maintain the Community's appearance, market desirability and individual home values, it is very important that ***all*** property owners maintain their property in a ***neat and attractive condition*** at all times. The POA (Property Owners Association), in compliance with the Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions of Royal Lakes, has established the following ***minimum standards*** for the maintenance of ***undeveloped lots*** within the community. Owners of undeveloped Lots are responsible for ensuring their property is in compliance at all times with these minimum standards for maintenance and appearance.

#### **Minimum Standards for Undeveloped Lots:**

1. The regular maintenance area on undeveloped Lots (i.e. the "***grass area***") is from the ***curbside to the mature tree line*** of the Lot, or at minimum 15ft from the curb. This area should be covered with grass and must be regularly maintained as follows.
2. During the growing season, the "***grass area***" of undeveloped lots should be mowed and edged at minimum every 3-week so that this area is maintains in a "***neat and attractive condition***". Any low over-hanging tree branches, tree saplings, or other plant conditions preventing the regular mowing of this "***grass area***" must be removed.
3. The Lot's grass area must be grass covered. The suggested grasses are Bermuda, Zoysia and Fescue. Bare areas of exposed soil within this area of undeveloped Lot's must be seeded or sodded over.
4. Weed killer & fertilizer should be applied to the grass area a minimum of three times annually to prevent weeds.
5. The lot's curb and any other hard surfaces (i.e. storm drains & etc.) must be edged at each mowing.
6. All debris (trash, limbs, clippings & etc.) must be removed from the lot's grass area at each maintenance service.
7. Vines of any type growing along the lot's mature tree line, including any vines growing into the trees along the tree line, must be removed and prevented from growing back.
8. Any tree or portion of a tree that falls onto the lot's grass area must be quickly removed from the lot. Fallen trees within the interior of the lot must be either cut-up or removed so as to not be visible.
9. During the fall season, leaves must be removed from the grass area every 3-weeks to help prevent them from blowing onto neighboring property and/or the Common areas of the community.
10. Leaves, grass clippings and any other debris CANNOT be blown onto the streets, dumped onto other lots or placed down storm drains as this is in direct violation of Hall County ordinances.



**Example: of an undeveloped Lot properly maintained to Royal Lakes Standards.**



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## Trash Containers

### Storage, Curbside Placement & Removal – Community Standards



*Ahhh yes...those ubiquitous unsightly trash can! For a moment, just stop to think about having to view garbage cans every time you drive down your street or onto your property. Think about it as if you were a visitor to our community. NOT a pretty sight for sure!*

The community Covenants and Standards mandate the following requirements relative trash containers:

#### 1. Storage of Trash Containers

Garbage containers **must** either be **stored in the garage**, or be **enclosed within an architectural screen** (when not at curbside for pick-up), and otherwise they **must NOT be visible from the street, adjacent lots, golf course or the lakes.**

A few examples of approved type architectural screens for trash containers are below. Contact the ASC for approval of screens and their intended location on the property.



Architectural Screen examples for Trash Containers

#### 2. Curbside Placement & Removal of trash containers

Trash containers should be placed out at curbside on the morning of the day the service runs, and certainly no earlier than the night before. Trash containers must be removed from the curbside on the same day as your trash company services the community. No trash containers should be left at the curb after midnight of the day your service runs.

Trash companies servicing Royal Lakes pick-up the trash on either Wednesdays or Fridays. **This means that trash containers should not be visible within the community on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays or Sundays.**

#### 3. Self-Removal of Trash

For Property Owners who desire to dispose of their trash themselves Hall County has three (3) Compactor and Recycling sites located within a few miles of Royal Lakes. The closest of these is behind the Blackshear Place library on Old Atlanta Highway.



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## Mailboxes

### Approved Types, Styles & Maintenance – Community Standards

*The Royal Lakes Covenants Section III, Article 5.0 DESIGN STANDARDS, 5.5 Mailboxes – “The following standards provide direction as to the appropriate placement and design of typical site accessories.” Mailboxes - The Architectural Standards Committee shall design and supply the mailbox plans within the Royal Lakes community to insure continuity in design and placement.....”*

#### **1. Current Standard Mailbox Types:**

As of 2014, the Architectural Standards Committee has approved two types of mailboxes as the ‘Standard’ for Royal Lakes. They are:

**A. The custom-built column style mailboxes** that match the materials and color of homes built of brick, stone or stucco. (Below are just a few of the many existing examples within Royal Lakes):



**B. The other mailbox design also approved for use throughout the community is the sturdy high-quality Black Cast Aluminum Mailboxes** installed at most of the Kenwood section homes, and elsewhere within the community. These mailboxes may be purchased from **Mailbox Refreshers, owner Ted Tatum – 770-827-5365** and **Global Home Products, Steve Caldwell – 770-409-8292**. (Example is pictured below):



Both vendors listed also have replacement parts, such as numbers, flags, doors and door inserts. **Mailbox Refreshers also provides full on-site repainting and repair services.** Contact them for parts and repairs.

## **2. Non-Standard Mailboxes Currently in the Community:**

Currently about 15% of the mailboxes within Royal Lakes are of a 'non-Standard' design, that is not one of the ASC approved design types. These current 'non-standard mailboxes' are "grandfathered in" until such time as they need replacement due to disrepair and/or age. At that point non-standard mailboxes must then be replaced with one of the approved Standard mailbox types.

## **3. Routine Maintenance Requirements:**

The mailbox is an extension of your home, and just like your home, mailboxes require regular care to keep them attractive and functional. Due to the intense Georgia sun, the metal components of your mailbox should be painted every 2-or-3 years to maintain their appearance and to prevent corrosion. The Royal Lakes 'Standard' color for mailboxes and their metal post is black.

Mailbox numbers should be replaced immediately if they fall-off or fade. This is an important safety issue, reference the below section on mailbox numbers, safety and the law.

## **4. Mailbox Numbers: Safety and It's the Law**

***Please note the very important, possibly life-saving, mailbox related issue: Street Address numbers required on mailboxes at all times by the laws of Hall County shown below:***

<p>HALL COUNTY, GEORGIA - CODE of ORDANCES</p> <p><b>Part 1 – Official Code</b> <b>Title 12 – Streets, Sidewalks and Public Places</b> <b>Chapter 12.10 – House Numbering System</b> <b>12.10.040. - Posting of designated structure numbers.</b></p>
<p>1. If the mailbox is located on the same side of the street and adjacent to the driveway or curb cut, the number shall be affixed to the mailbox in letters two inches in height or larger and of a color contrasting with the color of the mailbox. This section does not preclude an individual from also numbering the front entrance of the structure if so desired.</p>

**Street address numbers are vital for any emergency vehicles to be able to respond quickly during an emergency at your home!**

We hope this information is helpful and possibly inspires you to take a look at your own mailbox to see how it reflects the pride you have in your home. Don't forget that a new coat of paint on your mailbox does wonders to freshen-up your home's appearance from the street.





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## Trailers, Boats & Campers

### Parking & Storage Requirements – Community Standards



**Our community Covenants are very clear when it comes to the parking and storage of trailers, boats, campers and other recreational vehicles on Royal Lakes individual home lots, and on any of the common property:**

The Covenants state in: **SECTION II, ARTICLE VI- Use Restrictions, Section 4 “...Mobile homes, truck campers, trailers of any kind and boats *shall not be parked or stored on individual lots except in such a manner that they are totally shielded from vision from the street, adjoining lots, lakes or the golf course.*”**

**This Covenants provision means** that trailers, boats, campers and etc. must either be: (A) parked/stored within the home’s garage and with the garage door fully closable; or (B) must be parked/stored at an off-site facility or location, in order to comply with the Covenants’ “***totally shielded from vision from the street, adjoining lots, lakes or the golf course***” requirement. This refers to all types of trailers including, but not limited to flatbed, yard varieties, enclosed, boat, jet ski, and campers, plus recreational vehicles such as truck campers, motor coaches and etc.

The POA acknowledges and understands that trailers may be needed during periods of lawn and landscape maintenance to haul-in pine straw, mulch, sod and other materials, and to haul-off lawn waste, tree trimmings and other debris.

The POA also understands that campers need to be cleaned or stocked before or after a trip. When an owner is going to have this need for a day or two, it is best to contact your street representative to let them know which day or days you will have the trailer on the property. This saves the POA Board member’s time and saves the owner possible irritation and time spent having to deal with a Compliance notification that might be issued. Communication helps everyone in this situation.





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## Fences

### Approved Types, Styles & Locations – Community Standards

Per the Royal Lakes Architectural Standards Committee April 2012 design standard clarification for fencing within SECTION III, Design Standards 5.5 “Fences” and “Fencing of Pool Areas”.

“Fencing” is typically used to enclose your yard to provide a “contained” space for children and pets.

- All fences require submittal of an application, and approval from the ASC, before installation.
- The approved fencing type is: **“black” wrought iron (or aluminum) picket style fences with metal posts, or with brick or stone column style posts.** Varying design styles of this type fencing may be submitted to the ASC for review and approval.
- Only the rear and portions of the side yard(s) may be fenced in. Front yard fencing is strictly prohibited.
- Lots adjacent to the lakes and golf course must take the 25’ set back into consideration when planning a fence.
- Types of fences that will not be approved include: chain-link; weld wire; chicken wire; solid metal, plastic; fiber glass, wood panel, and etc., or any other type of privacy fencing.

Below are a couple examples of previously approved fences that meet this Standard:



For any “Non-Standard” fences that may be currently installed within Royal Lakes (i.e. that do not comply with the approved design types), these fences are “grandfathered” into the Standards until such time as they need replacement due to age and/or disrepair. At that point any non-standard fence must then be replaced with an approved type fence.



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## **Basketball Goals & Play Equipment**

### **Types, Styles & Locations – Community Standards**

**Royal Lakes Covenants Section III, 5.5 Considering Site Accessories at ROYAL LAKES, as Amended.**

#### **1. Play Equipment:**

Permanently installed **Play Equipment** (except basketball goals) shall be located where they have a minimum impact on adjacent properties and are screened from public view to the greatest extent possible from the street and golf course by the Property Owner applying both judicious placement of the equipment and use of landscaping.



Wood or metal construction is appropriate. Colors are a major influence on character and appeal while contributing to the general overall appearance of the neighborhood. As such, play equipment, exclusive of wearing surfaces (slides, poles, climbing rings, swing seats, etc.), shall be earth tone in color, blending with the surrounding natural environment. Harsh or bold colors are inappropriate.

#### **2. Basketball Goals:**

**Basketball goals** (includes backboards and poles) may be located adjacent to a driveway if such driveway is located within a side or rear section of the yard. Placement of basketball goals should be located where there is a minimum impact to adjacent properties. At minimum the basketball goal should be install in such a manner so that the backboard does not face the street, and should also be screened from public view to the greatest extent possible from the street and golf course by the Property Owner applying both judicious placement of the equipment and use of landscaping. Backboards shall be transparent and clear, i.e. colorless. A contrasting rectangular color outline may be painted on the backboard. Poles shall be painted black.



#### **3. General Guidelines for Basket Ball Goals & Play Equipment:**

**All play equipment** that will not be stored out of sight when not in use **must be approved by the Architectural Standards Committee (ASC)**. To obtain approval, the Property Owner must submit to the ASC, prior to installation, a Residential Change Application form including a detailed drawing or catalog sheet showing the equipment, including dimensions and color, as well as a copy of a plat or plan showing the planned location of the equipment.

**Permanently installed equipment** is defined as being placed, installed, and anchored in such a manner that the equipment is intended to remain stationary as placed; not readily and easily moved.

Equipment such as badminton, volleyball nets, and trampolines (not permanently installed), skateboard ramps, and portable play equipment shall be stored out of sight when not in use. All play equipment must be kept neat in appearance, suitably and safely maintained.

#### **4. Play Equipment & Basketball goals Installed Prior to 2008:**

Play Equipment, including basketball backboards and poles, already in place prior to this 2008 amended Design Standard shall be subject to ASC review and the property owner may be required to make changes to conform to the amended Design Standard.

Only in extremely rare cases will the ASC permit existing, permanently installed play equipment to be “grandfathered in”.

Considerations in those cases, while not all inclusive, are the cost of the initial investment; its continuing need due to the ages of the children; the effort that was made to seek approval in the first place; the impact on immediate neighbors, and any mitigating factors that may affect this decision. In addition, if approval is granted, the ASC reserves the right to require the homeowner to take additional steps to allay the situation by additional landscaping. (Amended July, 2008)



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## Signage

### Types, locations & Number– Community Standards

This **Royal Lakes Standard** expands the type and number of signs approved by the Association and allowed to be placed on Lots within the community, as adopted by the ASC and Board of Directors this date (April 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016). The Standard consists of the following specific signs permitted on Lots without the prior approval of the Association's Architectural Standards Committee (ASC).

If you have a sign you wish to display on your property, other than one the specific Standard signs discussed below in Items 1 & 2, please submit a "Royal Lakes Change Application" form to the ASC for approval prior to displaying the non-standards sign.

#### 1. Current Sign (s) Allowed on Lots by the Covenants:

- **Royal Lakes Real Estate Sign:** Currently, according to the Covenants, only the specific "Royal Lakes Realty Sign" may be placed on Lots and Homes "For Sale" within the community as stated per **SECTION III, "Design Standards for Royal Lakes", Item 5.5 "Signs"**. Note that no other realtor signs are allowed within the community.



For complete information on how to obtain the specific Royal Lakes Realty Signs for your realtor please visit the community's website at [www.royallakespoa.com/](http://www.royallakespoa.com/).

#### 2. Additional (New) Signs Allowed on Lots as per this Standard:

- **Security Service/Systems Signs** – Up to two (2) of these small signs may be placed within islands on the Lot.
- **Seasonal Banners** – One seasonal banner at a time may be placed within an island on the Lot.
- **Legal Proceeding Signs** – As may be required by Law.

#### 3. Signs NOT Allowed on Lots:

- **Contractors' Signs** – No 'contractor signs' are permitted on Lots or Common Property areas within Royal Lakes.
- **Non-Standard Real Estate Signs** – No Real estate signs other the Royal Lakes specific sign, reference in item 1.
- **All Other Signs** – Not designated in items 1 & 2 above.

#### 4. Signs Maintenance:

All signs on Lots must be maintained in a "neat and attractive condition". This means any signs that are faded, damaged or broken must either: be repaired to like-new condition; be removed; or be replaced with a new sign.