



Applicant FAQs

Applying for a liquor license

What kind of liquor license do I need and how much will it cost?

There are a variety of liquor licenses, and the license fees vary greatly.

- [Retail license descriptions and fees](#)
- [Non-retail license descriptions and fees](#)
- [Non-retail FAQs](#)

How long does it take to get a liquor license?

It normally takes 60 to 90 days to process retail and in-state non-retail licenses, and 30 to 45 days to process an out-of-state non-retail license. It can take longer in some cases, i.e. if the WSLCB receives an objection to the application or if additional documents are needed.

Who will I work with from the WSLCB during the application process?

You will work with a liquor license investigator and a liquor enforcement officer. The investigator will collect documents and review your application, while the officer will help you understand liquor and tobacco laws and regulations and support the licensing process as required (i.e. conduct a final inspection of your business).

If I apply for a liquor license and then withdraw or get denied, do I get my fees back?

In most cases, we will keep \$75 as a processing charge, and refund the rest.

I am buying an existing business. Can I get their liquor license transferred to me?

Liquor licenses are not transferable. You must apply for your own license.

Do I have to be a resident of Washington to apply for a liquor license?

If you are applying as a sole proprietor or a partnership, both you and your spouse (if applicable) need to be residents of Washington for 30 days before applying for a liquor license. This requirement does not apply if you are applying as a part of a corporation or a limited liability company that is registered with the Washington Secretary of State's office. Please visit the [Secretary of State's website](#) for information about forming a corporation or a limited liability company.

Following laws and regulations

How can I stay current with changes to liquor and tobacco laws and regulations?

The WSLCB [Laws and Rules page](#) offers up-to-date information on liquor and tobacco related laws and rules. The WSLCB posts fact sheets following each legislative session to help you understand any changes or new legislation.

What signs do I need to post at my business?

[A number of signs](#) must be posted at your business. The signs you need are based on the type of liquor license you hold.

What kind of training do my employees need?



A [Mandatory Alcohol Server Training \(MAST\) permit](#) is required by law for employees who serve alcohol or supervise the sale of alcohol for on-premises consumption.

Making responsible sales

How can I help my employees make responsible alcohol and tobacco sales?

The [Responsible Vendor Program \(RVP\)](#) provides free training materials in English, Korean and Spanish. You can use the printable booklet or interactive online course to train employees on responsible alcohol sales.

Special events

I'm having a private party where I will be serving liquor. Do I need a license?

You may need a [banquet permit](#), which is for a private, invitation only event (not open or advertised to the public).

What kind of license is needed for a nonprofit organization holding a fundraiser?

A [special occasion license](#) allows a nonprofit organization to sell liquor at a specified date and place.
