



## Apply for a Liquor License



If your business deals with the importation, manufacture, distribution or sale of alcohol in Washington State, you need a liquor license.

A liquor license is an endorsement on your Business License issued by the Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR) Business Licensing. You must complete an additional Business License Application even if you already have a Business License to obtain a liquor license.

After you submit your liquor license application, the Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board (WSLCB) will guide you through the licensing process to verify your business meets all licensing requirements.

### **Liquor License Starter's Guide**

If you are new to the licensing process, please view our Starter's Guide. This guide will take you step-by-step through the process of obtaining a liquor license in the State of Washington. [Click here to view the Starter's Guide.](#)

If you have applied for a license before or need quick access to our resources, review the brief overview below on how to submit your application:

### **When to Apply**

Applications for a liquor license should be submitted 90 days before the anticipated opening date. If an



application is submitted too far in advance, it may be administratively withdrawn and you will be encouraged to apply closer to your opening date. If you are applying for a non-retail liquor license, you must obtain your approved TTB Federal Permit before applying.

## License Types

Use the descriptions in the links below to figure out what type of liquor license you need.

- **Retail liquor license descriptions and fees:**
  - [English](#)
  - [Korean](#)
  - [Spanish](#)
- **Non-retail liquor license descriptions and fees:**
  - [English](#)
  - [Korean](#)
  - [Spanish](#)

## How to Apply

You can apply online through Business Licensing at [dor.wa.gov](http://dor.wa.gov) and go to the liquor licenses section to complete your application.

In addition to applying through Business Licensing Services, complete an [Alcohol Dealer Registration](#). Mail this form to the U.S. Department of the Treasury Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) at the address on the form.

- Note: If you are applying for a Spirits Retailer liquor license and intend to sell to on-premises liquor retailers for resale at their licensed premises, or for a Wine Retailer/Reseller Endorsement, you will **also** need a federal Basic Permit under the Federal Alcohol Administration Act. This allows you to purchase product for resale at wholesale prices, and a permit is required for each location where you plan to sell to another retailer. Apply for this permit online with at <https://www.ttbonline.gov/permitsonline/>. It is recommended that you post this permit on your premises with your other licenses.

## Liquor Licensing Pilot Project

Our Liquor Licensing Unit is currently working on a pilot project to reduce the time frames it currently takes to issue licenses. We have received feedback from the industry that the current license processing timelines are too long. We are hoping that these efforts will provide better customer service for our applicants and licensees. We are sharing this information with you so that you are aware of what we are doing to meet these needs.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, our applicants were experiencing work and supply chain slowdowns, this in turn had extended the processing timelines significantly. Now that business has returned to a more normal cadence, we will be reviewing our time frames to better support our applicants.

Our current average processing time is 70 days. Our goal is to reduce that time to an average of 45 days, starting May 15, 2023.

As we begin this process, we will start with snack bars, beer/wine restaurants and taverns to learn more about the impacts of these changes and how to best implement them. Four Licensing Specialists have volunteered to work on the pilot. The liquor team is expected to contact licensees within 2 days of assignment and complete the initial interview within the first week. Supervisors will send applicants an



email to let them know that we have received their application, introduce them to their Licensing Specialist, and inform them of the timeframes.

### **What does this mean for you?**

- Licenses will be issued more efficiently.
- Timelines for licensees to return documents will be shortened from 14 to 7 days. Licensees can expect that the Licensing Specialist will review their documents within 7 days.
- If additional documents or corrections are necessary, the Specialist will notify the licensee, and they will have an additional 7 days to return those documents.
- Applicants will be expected to be ready to operate within the 45 days. If they are in the process of significant construction or remodeling, they will be asked to reapply when they will be ready to complete the process.

**Applying for an out-of-state non retail licenses?** [View this page](#) for instructions on applying.

### **Not finding a liquor license that fits your business?**

Alcohol permits cover a wide variety of activities and can be issued to both businesses and private citizens. You can find a list of permits and application instructions [here](#).

You may need additional local, state and federal licenses for your business that are not covered under the Business License Application. For more information on licensing requirements for your business, contact [Department of Revenue Business Licensing Services](#) at 360-705-6741 or [BLS@dor.wa.gov](mailto:BLS@dor.wa.gov).