



Washington State  
Liquor and Cannabis Board

# Retail Liquor Licensing

A Guide Through the Process



Checklist



Apply



Application Received



Local Authority



Posting Notice



Churches and Schools



Briefing



Approval



Resources

# Pre-application Checklist

- ✓ Review liquor license type and requirements:  
[List of Available License Types](#)
- ✓ Applications for a liquor license should be submitted roughly (but no more than) 90 days before the anticipated opening date
- ✓ Must have a business location address to apply
- ✓ Business Plan (owners, financing, operations, intent)



# Complete Application

Visit <http://www.bls.dor.wa.gov> and go to the liquor licenses section to apply online or fill out the following forms:

- A Business License Application
- A Liquor and Cannabis Board Addendum

**Remember** to check with your city or county - You may need additional local, state and federal licenses for your business that are not covered under the Business License Application.



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# WSLCB Receives Your Application

**A liquor license specialist will contact you** and guide you through the application process. The specialist will first schedule a telephone interview to better understand your business plans. Then, the specialist will request documents relating to the start up of your business, such as:

- Business structure
- Financing/start-up costs
- Lease or purchase agreements
- Franchise agreements
- Floor plans
- Personal/criminal history statement



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# WSLCB Notifies Local Authority

[State law](#) requires the WSLCB to notify the local **authority** (i.e. mayor or county commission) of the city or county your business is located in that you have applied for a liquor license.

The local authority has 20 days to respond with an approval or objection to your license application.

**In Alcohol Impact Areas (AIA)**, the local authority has 60 days to respond. [Click here](#) for more information regarding AIA's.



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# Public Posting Notice

A public notice will be posted for **14 days** at your business if:

- Your business is in a new building or if the location hasn't hosted a liquor licensed business immediately prior to your tenancy
- You are changing the type of liquor license at the location



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# WSLCB Notifies Nearby Churches and Schools

**The WSLCB will research the neighborhood for nearby public and private schools and churches.** If there are any within 500 feet of your business, they will be notified and have the chance to support or object to your application.

**Note:** [State law](#) provides that public schools within 500 feet of the premises may veto a license. The WSLCB will take all protest and support letters into consideration when making a decision to approve or deny a license.



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# Complete Online Briefing

**All applicants will need to complete an online briefing of liquor laws and regulations.**

At the end of the briefing, you will need to complete and return an acknowledge form to your licensing specialist.

[Click here to view the video](#)



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# WSLCB License Approval

**If all your documentation has been received and approved by the WSLCB** and there are no issues outstanding, you will receive an approval letter that serves as your 30-day liquor license until you receive your Master Business License with the liquor endorsement from Business Licensing Services.

Once you receive your license, you will then be licensed to responsibly sell alcohol in the state of Washington.



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# Additional Resources

- Frequently asked questions from [applicants](#) and [licensees](#).
- [The WSLCB Licensing Division provides free WebEx classes](#) to answer your questions about a variety of alcohol and cannabis related topics.
- This [step-by-step license application guide](#) will help you understand the process and what to expect along the way.



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