



CITY OF TUKWILA

BUSINESS LICENSING FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

HOW DO I APPLY FOR A CITY BUSINESS LICENSE OR UPDATE MY LICENSE?

The City of Tukwila uses the Washington State Department of Revenue (DOR) for its city business license applications. To apply for a new license or update the information on your current license, please go to dor.wa.gov/tukwila.

HOW MUCH IS THE BUSINESS LICENSE FEE?

If you have a physical place of business within Tukwila city limits, the fee is \$56 per part-time employee and \$112 per full-time employee, with a minimum fee of \$56. The fee for nonresident businesses is \$100. Business licenses are valid for one year and must be renewed annually.

Additional business license fees apply to cabaret establishments, amusement centers, and businesses operating amusement devices.

WHO IS CONSIDERED AN EMPLOYEE FOR PURPOSES OF THE LICENSE FEE?

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The term “employee” includes each of the following persons who are not required by the city to have his or her own separate City of Tukwila business license:

- a. Any person employed at any business who performs any part of their duties within the City of Tukwila or reports from a location within the city’s corporate limits; and
- b. Any person who is on the business’ payroll, including all full-time, part-time, and temporary employees or workers; and
- c. Owners, officers, managers, and partners; and
- d. Any other person who performs work, services, or labor at the business including, but not limited to, family members, regardless of whether they receive a wage from the business; and
- e. Self-employed persons and sole proprietors; and
- f. Any other person who performs work, services, or labor at the business, including an independent contractor who may be exempt from requirements to have a separate City of Tukwila business license.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PART-TIME OR FULL-TIME EMPLOYEE?

A full-time employee is one who works 30 hours or more per week.

I DON'T KNOW HOW MANY EMPLOYEES WILL BE WORKING IN TUKWILA. HOW DO I DETERMINE THE BUSINESS LICENSE FEE?

If the number of employees is not known at the time of application or renewal of the license, the business must estimate the maximum number of employees that it anticipates working at any time during the 12-month period subject to licensure.

If the business over-reports the number of employees by more than 15 percent, the business may request that the city refund the overpayment. If the number of employees is under-reported, additional license fees may be assessed by the city.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO RECEIVE MY NEW BUSINESS LICENSE?

We recommend applying for your business license 30 days prior to starting business in Tukwila. You can confirm your city business license endorsement online at dor.wa.gov/businesslookup.

I DON'T HAVE A BUSINESS LOCATION IN TUKWILA. DO I STILL NEED A LICENSE?

A city business license is required of any person “engaging in business” in Tukwila, as defined in [Tukwila Municipal Code \(TMC\) 5.04.010](#). This includes meeting with customers or potential customers, delivering goods in vehicles maintained by the business, performing construction services, making repairs, providing technical or professional services, picking up and transporting tangible personal property, and other activities.

WHAT BUSINESS ENTITIES ARE EXEMPT FROM PAYING A LICENSE FEE?

The following entities must apply for and obtain a city business license but are not required to pay a license fee. For important details, refer to TMC 5.04.090.

- Non-resident businesses with annual revenue in the city of \$2,000 or less
- 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations exempt from federal income tax
- Governmental entities that engage solely in governmental activities
- Nonprofit entities operated exclusively for a religious purpose
- Civic groups, social clubs, or social organizations
- Certified, qualified, or registered court interpreters with less than \$12,000 in annual gross revenue in the city
- Public (social) card rooms with a house-banked license

WHAT BUSINESS ACTIVITIES REQUIRE A SPECIAL LICENSE ENDORSEMENT?

As provided in [Chapter 5 of the TMC](#), the following types of businesses are subject to additional license fees: Cabarets, adult entertainment cabarets, amusement centers, and businesses operating amusement devices.

Special requirements are also in place for peddlers/solicitors, pawnbrokers and secondhand dealers, businesses operating panoram devices, and residential rental businesses which are subject to a residential rental inspection program.

WILL I BE SENT A REMINDER NOTICE BEFORE I NEED TO RENEW MY LICENSE?

The DOR sends business license renewal notices by email. Licensees should verify the accuracy of their email address in their [Secure Access Washington](#) (SAW) profile.

Licensees can edit their SAW email address at: dor.wa.gov/manage-business/my-dor-help/update-your-account-information

HOW DO I RECEIVE A COPY OF MY BUSINESS LICENSE CERTIFICATE?

DOR sends the business license document by email as an attachment to any SAW email addresses associated with that account. Licensees can see the license document through the My DOR account and can reprint the license on demand. If there is no SAW web logon associated with the account in My DOR, the license document will be mailed by DOR to the mailing address on file.

IS THERE A PENALTY IF I CONDUCT BUSINESS IN THE CITY WITHOUT A LICENSE?

Yes, the city may assess a penalty if the business is late in obtaining a new business license or is late renewing an existing license. The penalty can be up to 25 percent of the license fee for failure to timely obtain a new business license, and up to 45 percent of the license fee for failure to timely pay the annual license renewal fee.

If the business is subject to B&O tax, operating without a business license may also result in additional tax penalties and an extended lookback period for back taxes.

DOES THE CITY OF TUKWILA ALSO IMPOSE BUSINESS TAXES?

Yes. The city imposes a tax on admissions, commercial parking, gambling, and utilities. Effective January 1, 2024, the city will also impose business and occupation (B&O) tax. For more information, visit our website at tukwilawa.gov/citytaxes.

STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?

For regulatory questions, contact us at 206-433-1835 or licensing@tukwilawa.gov. For questions about the business license application process, please contact DOR's Business Licensing Service at 360-705-6741.