

Easy Start: Permits and Licensing

With numerous city and state rules and regulations it can be difficult to understand which permits or licenses you need to start your business. The NYC Business Solutions Centers are available to answer the main questions:

- Which permits do I need?
- Which agency or agencies provide these permits? What information do I need to provide?
- Do I need permits from more than one agency, from both the City and State?

Tips on Applying for Permits

- **Start Early.** Prepare your application well in advance of the date you wish to start any activity that may require a license; it can take time to get a license approved, especially if you need a permit that requires inspections or approval from multiple city departments (e.g., Consumer Affairs, Buildings, Fire, or Transportation) or qualifying exams.
- **Take Steps in the Right Order.** Knowing what is required to obtain the permit will save you time and aggravation. For example, know what documents you will need to submit with the application and prepare them in advance. If the permit you need requires multiple agency approval or both City and State approval, you should get them in the order indicated.
- **Know the Rules.** It is not enough to get a permit. You need to be informed about what you can and cannot do under the regulation or law because, even if you don't know the rules, inspectors do. If you have questions, call the relevant agency and ask. Don't ignore fines. Seek help.

These are the key agencies that issue permits. For more detailed information, use the websites or phone numbers provided.

General Business Activities	Licensing Agency
Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) Phone: 311 Website: http://www.nyc.gov/consumers	Issues licenses/permits for most retail activities and other common business activities, including cabarets, debt collection agencies, cigarettes, electronics, employment agencies, garages, home improvement contractors, stoop-line stands, sightseeing buses, street fairs/general vending (non-food), tow-truck companies, laundromats, locksmiths, motion pictures, newsstands, and much more.
Department of Health (DOH) Phone: 311 Website: http://www.nyc.gov/health	Issues licenses/permits for restaurant and food establishments, mobile food vendors, tattoo and funeral parlors, manufacturers of ice cream, groomers of small animals, users of insecticides, and much more.
Department of Buildings (DOB) Phone: 311 Website: http://www.nyc.gov/buildings	Issues licenses/permits for construction-related trades, such as licensed electricians and plumbers, cranes, derricks, hoists and riggings, as well as for maintenance and repair of boilers and elevators, store alterations and certificates of occupancy. DOB also issues Certificates of Occupancy and permits for awnings and outdoor signs.

For specific information on the permits and licenses required to open your business, please visit NYC Business Express at <http://home2.nyc.gov/portal/site/businessexpress>

<p>Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Phone: 311 Website: http://www.nyc.gov/dep</p> <p>The Environmental Economic Dev. Unit (EEDAU) helps find sources of financial aid for regulatory compliance and pollution prevention.</p>	<p>Issues water taps or wet connection permits, water meter permits, sewer connection permits, industrial wastewater discharge permits. Also issues work permits and certificates of operation for businesses that must comply with the NYC Air Control Code; permits for asbestos demolition and renovation activities. Facilities storing or handling hazardous substances at or above certain levels must file an annual Facility Inventory Form to comply with the NYC Community Right-to-Know Law; certain facilities also must file a Risk Management Plan.</p>
<p>Department of Transportation (DOT) Phone: 311 Website: http://www.nyc.gov/dot</p>	<p>Issues permits for revocable consent, street furniture, sub-surface street repairs and sidewalk repair or installation.</p>
<p>Taxi and Limousine Commission Phone: 311 Website: http://www.nyc.gov/tlc</p>	<p>Issues licenses for taxis, limousines, and small charter buses.</p>
<p>New York State AGENCIES Website: http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/ils/nyserver.html or www.nys-permits.org (O.P.A.L) or 800.342.3464 If you're getting the runaround by a state agency call the Office of Regulatory Reform and they intervene and take care of the problem. OR Online Permit Assistance & Licensing -A quick reference to identify needed permits or licenses</p>	
<p>NYS Department of Health (DOH) Phone: 311 Website: http://www.health.state.ny.us/</p>	<p>Issues licenses for health organizations, health spas, pet shops and funeral establishments.</p>
<p>NYS Liquor Authority (SLA) Phone: 311 Website: http://abc.state.ny.us</p>	<p>Issues licenses for alcoholic beverages.</p>
<p>NYS Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) Phone: 311 Website: New York State Department of Motor Vehicles - NYS DMV - NYSDMV - Driver - Vehicle</p>	<p>Issues licenses for commercial vehicles.</p>
<p>NYS Department of State Phone: 311 Website: http://www.dos.state.ny.us/</p>	<p>Issues licenses for appearance enhancement, barbers; alarm installers; armored car carriers; bail enforcement agents; central dispatch facilities; hearing aid dispenser businesses; private investigators; real estate brokers; real estate appraisers, real estate salespeople and real estate branch offices; security guards; watch, guard, and to customer service representative) patrol agencies; armored car guards and. telemarketers.</p>

For specific information on the permits and licenses required to open your business, please visit NYC Business Express at <http://home2.nyc.gov/portal/site/businessexpress>