



Internal Services Agency

Department of Finance

Tax Collection and Licensing Division

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County of Sacramento

INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR BUSINESS LICENSE APPLICANTS

The County of Sacramento issues business licenses to regulate businesses operating in the unincorporated area of the County (the areas of the County not within city limits), to promote improved enforcement of ordinances that protect the public, and to prevent nuisances and neighborhood disturbances. The license fee is not a business tax and is not based on business revenue.

Types of Business Licenses

General Business Licenses are issued to businesses in the unincorporated area after a review by the Planning and Community Development Department of the business activities at a specific location (street address) and the land use zoning of the property.

Special Business Licenses are issued to individuals performing certain types of business activities in the unincorporated area after a character review by the Sheriff's Department. In addition to Special Business Licenses, employees who engage in certain activities will require an identification card called an **Employee Permit**.

Tobacco Retailer Licenses are issued to businesses that sell tobacco products and tobacco paraphernalia. The Tobacco Retailer License is in addition to the required General Business License.

Exemptions from General Business License Requirement

Financial Institutions and Insurers - banks, savings and loans, and credit unions that pay an in-lieu tax to the State of California are exempt from a General Business License. Check cashing businesses require business licenses and are not exempt.

Insurers and their dedicated agents that pay an in-lieu tax to the State of California are exempt from a General Business License. Insurance brokers and those agents who conduct business activities outside of the scope of their dedicated agency are not exempt from a business license.

Residential Facilities - apartments, rooming houses, duplexes and other facilities for long-term stays (over 30 days), residential care homes for adults or children, and family day care.

Churches - to the extent the facilities are used for religious purposes or restricted to members of the congregation. A General Business License is required for a church-run or church-located school or child care facility or thrift store, etc.

Libraries - public and private.

Agriculture - includes growing of crops or raising livestock, except that a General Business License is required for any enterprise that combines product from multiple farms, wholesaling, processing, storage or manufacturing use which involves assembly of the products of multiple farms or ranches by a cooperative or other business enterprise for marketing distribution.

Business License Fees and Terms

Business License Application Fees are NON-REFUNDABLE. If your business will be located in the unincorporated area of Sacramento County, you are strongly encouraged to contact the Planning and Community Development Department at (916) 874-6221 BEFORE submitting your business license application to determine if your business activities are allowed at the business site.

General Business Licenses

The fee for a General Business License depends upon responses to questions in the application.
The General Business License is valid for three years, or until a change of ownership or location.

Special Business Licenses and Employee Permits

The fee for a Special Business License is indicated on the application.
The Special Business License and Employee Permit are valid for one year, or until a change of ownership.

Tobacco Retailer License

The fee for a Tobacco Retailer License is indicated on application.
The Tobacco Retailer License is valid for one year, or until a change of location or ownership.

Planning/Zoning Code Requirements

All home-based businesses must comply with the Zoning Code Home Occupation Standards.

Some commercial and industrial business activities may require a use permit from the Planning Department prior to operating. Those businesses include, but are not limited to:

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| Auto dismantling | Hospitals |
| Auto sales | Hotels, motels |
| Temporary concession stands | 24-hour convenience markets |
| Public dance | Drive thru windows |
| Gas stations | Arcades/gaming centers |
| Outdoor festivals/flea markets | Private social centers |
| Palm reading/fortune tellers | |

All commercial and industrial businesses are required to meet certain Development Standards (i.e. landscaping, parking, fencing, setbacks, etc.). Your license may be denied if the property does not meet these standards.

Businesses are allowed promotional displays such as banners, flags, pennant flags or search lights with an approved Temporary Use Permit from the Planning Department. Time limits of the use shall not exceed thirty (30) days within the first one-hundred eighty (180) days of business. Other existing businesses shall be limited to one period not exceeding ten (10) days within a given year.

If you have any questions regarding zoning compliance, Home Occupation Standards, Use Permits, Temporary Use Permits or Development Standards, please contact the Planning and Community Development Department at (916) 874-6221 prior to submitting a business license application.

Application Process

There is one Business License Application that covers General, Special, and Tobacco Retailer Business License. The application contains questions which allows the applicant and Business License Unit staff to determine which types of license apply to the business, and the fees required. Checks or money orders for business license and employee permit fees should be made payable to the **County of Sacramento**. An application is not complete without payment of the required fee(s).

You may obtain an application at our web site at: www.finance.saccounty.net/tax, apply and pay on-line at: <http://www.finance.saccounty.net/Tax/OBLA.asp> or request the application by calling our 24-hour automated phone system at (916) 874-6644.

All sections of the application must be completed. Any blank line or unanswered question may cause the application to be rejected and will delay the process.

If a Special Business License is needed: After filing your application, you must go to the Sheriff's Identification Bureau at 711 G Street for fingerprinting. The Sheriff's Office is open for fingerprinting from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 pm and 1:00 pm to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. An application is not considered complete without fingerprinting. The Sheriff's Office may deny an application for incompleteness if the business owner(s) does not get fingerprinted within fifteen days of submitting the application.

After a completed application and fees have been submitted to the Business License Unit of the Tax Collection and Licensing Division, a General Business License review will be performed by the Department of Planning and Community Development within forty-five (45) days of entry of a completed application. If a Special Business License is required, the Sheriff's Department will review the application within ninety (90) days of entry of a completed application. In the event of a denial, a letter will be mailed to the applicant with information regarding the grounds for denial and appeal rights and processes.

Other Types of Licenses

The Business License Unit of the Tax Collection and Licensing Division does **NOT** issue Day Care licenses for home-based "family day care." Contact the County's Department of Health and Human Services at (916) 875-2808 for more information. We do issue business licenses for day care in commercial locations. Also, residential board and care homes are licensed through the State. For more information on residential board and care homes call (916) 324-4031

Depending on the type of business or service you are providing, you may need additional licenses, permits, certifications, etc. from local, state and/or federal agencies. It is your responsibility to determine what other requirements you need.

Questions Concerning Business Licenses

For specific license information and/or applications and questions concerning fees, please contact:

Business License Unit, Tax Collection and Licensing Division, Department of Finance

700 H Street, Room 1710, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 874-6644

Applications accepted: 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m., Monday through Friday excluding holidays

Web address: <http://www.finance.saccounty.net/Tax/Default.asp>

Email address: buslicense@saccounty.net

For specific information regarding any zoning restrictions and requirements, please contact:

Department of Planning and Community Development

827 7th Street, Room 101, Sacramento, CA 95814 (916) 874-6221 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Office Hours: 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Thursday excluding holidays

Web address: www.saccounty.net/planning

For specific information regarding Special License approval, please contact:

Special Investigations Unit, Sacramento County Sheriff's Department (916) 874-5848

711 G Street, Sacramento, CA 95814

Fingerprinting Hours: 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday excluding holidays.

Note: these hours are subject to change - call the Identification Unit (fingerprinting) at (916) 874-8076 to confirm.