

Q&A - Registration Process for Business Licenses Beginning 2023

What is the new Business License Registration Process beginning 2023?

Most Business Licenses transitioned to a new database in 2022. Therefore, we are able to improve our tracking and maintenance of Business License Accounts information. We will send out revised Business License Applications beginning November 2022 via email address(es) on file. If the email address fails in its delivery attempt of the Business License application, the Business License application will be mailed to the current business address on file.

Renewal (or new) customers will return their completed application and copies of required documentation either electronically, mail, or in-person preferably no later than December 1st annually. No payments will be accepted and/or processed at that time so that the Licensing Staff can review and process all received applications.

If approved, Licensing Staff will email a copy of the Business License invoice preferably no later than December 15th annually. Customer will remit payment either by mail, in-person, or online payment. All 2023 Business Licenses will be emailed and/or mailed to approved customers beginning January 1, 2023.

If there is any missing information or incomplete information regarding your received application, you will receive a Non-Compliance Letter with a Response Date to submit the required documentation. Regardless of status, customers are required to register their business in a manner required by the Director Finance no later than December 31st annually.

Any late Business License applications, missing or incomplete application packets, or no filing of required Business License per Baltimore City Code could result in violations and/or penalty and interest assessments in addition to required Business License fees.

Why can't I pay when I submit my Business License Application as I have in the past?

Following an internal review of our existing business practices and the compatibility of our new billing database, it has come to our attention that we have an opportunity to improve our current processes to ensure we are compliant to updated Baltimore City Codes, provide our customers enhanced billing capabilities of a billing database, and offer our customers' the flexibility of payment options.

In turn, we want to ensure that the requirements of the Business License are complete prior to accurately billing any customers for applicable Business License.

Can I just use my same Business License application from before?

NO. All Business License applications have been revised to meet the standards of the Baltimore City Code and to populate the new database with more relevant information. Therefore, the former versions of all Business License applications are obsolete and cannot be used for Business License registration as of November 7, 2022.

All applications have a cover sheet with related Baltimore City Code excerpts and other required documentation such as Trader's License, if applicable, for Business License registration.

Amusement Devices, Auctioneer, Commercial Parking, Late Night Operations, Pawnbroker, Simulated Slot Machines, Special Event Parking Lots, and Street Entertainer NOW have new individual Business License application for each business type.

All remaining Business License registrations will use a combined Annual Business License application.

Additionally, Simulated Slots, Amusement Devices, and Hall or Sports Centers now requires a separate Registration Form, along with the appropriate Business License application, for registering each Simulated Slot Machine, Amusement Device, and Hall (Sports Center) description.

What else has change?

Because the State of Maryland requires all businesses conducting business in Maryland to have a SDAT number, we can no longer accept a “T” (Trade Name) or non-SDAT number as your SDAT number for customer’s business. All customers will have to register with the State of Maryland Assessment and Taxation Office for an authorized SDAT number for a business entity. In addition, the customer’s SDAT number shall be in GOOD STANDING. To see if your business is registered or to get registration information, go to <https://egov.maryland.gov/BusinessExpress/EntitySearch>

Where can I find a listing of the current Baltimore City Codes?

Customers can visit the City of Baltimore’s Legislative Reference for listing of Baltimore City Codes at <https://legislative.baltimorecity.gov/city-codes>. Business Licenses statutes are located within Articles 2, 15, or 28.

What is a Non-Compliance Letter?

A Non-Compliance Letter is a written correspondence to formally inform customers of any missing required documents to process and approved his/her Business License application. Examples of such non-compliances are incomplete or missing Business License application(s), SDAT is Not in Good Standing per the State’s website, outstanding Personal Property Taxes, outstanding Business License fees and non-compliances from prior registration years, missing or expired Trader’s License, etc.

Non-Compliance Letters are emailed to the email address(es) provided on the received Business License application. Customers will have up to 30-calendar days from the date of the Non-Compliance Letter to resolve the identified non-compliances or risk having their application denied and potentially filing of suit with Law Department.

If I am denied a Business License, then I am not obligated or responsible to get a Business License?

Not True. If you have been denied, you can request a written Statement of Appeal regarding your denial of a Business License. However, if you have been denied a Business License for failure to apply for a Business License in a timely manner or for failure to comply to the requirements as established by the Director of Finance, you are still responsible under the applicable Baltimore City Code to fulfill the requirements of a Business License.

How do I request an Appeal to a Denied Business License?

All denied Business License customers shall either come in-person to the Licensing Unit Room 3 of the Abel Wolman Municipal Building or email a written statement requesting an Appeal, to which your Business License application will be given a final review. This step gives the customer an opportunity to bring everything current for an approved Business License application. Customers will have 10-calendar days from the date of the Denial Letter to request an Appeal.

Who do I contact if I have any additional questions or concerns?

The City of Baltimore’s Department of Revenue Collections’ Miscellaneous Tax & Licensing Unit at (410) 361-9690 or email COBBusinessLicense@baltimorecity.gov