Business License FAQ and Basic Requirements

Why does the City have a business license program?
Business licenses are required and restrictions imposed by the Lake Oswego City Code (LOC 20.02). These were enacted to ensure the public's interest by regulating businesses to make sure they comply with applicable laws and ordinances, and conduct themselves in a manner that does not detract from the public health, safety, and welfare. The City administers this program, monitors compliance, and conducts enforcement as necessary.

Who needs a City of Lake Oswego business license?
Unless specifically exempted by State law, Lake Oswego City Code requires anyone who conducts business within the City of Lake Oswego to have a business license.

The business license application for a new business should be received thirty (30) days before the business opens.

Does that include working out of a home?
Yes. Once the proposed business (home occupation) complies with City zoning codes, it would need a business license.

What about for door-to-door solicitation?
Solicitation for any purposes, e.g., for-profit business, non-profit organization, charitable entity, or political candidate or measure, must be conducted in accordance with LOC 34.16.910 - .950.

"Solicitation" means “the entry onto real property used for residential purposes by a person for the purpose of communicating with an occupant of the property, whether the communication is verbal, visual or in writing.”

Read Door-to-Door Solicitation Rules.

Where do you find a list of current business licenses in Lake Oswego?
Listings of current business licenses in Lake Oswego and new business licenses for the latest quarter are attached at the bottom of the Getting a Business License webpage.

Where does a person go to apply for a business license?
An applicant may either come to the Finance Department on the first floor of City Hall and pick up an application, or call 503-635-0279 to request that an application be mailed. You may also download a business license application by visiting the business license application page in the Finance Department. Fill in and print the form then mail in or hand deliver to the Finance department in City Hall.

How soon do I need to apply for a business license?
The business license application for a new business should be **received thirty (30) days before the business opens**. Application should also be received on the specific “due date.” If compliance with these time frames is not met, the business license fee is higher.

How much will it cost? (Certain businesses, with anticipated or established gross revenue during a calendar year of no more than $1,000 and at least 50% owned by a person under 19 years of age, are exempt from the following annual business license fees (LOC 20.02.025).)

Current fees for the initial business license application are:

Employees (including owners)	Fee
1 - 3	$80.00
4 - 10	$110.00
11 +	$150.00

These fees are non-refundable.

Beginning as of October 1, 2013, all existing business license holders will be converted to staggered renewal times and will renew annually thereafter. Business Licenses must be renewed by the indicated expiration date on the license. A renewal form indicating the renewal fee will be mailed to current business license holders.

What happens after the fees are paid and the application is submitted?
Once submitted, the application is routed to various departments for review and approval. Most applications only require Planning and Building Department reviews. However, if issues such as health and safety are involved, the Engineering, Fire, and Police Departments may also review the application.

How long will it take to complete the review process?
While the Ordinance for Business Licensing requires that those applying for a business license "do so thirty (30) days prior to the date the license is requested to be effective," the review process is normally completed within 10 working days and the license is then issued.

Renewal fees for business licenses received on or before the renewal date are:

Employees (including owners)	Fee
1 - 3	$64.00
4 - 10	$84.00
11 +	$110.00

Renewals fees for business licenses received after due date are:

Employees (including owners)	Fee
1 - 3	$8
4 - 10	$1
11+	$1

What does the City do with the revenue collected for business licenses?
The revenue collected from business license fees go into the General Fund. The General Fund supports services such as Fire, Police, Parks, and Library operations.

Additional Information
In addition to maintaining a current listing of licensed businesses and building contractors at the permit center counter, the City also provides the Chamber of Commerce with a copy of all licensed businesses, and frequently helps locate local businesses for callers.

Other Resources

Metro Contractor's Business License Program	503-797-1710
Clackamas Community College Small Business Development Center	503-656-4447
State of Oregon Business Information Center	503-986-2222
State of Oregon Corporation Division (registration of a business name)	503-986-2200
State of Oregon Builders Board	503-378-4621
US Small Business Administration (Portland)	503-326-2682
Internal Revenue Service	1-800-829-1040
Federal Identification Number	1-800-829-3676

Web Links

Getting a Business LicenseSubmitting a Business License Application

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