

CitizenServe Q&A – City Clerk’s Office:

Business License

1. Why do I have to get a license/permit for certain business operations from the City of Dubuque?

- a. The City of Dubuque is required to abide by and enforce city ordinances.

These ordinances are laws passed by the city council that establish rules and regulations related to the safe and effective governance of the municipality. They are designed to promote and ensure the safety of our residents and any visitors. The permitting and licensing process is governed by city ordinance and the City Clerk’s Office is one of several city departments charged with ensuring compliance with it.

2. The application process is available both online and in paper format. Do I have to submit it on the website?

- a. No, submitting an online application is not *currently* required. Paper applications are available in the City Clerk’s Office, as well as a PDF version on the City’s website. However, the online application allows you to provide all pertinent information in an easy-to-use electronic format and make payment on the website. Once you pay and submit your electronic application, it is automatically received by our office. The online process can save time and, as a result, your application can be processed more quickly.

3. Do I have to provide my Social Security Number, Birth Date and Driver’s License on the application?

- a. Yes, some of our business license applications require this information, as the City runs a national background check on these particular applicants. This information is necessary for that process. If you are asked for any or all of this information, it must be provided. All information is safeguarded and stored securely.
 - i. Mobile Vendor and Controlled Livestock Grazing licenses do not require a background check.

4. Do I have to pay the application and background check fee when submitting my application?

- a. Yes, all fees are required at the time of submittal. Applications are not processed until payment is received.

5. How long does it usually take for my application to be processed?

- a. Once received, the application is processed within 7 business days.

6. Is my application and background check fee refundable?

- a. No, the fees cover administrative processing and background checks.

7. How will I receive my permit/license?

- a. Once approved, you will receive your permit/license via email. It will be sent to the email provided by the applicant in their application.
 - i. If the applicant does not have an email, the permit will be printed and either picked up by the applicant or mailed to them.

8. How soon do I need to submit my application in order to ensure that it is issued by the time I need it?

- a. That depends on the type of permit or license. The following permits/licenses are issued by the City Clerk's Office:
 - i. **Mobile Vendor:** At least 14 days prior to anticipated start date
 - ii. **Taxi Driver:**
 - 1. Current driver permits expire December 31st of each year. Renewal of current permits need to be obtained by each driver before expiration date.
 - 2. New driver permits, applications must be submitted at least 8-10 days prior to anticipated start date
 - iii. **Taxi Business:** Licenses expire March 31st each year. Renewal licenses need to be obtained before the expiration date.
 - iv. **Solicitor:** At least 8-10 days prior to anticipated start date
 - v. **Transient Merchant** (including Fireworks Sales): At least 8-10 days prior to anticipated start date
 - 1. A license will not be issued until the applicant has obtained approvals from the following departments:
 - a. **Planning Department** – for a Temporary Use Permit
 - b. **Fire Department** – for tents if that is how the business will be conducted and verification of a valid State of Iowa Fireworks License (for Fireworks sales)
 - c. **Health Department** – for a Food License (if applicable)
 - vi. **Adult Entertainment:** Annual license. Renewal licenses need to be obtained before expiration date each year.
 - vii. **Pawn Shop:** Annual license. Licenses expire January 31st of each year. Renewal licenses need to be obtained before expiration date each year.

- viii. **Secondhand Dealer:** Annual license. Licenses expire January 31st of each year. Renewal licenses need to be obtained before expiration date each year.
- ix. **Salvage Sales:** Annual license. Licenses expire January 31st of each year. Renewal licenses need to be obtained before expiration date each year.
- x. **Junk Dealer:** Annual license. Licenses expire January 31st of each year. Renewal licenses need to be obtained before expiration date each year.

NOTE: It is the **applicant's responsibility** to apply for and secure all required departmental permits. Each department must confirm that their specific requirements have been met before the license can be approved.

9. What happens if I don't get my application submitted within the required timeframe?

- a. You cannot begin your activity until the appropriate license has been issued. Operating without a license or permit is a violation of city code and may result in fines, penalties, or other enforcement actions.

10. If the permit/license for which I am applying also requires applications from other city departments, can I submit everything to the City Clerk's Office?

- a. Please submit applications that are not for the City Clerk's Office directly to those respective department(s). For example, the Health Department handles food licensing, the Planning Department processes Temporary Use Permits and the Inspection/Construction Services Department issues Sign Permits. To ensure timely processing and that you are submitting all required documentation and following their specific guidelines, please reach out directly to the department responsible for that process.

Contact Information:

City Clerk's Office: 563-589-4100

Planning Services Department: 563-589-4210

- Temporary Use Permit

Health Department: 563-589-4181

- Food License
- Noise Variance Permit

Fire Department: 563-589-4160

- Fireworks Permit
- Pyrotechnics Permit
- Temporary Membrane Structure, Tents and Inflatables

Inspection & Construction Services Department: 563-589-4150

- Temporary Sign Permit

Engineering Department: 563-589-4270

- Public Right of Way
- Parking Signs

Parking Division: 563-589-4267

- Parking Meter Bags

11. If I can't upload documents on the electronic application, what do I do?

- a. You may submit those documents to the City Clerk's Office via email or in paper format and we are happy to upload them to your application. **Please note, do not send documents containing personally identifying information (i.e. social security number, etc.) to our office via email.** If you need to electronically send anything to us with private information, please let us know and we can provide you a secure link with which you can securely upload your documents to us.
 - i. Contact Pam McCarron at pmccarro@cityofdubuque.org for the following: Mobile Vendors, Secondhand Dealer/Junk Dealer/Pawn Shop/ Salvage Sales, Adult Entertainment Establishment, Taxi Business
 - ii. Contact Tusdee Blus at tblus@cityofdubuque.org for the following: Transient Merchant (including Fireworks Sales), Solicitor, Taxi Driver

12. I have questions about the insurance requirements. Who do I call?

- a. Please follow the insurance schedule provided in the application booklet. We recommend that you provide the insurance information contained in the application booklet to your insurance agent. If they have questions, they may contact our office directly.
- b. Proper endorsements are required with the Certificate of Liability Insurance document. Please ensure all appropriate and required endorsements are submitted with your application. For questions, please have your insurance agent contact our office.

13. What is a Surety Bond and where do I get one?

- a. The surety bond is a type of insurance that protects the buyer and seller related to sales/transactions. You should reach out to your insurance provider to ask if they issue surety bonds.

14. Is a Surety Bond and the Certificate of Liability Insurance the same?

- a. No, they are two different types of coverage. Please refer to the application information to determine what type of coverage is required. If your agent has questions, please have them contact our office directly.

15. What are the requirements for a mobile vendor who wants to locate in a metered parking space?

- a. Any parking spaces occupied by the vendor must be paid according to the time and payment structure for the specific meters occupied (i.e. 20-minute meter, 1-hour meter, 2-hour meter, 10-hour meter).
- b. Contact the Parking Division to pay for and obtain the meter bags to place over the meters that will be restricted during the event. They will provide you with instructions on this process (i.e. when to place the bags on the meters, etc.)

16. Will my application carry over from year to year?

- a. No, a new application is required each time a license or permit expires. All required documents must be submitted with each new application. The City Clerk's Office does not retrieve documents from past submissions. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide the required current documentation for every application they submit.

17. What happens if my application is denied?

- a. You will be notified via email with a letter explaining the denial and any further processes/options available to you as the applicant.
- b. All application fees are non-refundable.