

Cook County

Unincorporated Liquor License FAQ's



1. What is a Liquor License?

A Liquor License is required for all businesses in the unincorporated area of Cook County that sell at retail any alcoholic liquor for each premise where the retailer is located.

2. Where can I find the Ordinance or Cook County Liquor Commission Act?

Please visit our website at <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/agency/cook-county-liquor-commission> that has further information and/or please find the direct link below:

https://library.municode.com/il/cook_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIGEOB_CH6ALLI

3. How do I apply for a Liquor License?

Please visit <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/agency/cook-county-liquor-commission> for access to the application portal or visit the portal directly at <https://revenue.cookcountyil.gov/LicensePortal>. For more information on how to apply, please visit liquor license portal and click on User Manual.

4. How do I complete the fingerprinting requirement?

A criminal background check must be conducted through the Cook County Sheriff's Department. Fingerprints must be given in person by each officer of the corporation, each partner in a business partnership, each owner of an individually owned business, and each manager associated with the liquor establishment as indicated on the application. Once you have completed the online application, please contact us at ccliqorcommission@cookcountyil.gov to coordinate scheduling.

5. What documents are required for a Liquor License application? The following documents are required for the application:

- Secretary of State Proof that Corporation/LLC is in good standing.
- Proof of property ownership or lease.
- Original certificate of Liquor Liability Insurance (Dram Shop) in an aggregate amount of at least \$1,000,000.00.
- Public Health Tobacco Retail License (if applicable).
- Public Health Food Establishment Permit (if applicable).
- Copy of your Illinois State Liquor License (renewal)

6. What other licenses can be added to a Retail Liquor License?

- Beer Garden
- Live Music Entertainment
- Special Late License
- Additional Special Late License (renewal)

7. What are the penalties for not obtaining a Liquor License?

It is unlawful for any Person doing business in any unincorporated area of Cook County to conduct such business without having first obtained a Liquor License. In accordance with Chapter 6 – Alcoholic Liquor (Cook County Liquor Commission Act) Section 6-47 – Violation.

Any person violating any of the provisions of this Chapter shall be fined and amount not less than \$1,000.00 or more than \$15,000.00, except where otherwise specifically provided. A separate and distinct offense shall be held to have been committed each day any person continues the violation. Each day on which a violation continues shall constitute a separate violation. Not more than \$15,000.00 in fines under this Section may be imposed against any licensee during the period of his license.

8. What is the website address to the Cook County Liquor License Portal?

Visit <https://www.cookcountyil.gov/agency/cook-county-liquor-commission>, on the right side, under related links, click on Business License Portal- Liquor License or visit the portal directly at <https://revenue.cookcountyil.gov/LicensePortal>.

9. I have registered, but I cannot remember my password and/or user id.

You may request your forgotten password from the Login page of the Cook County Business License Portal. Click on Forgot Your Password button and continue with the steps. If this does not work, use the Contact Us link on the top right corner of the page or email us at ccliqorcommission@cookcountyil.gov.

10. How can I change my password and/or contact information?

Click on Maintain Profile button on the License Portal. Here you can update personal information and change your .

11. I made a mistake on my Liquor License application; can I correct it?

If you made a mistake answering any of the questions on the application, please call (312) 603-3727 or email us at ccliqorcommission@cookcountyil.gov.

12. I submitted my Liquor application; how do I find the status of my license?

You may check the status by of application by clicking on License History tab on the Cook County Business License Portal. Once application is approved/denied, email will be sent to portal registered user with more information.

13. How can I pay for my license fee?

You may pay online with a valid credit card or ACH.

14. Can I apply for my application online and pay online?

Yes, you can apply and pay online.

15. Can I apply for my application online and pay in person or by mail?

No, the only option to make a payment is online.

16. What happens once I make a payment for license application on the portal?

Once you make a payment, the next step will be signing the application electronically. You will receive an email from DocuSign which will prompt you to click on the provided link and sign the application. Once this step is complete, the application will be sent to the Cook County Liquor Commission for processing and approval.

17. Is there an expedited license approval process?

No. Once a complete application has been submitted, license processing will take up to 6-8 weeks depending on the level of complexity of the application to be reviewed and business compliance with all other applicable Cook County Ordinance requirements.

18. What if I am applying right before the deadline?

Submitted applications will have to go through the full review process before approval is granted.

19. What if I do not have access to the internet?

You may access the internet at the following locations: Your local public library or you may schedule an appointment with the Liquor Commission by calling (312) 603-3727 or email us at ccliqorcommission@cookcountyil.gov.

20. Does my PC need any minimum requirements for me to access the Liquor License website?

You need to have Microsoft Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox or Goggle Chrome and an internet connection.

21. What do I do if the Liquor License website logs me out while I was in the middle of application?

In case Cook County Portal logs you out, login back to portal and try again.

22. What if I have multiple locations, do I need a Liquor for each location?

Yes. A Liquor License is specific to a location.

23. Which County Departments/Agencies are responsible for reviewing my Liquor License application?

The following Cook County agencies will be reviewing each Liquor License application:

- Department of Revenue
- Department of Public Health
- Office of the Sheriff
- Department of Building and Zoning
- Office of Child Support