



FOR ASSISTANCE VIEWING OR READING ANY CITY DOCUMENTS,

contact the City's ADA Coordinator via email adacoordinator@fortcollins.gov or phone: 970-416-4254.

[A Request for Reasonable Accommodation](#)
can also be completed online.

For more information about the City's Non-Discrimination policy and Accessibility efforts, visit FortCollins.gov/Non-Discrimination.





Liquor License Application Guide

How to Apply for a New Liquor License

Using this Guide

To sell or serve malt, vinous, and/or spirituous liquors, a business owner must first obtain a liquor license. Colorado uses a **dual-authority licensing system, meaning both the local and state licensing authorities** review every retail license application.

Given the complexity of Colorado liquor laws, hiring an attorney is recommended for applicants unfamiliar with the licensing requirements. Applicants who are comfortable navigating the process may also represent themselves.

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Before You Apply

The new liquor license application process can take 120 days or more from submittal to license issuance. To begin, request a secure application link from liquorlicensing@fortcollins.gov; paper applications are not accepted, and incomplete packets will be rejected. Applications must be typed or legibly printed in black ink, and some required documents must be notarized.

Applicants are expected to know, understand, and comply with both the Colorado Liquor Laws, Rules, and Regulations and the [City of Fort Collins Municipal Code](#). More information on state requirements is available on the [State of Colorado Liquor and Tobacco Enforcement Division website](#).

It is strongly encouraged to contact [Sales Tax](#), [Building Services](#), [Zoning](#), and [Poudre Fire Authority](#) early in the process. Each of these departments may have separate requirements related to the proposed premises. Addressing them early can help prevent delays later in the application or hearing process.

1. Submitting Your Application Packet

The checklist below outlines the documents and information required to submit a complete liquor license application. Because incomplete packets will not be accepted, applicants should review each item carefully before submitting. Requirements vary by license and entity type, so applicants should confirm which items apply to their specific situation.

Application Packet Checklist

- ☐ [State Form DR8404 or DR8403](#)
 - The required form depends on the license type.
 - Applicant name and information must match exactly across all forms and supporting documents.
 - Applications must be filled out in all appropriate sections, signed, and dated.
 - Any question that doesn't apply must be answered "N/A" rather than left blank.
- ☐ Payment Receipt for City Fees ([City Pay Portal](#))
 - Local application fees are due at the time of submittal.
 - State and local application fees are nonrefundable.
 - If concurrent review is requested, state fees are due at the time of submittal.
 - If concurrent review is not requested, state fees are not due until after the local authority approves the application.

Applicants may request concurrent review, which allows the State and local authorities to review the application simultaneously rather than sequentially, for an additional \$100 fee.

- ☐ Detailed Premises Diagram
 - 8 ½" by 11" size
 - Must accurately represent the licensed premises, including dimensions (does not need to be drawn to scale)
 - The licensed premises must be completely outlined in **bold black ink**
 - Include the length and width of exterior walls
 - Include bars, walls, partitions, entrances/exits, and storage areas, specifically identifying where alcohol will be stored
 - A separate diagram required for each floor (if multiple levels)
 - Exterior areas must show the type and height of fencing or barriers

Lease Requirements

If submitting a lease, it must match the applicant's name exactly; cover the entire license period of at least one year; be in the applicant's sole possession; be properly executed; and demonstrate possession of all areas shown in the premises diagram (patio, storage rooms, etc.).

- ☐ Proof of Possession of Property
 - Deed in the name of the applicant, date-stamped and filed with the County Clerk
 - Lease in the name of the applicant
 - Lease assignment in the name of the applicant, with proper consent from the Landlord and acceptance by the applicant (attach original lease)

Financial Documents

If the business or an owner/member has taken out a loan to finance the business, applicants must provide a copy of the loan agreement along with a signed Promissory Note. If financing instead comes from gifted funds, a signed gift letter from the donor(s) is required. If funds were financed through other means, such as personal savings, applicants must provide bank statements demonstrating the source of those funds.

- ☐ Purchase agreements or stock transfer agreements
- ☐ Copy of executed promissory notes or loans
- ☐ Bank statements demonstrating sources of funds (if applicable)

Entity Documents

Submit only the required documents for your entity type.

Corporation

- ☐ Corporate entity chart
- ☐ List of officers/stockholders/directors of applying corporation (if wholly owned, designate at least 1 person as principal officer of parent)
- ☐ Certificate of Incorporation date-stamped by the Secretary of State

- ☐ Certificate of Good Standing issued within the past two years (for corporations older than two years)
- ☐ Certificate of Authorization (if foreign company)

Limited Liability Company (LLC)

- ☐ Organizational chart
- ☐ Certificate of Good Standing issued within the past two years (for corporations older than two years)
- ☐ Operating Agreement
- ☐ Articles of Organization date-stamped by the Colorado Secretary of State's Office.
- ☐ Certificate of Authority (if the applicant is a foreign company)

Partnership

- ☐ Partnership agreement (general or limited)
- ☐ Certificate of Good Standing issued (if formed after 2009)

Sole Proprietor or Husband/Wife Partnership

- ☐ Restrictions On Public Benefits Affidavit ([DR 4679](#))
- ☐ Copy of Driver's License or Colorado Identification Card for each applicant

Background Investigation Documents

Each of the items below is required for each owner with 10% interest or more in the legal entity applying for the license listed on page 4 of the application:

- ☐ Individual History Record ([DR 8404-I](#))
- ☐ [City of Fort Collins Authorization to Release Information](#)
- ☐ [Fingerprints must be submitted after the application packet is deemed complete.](#)

Management Information

1. Is this application for a Hotel & Restaurant, Tavern, Lodging, or Entertainment license?
 - Yes – See question 2.
 - No – Nothing else is required. (Questions #15 and #16 on the DR 8404 application form must still be completed for other on-premises license types.)
2. Will an owner be the Registered Manager (anyone listed on page 4 of the application)?
 - Yes - Nothing else is required.
 - No - If the registered manager will be someone other than the licensee or one of the owners, submit the following documents for that person:
 - ☐ Permit Application and Report of Changes ([DR 8442](#))
 - ☐ Manager Registration Fees: \$30.00 payable to the Colorado Department of Revenue ([State Pay Portal](#)) and the City of Fort Collins ([City Pay Portal](#))

2. Correct Application Deficiencies

City Clerk staff will review your application using this same checklist and notify you by email of any omissions or corrections needed. Your application won't be considered complete or set for hearing until these are resolved. Once complete, the Clerk will email you to schedule the Public Hearing.

3. Post Notice & File Affidavit of Posting

The Clerk will prepare and publish the notice in the newspaper per statutory requirements and will also prepare a poster for you to post on the site. The Clerk will tell you when to pick up the poster and when it must be posted. A blank affidavit will be attached to the poster at pickup.

Within one week of posting, email the affidavit and photos of the posting to liquorlicensing@fortcollins.gov.

4. Petition Completion

A petition is a signed document from neighborhood residents and business owners or managers indicating support for or opposition to a proposed liquor license. Petitions serve as evidence at the public hearing, helping the Local Licensing Authority determine whether existing businesses are meeting the neighborhood's needs and desires. Petitions and exhibits must be filed with the City Clerk's Office at least ten (10) days before the public hearing.

Anyone signing a petition must be at least 21 years old and either a resident, manager, or owner of a business located within the neighborhood boundary, defined as a one-mile radius around the proposed licensed premises. The City Clerk's Office will provide a boundary map, which applicants must use to determine where petition signatures may be collected.

5. Attend Public Hearing

At the hearing, you must prove to the Local Licensing Authority that the neighborhood's needs and desires aren't currently being met by existing businesses and that the owner(s) are of good moral character. You may prove this using any method you choose, though petitions and witness testimony are the most common.

Note: Anyone testifying at the hearing must be at least 21 years old and either a resident, manager, or owner of a business located within the neighborhood boundary.

Zoom links are posted with the agenda on the City's Liquor License page: <https://www.fortcollins.gov/Business/Permits-and-Licensing/Liquor-License>.

The Clerk's Office will also send you the agenda and instructions directly.

6. State Review

The State accepts and reviews applications on a first-come, first-served basis. If you selected and paid for concurrent review, the Clerk's Office will send your application to the State as soon as it's complete. If not, the Clerk's Office will send it after approval.

The State communicates only with the Clerk's Office, which will relay any updates to you. If the State requests corrections after its review, address them promptly upon notification.

Once the State approves your application, it will issue your liquor license to the Clerk's Office. The Clerk's Office cannot release your licenses until the Building and Fire inspectors have approved the file.

7. Pay Occupation Tax

Liquor Occupation Tax is prorated based on when the business is licensed. It is paid on the City Sales Tax website at <https://fortcollins.munirevs.com>.

The Liquor Occupation Tax is due annually on January 2nd, separate from the annual license renewal fees paid to the City and State.

Sales Tax can be reached at (970) 221-6780 or salestax@fortcollins.gov.

8. Pass Inspections

Licensees are required to ensure that their premises complies with local building and fire codes. A Certificate of Occupancy must be submitted to the Clerk's Office before licenses are issued.

Building Services Contact Information

- **Website:** <https://www.fortcollins.gov/Business/Building-and-Development/Building-Services>
- **Email:** buildingservices@fortcollins.gov
- **Phone:** (970) 416-2740
- **Address:** 281 N. College Ave
- Walk-in hours:
 - Monday-Friday
 - 9:00 am to 12:00 pm
 - 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Poudre Fire Authority Contact Information

- **Website:** <https://www.poudre-fire.org/>
- **Phone:** (970) 416-2891

9. Receive City & State Licenses

The Clerk's Office will send you your State of Colorado and City of Fort Collins liquor licenses. Congratulations!

10. Begin Operations

You've completed all the steps to obtain your license and must remain in good standing. Follow best practices, train your staff, and abide by liquor laws. City of Fort Collins Liquor Compliance Officers conduct routine compliance checks, so stay current on requirements.

11. Alcohol Server Training

FCPS offers [ABT Responsible Vendor Training](#) (ABT-Alcohol Beverage Training).

Another option is to find an approved training program on the [State Liquor Enforcement Division \(LED\) website](#).

12. Annual License Renewals

Each year, the State will mail your renewal form 90 days before your license expires. Do not mail your renewal to the State. It must be filed electronically with the City Clerk's Office 45 days prior to the expiration date. Send the renewal application and proof of payment for City and State fees to liquorlicensing@fortcollins.gov.

If your form is misplaced, a blank copy of [DR 8400 is here](#). You may also need to submit additional paperwork if you hold a [Takeout and Delivery Permit](#) or [Optional Premises](#).

If you ever have any questions or concerns about your license renewal or status, please contact the City Clerk's Office at (970) 221-6515 or liquorlicensing@fortcollins.gov

Petition Guidelines

These guidelines are intended to assist an applicant for an alcohol beverage license in petitioning the neighborhood most likely to be affected by the applicant's proposed establishment. Applicants are strongly encouraged to review Chapter 3 of the Code of the City of Fort Collins and/or consult a private attorney.

These guidelines should not be construed as legal advice. The City of Fort Collins and its employees assume no responsibility for the acceptance or rejection of petitions, or for the denial of an application by the Fort Collins Liquor Licensing Authority, based on an applicant's reliance on these guidelines. Applicants should not rely solely on the information provided here. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the petition is done correctly.

Neighborhood Needs and Desires

Before granting a license, the Fort Collins Liquor Licensing Authority must consider the reasonable requirements of the neighborhood and the desires of its adult inhabitants, as evidenced by petitions, remonstrances, or other evidence. The burden of producing this evidence falls on the applicant. Although the law does not require an applicant to petition the neighborhood, such a petition is the most common form of evidence presented.

Applicants may conduct a petition survey themselves or may contract with a professional survey firm.

Neighborhood Boundary

The City Clerk's Office sets the neighborhood boundary for each application in accordance with the City Code. This boundary is a one-mile radius around the proposed licensed premises. The City Clerk's Office will provide applicants with a boundary map to confirm whether a potential signatory resides, owns, or manages a business within the designated neighborhood.

Who May Sign a Petition

Petitions may be circulated only within the neighborhood boundary. Signatures should be obtained only from:

- Residents of the neighborhood, or
- Owners or managers of businesses within the neighborhood boundary

Anyone signing a petition must be at least 21 years of age and must indicate their age next to their signature.

Verified Statement and Notarization

Each petition packet must include:

- ☐ A cover page stating the date, time, and location of the hearing
- ☐ A verified statement, signed and notarized by the circulator, attesting that the circulator personally witnessed each signature, that each signature is, to the best of the circulator's knowledge, genuine, and that the address listed next to each name is the true business or residence address of the signatory

A petition missing a complete, notarized, and verified statement or cover page may be invalidated.

How Many Signatures

There is no required number of signatures. An applicant should collect enough signatures to give the Authority sufficient evidence to find that:

- The reasonable requirements of the neighborhood for the type of license sought are not currently being met, and
- The adult inhabitants of the neighborhood desire the issuance of the license
- As a general reference point, applicants typically submit petitions with 100 to 200 signatures, though this is neither a minimum nor a guarantee of approval.

Preparing the Petition Summary

After completing the petition survey, the applicant should:

- Review the petition(s) and strike, in red pen or marker, any signature believed to be invalid
- Tabulate the results, including the total number of signatures obtained, the number in support, the number in opposition, and the number stricken (with reasons)
- Be prepared to describe any statements signatories made to the circulator about their reasons for supporting or opposing the license

City Attorney Review

Before or during the hearing, the Assistant City Attorney will review the petitions and may object to their admissibility as evidence. Flaws in the petition format or petitioning process may cause the Authority to rule the petitions inadmissible.

Sample Petition

A sample petition is available from the City Clerk's Office for applicants who intend to circulate their own. The petition must comply with Section 3-53(5) of the City Code.

Common Reasons Signatures Are Rejected

- No age listed
- No manager or owner designation on business petitions
- Address is outside the neighborhood boundary
- Address listed is illegible

Filing Deadline

Petitions must be submitted to the City Clerk's Office at least ten (10) days before the hearing date.

Fingerprinting Instructions

Who needs to get fingerprinted?

Officers, directors, managing members, and members of a corporation or LLC with ownership interest in the liquor license of 10% or more.

You can choose to either complete electronic fingerprinting or visit a law enforcement agency to obtain physical cards.

Electronic Fingerprinting

Visit www.coloradofingerprinting.com, set up an account to schedule an appointment to get fingerprinted using **6192LLQH** as the CBI unique ID.

Visit <http://uenroll.identogo.com/> and enter code **25YQ6K** on the first screen, then click on schedule or manage appointment and follow the instructions. The unique CBI code for this business is **CONCJ6192**.

Fingerprint Cards

As of June 3, 2019, the Larimer County Sheriff's Office is no longer providing fingerprinting services for liquor license applications. You may visit another law enforcement agency* to be fingerprinted. However, your card must have the printed below printed on it to be accepted. Please take this information with you to give to the officer who is fingerprinting you.

OCA: CONCJ6192

ORI: CO0350300, PD, FT COLLINS, CO

Employer and Address

Fort Collins Police Services
2221 South Timberline Road
Fort Collins, CO 80525

Reason Fingerprinted

44-3-307 (3)(c) Liquor License Application

Your local law enforcement agency may or may not provide fingerprint services. Please contact them directly.

Notice

As part of the fingerprint process, the City of Fort Collins must notify you of the following regarding fingerprint-based background checks:

Your fingerprints will be used to check FBI criminal history records. You have the right to challenge the information in the FBI identification record by submitting a request to:

Colorado Bureau of Investigation (CBI)

690 Kipling Street - Suite 4000, Lakewood, Colorado 80215

Phone: 303-239-4208

<https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/cbi/employment-background-checks>

The procedures for changing, correcting, or updating an FBI identification record are set forth in Title 28, C.F.R., Section 16.34.

If you choose to challenge your FBI record, please notify the City Clerk's Office in writing immediately after submission of your challenge to CBI.

Your cooperation in following these instructions enables City staff to process your application without delay. Please call the City Clerk's Office at 970-221-6515 if you have questions.