

— FAQ —

BUSINESS LICENSE

1. Q: Do I need a business license?

A: Any business conducting business, generating gross receipts, or doing administrative work is required to obtain a city business license.

<https://businesslicense.costamesaca.gov/Apply/GettingStarted/BusinessLicense>

2. Q: How often do I have to pay for my business license?

A: The business license tax is an annual fee. The license expires after one year, and a payment is required at the time the license will expire.

3. Q: Do home based businesses need a business license?

A: Yes. All home based businesses located in Costa Mesa are required to obtain a business license. You will need to fill out a business license application and a Home Occupation Permit.

<https://businesslicense.costamesaca.gov/Apply/GettingStarted/BusinessLicense>

<https://www.costamesaca.gov/home/showdocument?id=7097>

4. Q: Do I need to fill out a Home Occupation Permit even if I am not conducting the business from home?

A: Yes. Anytime someone uses his or her home as the business address, even if no work is being done at the home, the permit is still required.

5. Q: What if my property owner will not sign the home occupation permit?

A: Please contact the Planning Department in regards to any of the requirements on the Home Occupation Permit. 714-754-5245.

6. Q: Do I need a sellers permit?

A: When you sell or lease merchandise, vehicles, or other tangible property in California, even temporarily, you are required to register with the California Department of Tax and Fee Administration (CDTFA), to pay sales tax on your taxable sales. You can contact the CDTFA at 949-440-3473.

<https://www.cdtfa.ca.gov/services/#Register-Renewals>

7. Q: Do I need to file for a fictitious business name (DBA)?

A: You are not required to file for a fictitious business name to apply for a City of Costa Mesa business license. Although not required, the City does recommend that every business file a statement.

8. Q: Where do I file for a fictitious business name?

A: You can file for a fictitious business name at the County Recorder's office or any local newspaper.

<http://www.ocreorder.com/services/fictitious>

9. Q: Where do I get a Tax I.D or Federal EIN?

A: You will file for a Federal EIN through the IRS.

<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/employer-id-numbers>

10. Q: What is the fee for a business license application?

A:

- *The fee for a general business license application is based off estimated gross receipts for the first 12 months of doing business in Costa Mesa.*
- *The fee for a California State Contractor is \$50.*
- *Any business conducted by vehicle (Food truck, delivery services, etc.) is \$25 per vehicle.*
- *All businesses are required to pay an additional \$4 AB1379 State fee.*

See the back of a business license application for more information on the fee breakdown.

<https://www.costamesaca.gov/home/showdocument?id=13947>

11. Q: I am a contractor and closed my license with the city. Will I have to reapply for a new business license?

A: If you are a contractor and have ever had a business license with the City of Costa Mesa, please contact our business licensing phone: 714-754-5235 or email: bl@costamesaca.gov. You most likely have an account on file and will not need to reapply for a new license. There is a \$35 reactivation fee.

12. Q: My business is located in Costa Mesa and I have changed locations within the City. Will I have to reapply for a new business license with the new address?

A: No. If you have a change of address for your business, please contact our business licensing phone: 714-754-5235 or email: bl@costamesaca.gov. A change of address form will need to be completed and approved by our Planning Department.

13. Q: My business is not located in Costa Mesa and I need to update the address on my license. How can I update my license?

A: Please contact our business licensing phone: 714-754-5235 or email: bl@costamesaca.gov to speak with someone about updating the license.

14. Q: What is the quickest way to obtain my business license?

A: Applying for the business license online is the quickest way to complete the business license application process.

15. Q: What do I need to provide if my business is a non-profit?

A: You will need to supply proof of your non-profit status by submitting letters from the Internal Revenue Service and State Franchise Tax Board.

FOR ANY OTHER QUESTIONS PLEASE CONTACT BL@COSTAMESACA.GOV OR 714-754-5235.