



# RESTAURANT PERMIT & LICENSE CHECKLIST

There are numerous licenses and permits required to open a restaurant and it can get confusing. This handy checklist can keep you on track and in compliance.

## WHAT LICENSES AND PERMITS ARE REQUIRED FOR NEW OWNERS?

Failure to procure all the necessary licenses for your new restaurant can result in penalties, delayed opening, or denial of your establishment. Here are some of the most common licenses required for new owners.

### 1 Business License

A business license gives you permission to operate your restaurant in your area. Obtain this license through your city and state government and fill out the proper form. If your establishment plans on serving alcohol, you will also need to file a business license with the Federal Government.

### 2 Employer Identification Number

An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is confirmation that you are a legal employer, provides you with tax ID numbers, and allows you to officially hire employees. Visit [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) and fill out an online application. The approval process can take a while, so apply early on.

### 3 Food Service License

A food service license is issued by your local health department, following a formal inspection. Visit your state government's website to apply online. Expect periodic check ins from your health inspector.

### 4 Sign Permit

This permit gives you the ability to display permanent signage outside of your restaurant. You'll also need one of these permits if you plan on modifying an existing external sign. Visit your local county government's website to fill out an application.

### 5 Food Handler's Permit

Some states require individual food handler's permit for all employees and owners that will be in direct contact with any food. This typically involves taking and passing a course on food safety practices in your area.

### 6 Liquor License

If you intend on serving alcohol at your new restaurant, you must obtain a liquor license through your state liquor commission. Liquor laws vary widely from state to state, so contact your Alcohol Beverage License (ABC) department for the necessary forms and regulations.

Laws and license requirements vary by state, so be aware, additional permits might be needed.