

GLOSSARY OF TERMS FOR OPENING A NIGHTLIFE BUSINESS IN NEW ORLEANS



Opening a business involves navigating a range of permits, licenses, and regulatory terms. This glossary is designed to help you understand what each requirement means and how it applies to your business in New Orleans.

BUSINESS & TAX REGISTRATION

Secretary of State Registration Officially registers your business name with the State of Louisiana. Required for LLCs, corporations, and partnerships.

EIN (Employer Identification Number) A federal tax ID issued by the IRS. Required to open a business bank account, hire employees, or file taxes.

Occupational License Required by the City of New Orleans to operate legally. It confirms you're approved to conduct your type of business at your location.

Sales Tax ID (City & State) These IDs allow you to collect and remit sales taxes. You'll need both a Louisiana state ID and a City of New Orleans tax ID.

Assumed Business Name / DBA (Doing Business As) If your business operates under a name different from your registered name, it must be filed with the Orleans Parish Clerk of Court.

LOCATION & PERMITS

Certificate of Occupancy Shows your building is safe to operate in and is allowed for your type of business (e.g., restaurant, bar, etc.). Issued by the city after plan reviews and inspections.

Zoning Verification Confirms that your business type is allowed at the address you've chosen. Can be checked on property.nola.gov.

Litter Abatement Plan Required by the city for food and beverage businesses. You must describe how you'll keep the outside of your property clean.

Sign Permit Needed if you want to put up exterior signage for your business.

Sidewalk Café Permit Allows a restaurant or café to place tables and chairs on the public sidewalk directly in front of their business. Requires proof of insurance, a site plan, and compliance with ADA clearance standards. Issued by the City of New Orleans.

Parklet Permit Allows a business to convert adjacent curbside parking spaces into outdoor seating or public space. Typically requires additional review for safety, design, and traffic impact. Often seasonal or pilot-based.

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Temporary Use Permit Required for short-term uses like food pop-ups, events, or vendor markets on private or public property. Usually submitted through OneStop.

Mobile Vendor Permit Required for selling food or goods from a truck, cart, or trailer on public streets or private property. Includes location restrictions, health inspection requirements, and sometimes neighborhood-specific rules.

Right-of-Way Use Permit Required if your setup blocks or uses public streets, sidewalks, or neutral grounds (medians). Applies to parklets, food trucks, and some vendor stalls.

HEALTH, FIRE, AND SAFETY

Health Permit Issued by the Louisiana Department of Health. Required for any business that prepares, serves, or sells food or drinks.

Health Inspection Conducted after you apply for your Health Permit. You must pass before opening.

Fire Marshal Inspection Ensures your building complies with safety codes. Required for a Certificate of Occupancy.

ServSafe Certification A food safety certification required by the Louisiana Department of Health for at least one person in your business. Sometimes called a "food handler" or "manager" certification. Covers safe food handling, storage, and sanitation. Available online at www.servsafe.com.

Responsible Vendor Training A mandatory alcohol server training required by the Louisiana ATC. Anyone selling or serving alcohol — including owners, bartenders, and waitstaff — must complete this course. Certificates are issued by ATC-approved vendors, such as www.lrvp.com.

ALCOHOL & LIVE ENTERTAINMENT

ABO Permit (Alcohol Beverage Outlet) Required by the City of New Orleans to sell alcohol. There are different types depending on your hours and operations.

Louisiana ATC Permit State-level alcohol permit from the Louisiana Office of Alcohol and Tobacco Control. Required in addition to your city ABO.

Live Entertainment Permit Required if you plan to host live music, DJs, dancing, or other performances. Apply through OneStop with floor plans showing performance space.

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HIRING & INSURANCE

Louisiana Workforce Commission Registration Required if you plan to hire employees. This allows you to handle unemployment insurance and payroll taxes.

Worker's Compensation Insurance Required if you have employees. Protects your business and staff if someone is injured on the job.

General Liability Insurance Highly recommended for any business. Covers accidents, injuries, or property damage.

ONESTOP-SPECIFIC TERMS

OneStop App / Portal The City of New Orleans' online platform to apply for licenses, permits, inspections, and track progress. The OneStop App URL is <https://onestopapp.nola.gov>.

Dashboard Your homepage on the OneStop portal, where you can track your applications, upload documents, and respond to city requests.

Attachments Files you need to upload during your application — like your menu, site plan, ID, or insurance docs. Use PDF format whenever possible.