

How to Renew Your Business License

A photograph of a woman with dark hair, wearing a black jacket over a beige top, sitting at a desk and working on a laptop. The background is dark and out of focus.

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As a small business owner, you may have to [renew your business](#) license or registration. In Ontario, you must do this every five years or otherwise register your business as new. Businesses registered in Manitoba and Saskatchewan are renewed every 3 years, and those businesses registered in Alberta and British Columbia do not have an expiry date.

Small business owners frequently ask us about this topic, and in this blog, we'll discuss how to obtain and renew your Ontario Business Registration or Master Business License.

Renewing Your Business License

You will need to complete your business renewal in a timely manner to avoid unwanted issues. Many business owners are unaware that this is even a requirement for their Master Business Licence. Registered businesses in Ontario have up to 60 days after the expiration date to complete this process; otherwise, they will expire and be archived in the Ministry database. If a business name registration expires, it may lead to problems with your business bank account, contractors, clients and others. Filing an on-time renewal is the easiest way to avoid these issues from arising.

To complete this process, you will require your BIN, along with the business information that was provided upon first registering the business. You can do this by mail or phone, online, or in person. You can also update certain business information on the Master Business License with the renewal, including business address, business activity and owner's address.

Additionally, businesses may choose to cancel their registration if the owners are no longer using it. In Ontario, you'll need to file a cancelation with the provincial government and provide the information that was originally filed when first registering your business. If you wish to file a cancelation of your business registration, Ontario Business Central can also help you to properly [close your business](#).



Obtaining Your Business License

An Ontario business license can be granted to two different types of businesses: Sole Proprietorships and General Partnerships.

In order to register your business licence, you must provide information related to your business, including its name, business address and mailing address, and individuals who are authorized to register the business in Canada. The activities that are carried out by the business must also be outlined as part of the registration process.

With each registration, an individual is required to be named as the authorization person making the change. Typically, this is one of the persons who has registered or is renewing the business.

Business License Considerations

There are a number of considerations that business owners must make when obtaining and renewing their business licences.

Business owners must first register a business name. This is especially important as your business name allows you to be recognized within your marketplace. You should [choose a name](#) that is unique while also providing a sense of what your business is all about.

Your business name should not cause confusion among potential customers. If your name is too similar to that of an existing trademark or business, it can lead to legal issues. It is a good idea to take some time to first conduct a business name search in order to avoid this.

Currently, small businesses in Ontario have little name protection, which means that the Ontario government will accept any name provided. This further increases the risk of legal action by competitors if you choose a name that resembles that of other businesses or an Ontario corporation that has name protection.

When your business is registered, you will receive a Business Identification Number (BIN). This denotes that you have registered your business, and any changes that are made to its name, address, or activity must be done so using this BIN.

What Happens to CRA Accounts When You Renew or Register A New Business License?

If you have a Sole Proprietorship or General Partnership, any CRA accounts you have registered, including a GST-HST account, payroll account or import-export account, are connected to you personally as the owner of the business and not to the business registration. CRA accounts also do not have an expiry date so, even if your business name registration expires, your accounts with the CRA will remain active. If you register a new business name, these accounts will stay the same. If any business information, such as address changes, are made to the Ontario business registration, this does not automatically update the information on file for your CRA accounts.



We help businesses by simplifying the entire process of business registration and renewal. Understanding how to register or renew your business licence gives you the tools you need to establish your business and achieve long-term success.

We hope you find this information useful when renewing your business. If you require additional assistance or have questions, feel free to [reach out to us](#) directly.

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