Business Licenses

The City of Half Moon Bay's Business License is an annual tax levied on any business doing work within the city limits. It has an annual fee starting October 1st of each year and expiring on September 30th of the following year.

The City's Municipal Code reads:
3.40.060License tax—License required.
No person shall transact, engage in or carry on any business within the city without first having procured a license from the City to so do and having paid the tax prescribed in this chapter, and having complied with any and all applicable regulations concerning the use and occupancy of the premises from which the business is to be conducted. (Ord. 6-94 §1(part), 1994: Ord. 6-93 §2(part), 1993

Frequently Asked Questions FAQ

Who needs a business license in the City of Half Moon Bay?

You need a business license in the City of Half Moon Bay if:

- You are conducting any kind of business for profit or for your livelihood within the city limits of Half Moon Bay
- You have a fictitious business name certificate
- You have a State Board of Equalization resale permit
- You are listed in a commercial directory yellow pages, business white pages, the newspaper, local business guides, real estate multiple listing books, and other similar listings
- You have a home based business

How do I get a business license?

You must:

- Obtain an application at:
  Half Moon Bay City Hall
  501 Main Street
  8:30 am to 5:00 pm
  Monday-Friday
  An application can be mailed or faxed or you can obtain one on the web at http://ci.half-moon-bay.ca.us. or www.hmbcity.com
- Check with our Planning Department to ensure that your business is permissible in the location you are considering. Planning and zoning ordinances must be complied with and may affect the location of your business.
- Fill out a business license application completely.
- Pay the required fee and return it with the completed application to City Hall.
- All federal, state, county and city laws, ordinances and regulations must be complied with before a license is issued.
- The application will be processed and you should receive your license in approximately 3-4 weeks.

What do I have to do to obtain a business license for a food establishment?

You must first fill out the business license application completely, pay the fee and obtain all the appropriate City approvals. Your application will be held until the San Mateo County Health Department has done their final inspection of your premises. Bring in the San Mateo County Health Department final inspection form and a City of Half Moon Bay business license will be issued.

Do I need a business license to sell pumpkins or Christmas trees once a year?

Yes, a business license is required for a temporary business location to sell any vegetables, fruits or Christmas trees. Before a license is issued the Planning, Police and Building departments will review all applications. This temporary license shall expire ninety days after issuance and is not renewable for the same use for a minimum of thirty days.

I am a solicitor/peddler, what must I do?

If you intend to go door to door to solicit funds or sell a product you first must go to the Police Department and obtain an application for a solicitor's permit. Then you may obtain a business license application from City Hall and pay the business license fee. When the Police Department has issued your solicitor's permit, we will release your business license. Once you have both documents in hand, then you may start soliciting. It takes approximately four weeks to obtain a solicitor's permit because a background check is required.

I want to do massage therapy in Half Moon Bay. What do I need to do?

You first must go to the Police Department and apply for a massage permit. You may then apply for a business license from City Hall and pay the business license fee. When the Police Department has issued your massage permit, we will release your business license. It takes approximately four weeks to obtain a massage permit because a background check is required.

Once I've applied for my business license and paid the fee, how long before I receive the actual business license?

It usually takes 3-4 weeks to process the completed application. The business license will be mailed to your business mailing address when complete.

What is the fee to get a replacement copy of a business license?

The fee for a new copy of an existing license is $5.00

What is the fee for changes to an existing business license?

If the ownership changes you will need to apply for a new business license. There is no charge to change a mailing address or business name on a business license unless a new copy is needed with the changes. The fee for a new copy is $5.00.

Can I transfer my business license?

A business license is **not** transferable to any other owner. It is the responsibility of the owner to advise the City of ownership changes, relocation or termination of the business.

How long does my business license last?

Your business license is a non-refundable annual tax. The business license year runs from October 1st through September 30th.

What if my business is in my home?

You are still required to obtain a business license if your residence is in Half Moon Bay city limits. Check with our Planning Department to ensure that your business is permissible from your home.

Can I start my business as soon as I pay the fee?

No, all the appropriate permits and/or approvals from Planning, Building, Police and/or any other City department may have to be secured before your business can start. All federal, state, county and city laws, ordinances and regulations must be complied with as well. You may wish to consult with an attorney to insure that your business meets all legal requirements.

Will I need an inspection before receiving my business license?

If you have a fixed, non-residential place of business, you will need a building inspection. After you have completed the business license application and paid the appropriate fee, contact the Building Department to schedule a day and time for inspection of the premises by the Building Inspection Officer. You will also need to contact the Half Moon Bay Fire Department to schedule an inspection by the Fire Inspection Officer.

How do I obtain a Fictitious Business Name?

The City does not issue Fictitious Business Names. You must file a Fictitious Name registration or a "doing business name" (dba) with the County of San Mateo. Contact the County Clerk's office.

Do I need to display my business license?

Yes, City law requires your certificate to be displayed in a conspicuous place at the business location.

How do I cancel my business license?

If you are no longer conducting business in Half Moon Bay, it is your responsibility to cancel your business license. This cancellation should be done in writing.

Business License Department	*726-8779*
Planning Department	*726-8250*
Building Department	*726-8260*
Police Business Office	*726-8288*
Half Moon Bay Fire District	*726-5213*
San Mateo County Clerk	*363-4712*
San Mateo County Environmental Health	*372-6200*

City of Half Moon Bay
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CITY OF HALF MOON BAY

BUSINESS LICENSE

FAQ's
Frequently Asked Questions

CITY OF HALF MOON BAY
501 MAIN STREET
HALF MOON BAY, CA 94019

BUSINESS PHONE (650) 726-8779
FAX NUMBER (650) 726-9389

WEB PAGE
http://ci.half-moon-bay.ca.us
www.hmbcity.com