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1. Overview

The Cook County Board of Commissioners passed a General Business License (GBL) Ordinance, where businesses in unincorporated Cook County will be required to obtain the GBL license.

This User Manual provides instructions on how to:

- Download GBL related information and manuals
- Register to use the Online GBL System
- Login into the Online GBL system
- Request for your forgotten password
- Change my user information:
  - Change my personal information (e.g. last name, phone number, etc.)
  - Change email address
  - Change password
- Apply for a GBL license

2. Minimum system requirements

- Internet Explorer version 8.0 or higher

3. Download GBL related information and Manuals
4. Register to use the Online GBL System

4.1. Overview

- Access the Online GBL system at the following web address: [www.cookcountygov.com/gbl](http://www.cookcountygov.com/gbl)
- Click on “Need to register for account?” link.
- You will need to provide registration information on the following registration screens:
  - User Information
  - Business Information
  - Contact and Business Site Info
  - Other Cook County licenses

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4.2. **User Information page**

Provide the following information on this page, especially required information, then click “Next”:

- Your personal and contact information.
- Valid email address and password, which you will need to log into the system and for email correspondences* with the County regarding GBL matters.

*NOTE: Email will be the primary method of communications with the County, so please verify the accuracy of your email address.

![Figure 2 - Registration: User Information](image-url)
4.3. Business Information page

Provide the following information on this page, especially required information, then click “Next”:

- **Business identification information** – Provide required information and other available information.
- **Ownership Type** – You must select the ownership type that best represent your business, or select “Other” and specify.
- **Illinois Business Tax Number** – Required for all ownership types.
- **FEIN** – Required if your business has a Federal Employer Identification Number.
- **Illinois Secretary of State Registration Number** – Required for all types of business except sole proprietorship.
- **Illinois Sales Tax Exemption Number** – Required if you are a Non-for-Profit organization.

![Figure 3 - Registration: Business Information](image-url)
4.4. **Contact and Business Site Information page**

Provide the following information on this page, especially required information, then click “Next”:

- **Primary Contact Person** – Provide contact person for this business site.
- **Business Site information** – Provide physical and mailing address for your business’ primary location.
- **Cook County Property Identification Number (PIN)** – You may refer to your property tax documentation for your PIN or via the Cook County Assessor’s website.

**IMPORTANT TIP:**

**Location Name** field – Provide a name that will serve as a unique identifier for this site/location for your reference, such as either the street name or neighborhood name where this site is located.

![Figure 4 - Registration: Contact and Business Site Information](image-url)
4.5. **Other Cook County Licenses page**

ONLY select the Cook County license(s) that your business currently hold and provide corresponding license number(s), then click “Next”.

**NOTE:** Your business may be exempt from applying for a General Business License if your business has a valid and currently active license.

![Figure 5 - Registration: Other Cook County Licenses](image-url)
5. Forgotten password

If you have registered successfully with the system and received an email confirmation from the Online GBL system, then you may request a password reminder as follows:

Click “Forgot your password?” link to request for your password to be sent to your email address.

On “Forgot your password?” page, provide the email address (i.e. user id) you provided during registration, then click “Submit”.

Check your email account for your password reminder, then log into the Online GBL system with your email address and password.

Dear Cookie Geebeelle,

Your password is: password1
6. Log into the GBL System

After you received your email confirmation that you have successfully completed your registration, you may now log into the Online General Business License center with email address and password that you provided during registration.
7. Your GBL Home Page

7.1. GBL Exemption Certificate

If you are determined to have “GBL Exemption” status then your GBL Exemption Certificate will be displayed on the Home Page, which you are required to print and display in a conspicuous place at each of your business site (i.e. location).

Click “Print” to launch print functionality on your computer.
7.2. **My Application**

If your business currently do NOT hold other Cook County licenses and operates a business in unincorporated Cook County, then you are required to apply for a GBL license for each of your business site (i.e. location).

On your GBL Home Page, a list of your GBL applications will be displayed and available for retrieval.

The first time you log in, this space will be empty. However, a list of GBL applications that you have applied for will be displayed after you have initiated one or more GBL application process.

You may click on the App ID link of a GBL application to view application details.

![GBL Application List](image)

7.3. **My GBL Center Navigation Menu**

The main navigation menu is on the right titled “My Center” with the following menu items while you are in the Home Page:

- Return to Home – This item is always available for you to navigate back to your home page.
- My Profile
- Apply for a GBL
- Logout

7.4. **My Profile**

Click on “My Profile” to change your contact information, email address, and/or password.

7.4.1. **Change My Contact Information**

Change any of your contact information and provide your password, then click “Update”.
7.4.2. Change Email Address and Password

Change your email address and/or password, then click “Update”. Please note that you will need to log in with this updated email address and/or password the next time you log in.

8. Apply for a General Business License

8.1. Overview

The option to “Apply for a GBL” is available in the My Center navigation menu, if your business is required to apply for a GBL (not exempt).

**REMINDER:** If your business has more than 1 location, then you are required to apply for a GBL license for each location.
Navigation Menu TIP:

1. Notice that the navigation menu has changed to allow for navigation between pages in your GBL application.

2. Each item (i.e. application page) will be enabled (allow you to click on them) after you have successfully completed that page of your application process.

3. Return to Home – You may return to your GBL Home Page at any time. If you do, please remember to save your work before returning to your GBL Home Page, or your changes on the current page will be discarded (not saved).

4. Save & Exit
   
   At any time during your application entry process, you may click “Save & Exit” which will save information you have entered and allows you to retrieve it on the My Applications list to continue your work.

5. <<Back
   
   IMPORTANT: Please use this “BACK” button to navigate back and forth between GBL application pages instead of the “BACK” option on your browser (i.e. Internet Explorer).

6. Save & Continue >>
   
   After you have completed entering information on the current application page, click “Save & Continue” to navigate to the next page in the application, if applicable. Your work on this application will be saved automatically into your “My Applications” list.
8.2. **Select a location**

Your **business information** is listed in the top section:

- This information is retrieved from either information you provided during registration, or information you provided during your last successful GBL application submission.
- You may not change any of the business information on this page, but you will have the opportunity on the next page.

**Select Location** from the dropdown list then click “Save & Continue”:

- You may either select an existing location or add a “NEW” location:
  - If you select an **existing** location, the system will retrieve information that you provided during registration or from a previously submitted application.
  - If you select **add new** location, then the system will provide you with a blank entry form on the Contact & Site Information page to create a new location.
8.3. **Business Information**

Verify that the information displayed is accurate, and make the necessary modifications as needed, especially required information, then click “Next”:

- **Illinois Business Tax Number** – This is the only information that may not be changed.
8.4. **Contact and Business Site Information**

Information on this page will be displayed as follows, verify the accuracy of the information and make the necessary modifications as needed, especially required information, then click “Next”:

- If you selected **Add New Location** on the Select Location page, then the fields are left blank for you to fill in.
- If you selected a location that you have added previously, then the fields will be filled in with information from either your registration or the last time you submitted an application for this location. You may make any necessary changes as needed then click “Next”.

![Contact and Business Site Information screenshot]

You may search for your PIN at [http://www.cookcountyassessor.com](http://www.cookcountyassessor.com) with the following disclaimer:

Disclaimer: Search for "Property Index Numbers (PINs)" from addresses do not create an official determination of the property PIN for that street address and are to be used as a guide, subject to verification. By making this information available, the Cook County Assessor’s Office and Cook County assumes no obligation to assist the user in interpreting, browsing or using the data, metadata, maps or any application. All material appearing on the web site, any form of electronic transmission and printed hardcopy is provided and transmitted without warranty of any kind and are subject to the terms of this disclaimer.
8.5. Ownership Information

8.5.1. Overview

You will be required to provide ownership information based on the type of ownership you selected on the Business Information page.
8.5.2. Add owner

1. Add first owner with a major beneficial interest (more than 25%) then click Update Owner Information.
   a. If you have more owners to add, fill out information for each owner and click Update Owner Information to add owner.

2. Do not click “Save & Continue” until after you have added every owner as needed.

Add owner STEP: After you have entered in first owner info, click “Update Owner Information”.

Continue to next page STEP: Click “Save & Continue” only after you have verified that every owner has been added with accurate and current information.

Please provide information of owners with more than 25% beneficial interest in your business according to instructions.
8.5.3. Modify or Delete an added owner

After an owner is added, you have the ability to either update or delete owner information as follows:

1. To update, click the owner’s “Edit” link, then the system will display the owner’s detail information, modify information as needed, then click “Update Owner Information”:
2. Do not click “Save & Continue” until after you have verified that every owner has been added with accurate and current information.
### 8.6. Business Activities

For each question on this page, perform the following steps then click “Save & Continue”:

1. Review each question carefully then select your response.
2. If you answered “Yes” to question, then you are required to provide the appropriate registration number.

**REMEMBER:**

Sec. 54-390 Failure to comply-Code of Ordinances

(c) It shall be grounds for denial and/or revocation of any license issued under the provisions of this Ordinance whenever the license applicant knowingly includes false or incomplete information in the license application or is in violation of a County Ordinance.

---

**Business Activities**

Does your business engage in 1 or more of the following activities?

- Sell, distribute, or supply alcoholic beverages to retailers in Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your Alcoholic Beverages Tax registration number.
- Select

- Own, operate, or manage amusement parks or a place of amusement in Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your Amusement Tax registration number.
- Select

- Sell, distribute, or supply gasoline or diesel fuel to retailers in Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your Gas Tax registration number.
- Select

- Provide parking or valet parking services, for a fee or charge, to persons seeking to park a motor vehicle in Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your Parking Garage Tax registration number.
- Select

- Sell, supplying or bringing cigarettes and tobacco products into Cook County for resale in or outside Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your Wholesale Tobacco Tax registration number.
- Select

- Make retail sales of tangible personal property title or registered with an agency of the State of Illinois, at an address or location in Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your Use Tax Dealer registration number.
- Select

- Make retail sales of non-motor vehicles, at an address or location in Cook County?
- If your business is not registered, then click here for registration information.
- If you answered “Yes” then you MUST provide your New/Motor Vehicle registration number.
- Select

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**Revenue Online License Center**

General Business License
8.7. Building & Zoning

For each question on this page, perform the following steps then click “Save & Continue”:

1. Review each question carefully then select your response.
2. If you answered “Yes” to question, then you are required to provide the appropriate permit number.

REMEMBER:

Sec. 54-390 Failure to comply-Code of Ordinances

(c) It shall be grounds for denial and/or revocation of any license issued under the provisions of this Ordinance whenever the license applicant knowingly includes false or incomplete information in the license application or is in violation of a County Ordinance.
8.8. **Environmental Control**

For each question on this page, perform the following steps then click “Save & Continue”:

1. Review each question carefully then select your response.

**REMININDER:**

**Sec. 54 -390 Failure to comply-Code of Ordinances**

(c) It shall be grounds for denial and/or revocation of any license issued under the provisions of this Ordinance whenever the license applicant knowingly includes false or incomplete information in the license application or is in violation of a County Ordinance.
8.9. **Sheriff’s Office**

For each question on this page, perform the following steps then click “Save & Continue”:

1. Review each question carefully then select your response.
2. If you answered “Yes” to question, then you are required to provide additional information (i.e. permit number, owner)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REMINDER:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sec. 54-390 Failure to comply-Code of Ordinances</strong></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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![Image of Cook County - General Business License Online System Application User Guide](image-url)
8.10. **Public Health**

For each question on this page, perform the following steps then click “Save & Continue”:

1. Review each question carefully then select your response.

**REMINDER:**

**Sec. 54 -390 Failure to comply-Code of Ordinances**

(c) It shall be grounds for denial and/or revocation of any license issued under the provisions of this Ordinance whenever the license applicant knowingly includes false or incomplete information in the license application or is in violation of a County Ordinance.
8.11. Child Support

For each question on this page, perform the following steps then click “Save & Continue”:

1. Review each question carefully then select your response.

**REMEMBER:**

Sec. 54-390 Failure to comply-Code of Ordinances

(c) It shall be grounds for denial and/or revocation of any license issued under the provisions of this Ordinance whenever the license applicant knowingly includes false or incomplete information in the license application or is in violation of a County Ordinance.
8.12. **Application Summary**

Review the summary of your application carefully before you click “Next” to proceed to the next page. This is your last chance to modify any information before you address payment and submit your application.

- To modify information, click on the menu items in the Application Steps menu on the right.
8.13. **I Certify**

Modify Applicant’s Name as needed then click “Pay & Submit Application”.

The applicant is the person legally responsible for the veracity and accuracy of the application.
8.14. Payment

8.14.1. Overview

You may select any one of the following payment methods then “Save & Continue”:

- Online with a valid credit card (note that there is a $3.00 convenience fee for this service)
- By mail with check
- In person with check or cash

Please note the due date, the amount due if payment if received before the due date, and if the payment is received after the due date.
8.14.2. Online Credit Card

If you selected either by mail or in person option, then Payment Coupon page is displayed:

1. Click Print, to print out a copy of the Payment Coupon.
   - If paying by mail, then include this Payment Coupon with your payment.
   - If paying in person, then bring a copy of the Payment Coupon with you.

2. Click “Next” to submit your application.

Please NOTE:

- Your application will not be processed in a timely manner unless payment is received with a copy of the payment coupon.

8.14.3. By Mail by Check / In person by Cash or Check

If you selected either by mail or in person option, then Payment Coupon page is displayed:

1. Click Print, to print out a copy of the Payment Coupon.
   - If paying by mail, then include this Payment Coupon with your payment.
   - If paying in person, then bring a copy of the Payment Coupon with you.

2. Click “Next” to submit your application.

Please NOTE:

- Your application will not be processed in a timely manner unless payment is received with a copy of the payment coupon.
8.15. **Submit Application**

After you have either successfully made your payment online or selected an offline payment method, you may click “Submit Application” to submit your application for processing. However, please note that your license will not be issued until your payment is received in full.
8.16. Confirmation

The “Application Submission Confirmation” page is displayed after you have either successfully submitted your application.

Please check your email account for correspondences from the Cook County offices regarding this matter within the next 45 days.

Do remember to submit your payment either by mail or in person, if you chose not to pay online.

8.17. Confirmation Email

You will also receive a “Confirmation” email acknowledging receipt of your GBL application.

Please do NOT reply to this email.

You may contact us via email at gblinfo@cookcountyil.gov or by phone at 312-xxx-xxxx.
9. Check Application Status

9.1. Retrieve from My Application

You may check on the status of your application and view application details by clicking on the App ID link.