



CHECKLIST FOR STARTING A Bar in Delaware

**Subject to change/or have additional updates*

1.

CONTACT US

Reach out to the Delaware Division of Small Business. Get connected with your regional business manager.

2.

BUSINESS PLAN

Outline your concept, target market, and financial forecasts.

- Set Up Financials: Open a dedicated business bank account.
- Design the Space: Create an appealing bar environment.
- Marketing Plan: Develop a marketing strategy to attract patrons

3.

CHOOSE A LOCATION

Select a high-traffic area suitable for a bar. Connect with local municipality (City or Town) to learn more about the licenses, location fit out requirements and occupancy use.

4.

BUSINESS STRUCTURE & REGISTRATION

Decide on a legal structure (e.g., LLC, Corporation, Partnership) and register your business name with the Delaware Division of Corporations.

5.

SET UP FINANCIALS

Obtain a General (State) Business License from the Delaware Division of Revenue. This is required for any business operating in the state in addition to any local licenses and involves an annual fee.

6.

ALCOHOL LICENSE

Apply for a liquor license from the Office of the Delaware Alcoholic Beverage Control Commissioner (OABCC). This includes:

- Completing the application forms.
- Paying the applicable fees, which vary based on the type of license.
- Meeting specific requirements related to the location and zoning of your bar.
- Submitting to a criminal background check.

7.

ZONING & PERMITS

Check local zoning laws to ensure your chosen location is approved for operating a bar. Obtain any necessary zoning permits from the local government.

8.

HEALTH & SAFETY COMPLIANCE

Adhere to health and safety regulations, including food safety standards if you serve food. You may need to obtain permits from the Division of Public Health Office of Food Protection.

9.

FIRE SAFETY & BUILDING CODES

Ensure your establishment complies with fire safety regulations and building codes. This may involve inspections by local fire marshals.

10.

EMPLOYEE CONSIDERATIONS

Recruit bartenders and support staff.

- When hiring staff, comply with labor laws and register for employer taxes.

11.

INSURANCE

Obtain liability insurance and any other necessary coverage to protect your business.

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