

Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Licensing

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need a liquor license or a beer or wine permit in Johnson County?

You do need a license or a permit if you are going to:

- Sell or serve liquor at no charge for consumption on- or off-premises,
OR
- Sell beer or wine for consumption on- or off-premises,
OR
- Charge an admission fee to attend an event where you give away beer or wine for on-premises consumption.

You do not need a liquor license or a beer or wine permit if:

- You are not going to charge admission fee to attend an event where you give away beer or wine for on-premises consumption

How do I fill out the online application with the Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division?

While most of the information on the online application is self-explanatory, it can be a little more confusing if you are hosting an event at which you will be serving or selling liquor. Below are some guidelines to follow for certain portions of the application. Follow these guidelines to limit errors.

Premises page: Business Information:

- **Name of Legal Entity:** Fill in your name, or the name of your business.
- **Name of Business (DBA):** If for a wedding reception, fill in your last name and Wedding, e.g.: Jones Wedding or Jones & Smith Wedding; if for other event, fill in the event name.
- **How Business will operate:** The applicants of private events usually select sole proprietorship, and they are also listed as the owner on the Ownership page. If in doubt, contact the Iowa ABD for more information.

Premises page: Premises Information:

- **Address of Premises:** enter address where selling/serving alcohol:
 1. If at The Celebration **Farm**: fill in 4696 Robin Woods Lane NE;
 2. If at Celebration **Barn**: fill in 4045 245th Street NE;
 3. If at JC Fairgrounds: fill in 4261 Oak Crest Hill Road SE;
 4. If other location, fill in the address where selling/serving alcohol.
- **Premises City:** Premises city
- **Premises County:** Johnson
- **Zip:** Premises zip code
- **Business phone number:** Your phone number
- **Mailing address:** Your mailing address
- **Local Authority:** County of Johnson
- **Control of Premises:** For most special events, the applicant will check "Other" and explain: "renting the premises for one-time special event"
- **Premises type:** Special event

Ownership page:

The owner *must be a resident* of the state of Iowa, and is considered an owner if they have an interest of 10% or more of in business. If more than one owner, indicate the percentage each owner holds.

Criminal History / Violations page:

If you have ever been charged, arrested, indicted, convicted, or received a deferred judgement, check "yes" no matter how far in the past the incident occurred, and provide an explanation. The Iowa ABD conducts background checks to verify this information.

What if I am going to sell or serve alcohol at a special event in rural Johnson County?

- Step 1. If the event is not located on property zoned for commercial use, immediately contact the Johnson County [Planning, Development, and Sustainability \(PDS\) Department](#) to determine if you will need a conditional use permit for the event. PDS staff can be reached at 319-356-6083, 8:00-4:30 Monday through Friday. If required, complete a [conditional use permit application](#) as soon as possible.
- Step 2. Start your application with Iowa Alcoholic Beverages Division at least 45 days before the license effective date. [How to Get a License](#) [License Classifications](#) [Fee schedule](#)
- If you currently own a business within Johnson County, and would like to transfer services for the day, follow instructions in the [Electronic Licensing User Guide](#) or contact the Auditor's Office.
 - If you currently own a business in the State, and would like to serve in the County's jurisdiction while continuing to serve at your current location, you must apply for a new, 5-day temporary license.
 - If the license is for a RAGBRAI associated event, revisit this information in the spring.
- Step 3. Start the Local Authority Process at least 30 days before the license effective date by submitting the below items to the Johnson County Auditor's Office:
1. A black and white sketch of the licensed premises on 8.5 x 11" paper to the Auditor's Office. The drawing must include the premise address, cardinal directions, location of interior and, if applicable, exterior/outdoor selling and serving area(s) within the boundaries of the licensed premises, restrooms, entrances and exits, measurements of the licensed premises and distances between selling and serving area;
 2. A copy of either the Warranty Deed, lease document, or rental agreement for the property to be covered by the license (must specify the address); **or** A document signed by the contracting party stating that you have been retained to provide alcohol beverage services for an event at that premises, (must specify the event premises address);
 3. The Original signed Report Accompanying Application form, and
 4. The Original signed Notarized Signature form of the applicant.

Once the license is endorsed and activated, the Iowa ABD will email the license to you.

*If you have further questions about the licensing process or a specific application,
contact the Auditor's Office at 319-356-6004.*