



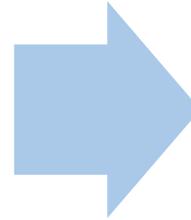
Department of Excise and Licenses Proposed Charter Change

July 16, 2025

What are we proposing?

EXL

Department of Excise
and Licenses



DLCP

Department of
Licensing and
Consumer Protection

What our Department does and doesn't do

We offer over **100 different types** of business and individual licenses

We administer over **50,000 active licenses** annually

Our mission

- Our mission is to protect the public through the regulation of businesses

How we achieve our mission

- We **issue licenses** to businesses and individuals
- We **educate licensees** on the importance of **compliance** with licensing regulations
- We **correct non-compliance** to hold licensees **accountable** and create **confidence** in regulated businesses

What we don't do...

- We don't impose, collect, or regulate **excise taxes** or taxes of any kind (our friends in **Finance** do this!)
- We don't regulate or oversee **exercise** (talk to **Parks & Recreation** if you're looking to break a sweat!)

Why change the name of the Department?



“The main purpose of licensing...is not to generate money but to protect the health, safety, and well-being of the people of Denver.”
-Susan Duncan, former EXL Director, 1990

Denver's History of Excise and Licensing Duties

1904

Denver Municipal Facts

How Denver's Fire and Police Board Performs Its Varied Duties



- Denverites approved Denver's first home rule charter on March 29, 1904.
- Licensing was handled by the **Fire and Police Board**, composed of three commissioners:
 - A fire commissioner
 - A police commissioner
 - An excise commissioner

1912-1916

Excise Department of the Denver City Government



- From 1912 to 1916, Denver adopted a Commission form of government.
- During this time, the **Excise Department** was comprised of three members, including the **Commissioner of Finance**, who oversaw the Department.

1916



- The Speer Amendment ended the era of Commission-style government and ushered in the local government structure we have today.
- One of the Mayor's four cabinet members was the **Manager of Safety and Excise**, who was responsible for all licensing and safety duties.

1971

HEAVILY LOADED JOB

Safety and Excise Separation Pushed

figured in. And Canjar, who became manager when Koch resigned on June 1, 1970, says he simply doesn't have time to handle the duties of safety manager because of the great number of liquor license hearings that come before him.

- Denverites approved several charter amendments in a special election on October 27, 1971.
- One of these split the Department of Safety and Excise into two departments:
 - The Department of Safety
 - **The Department of Excise and Licenses**

Since 1972



- The Department of Excise and Licenses continues to issue business and individual licenses
- Handling of excise taxes has been a DOF duty
- New licenses added in the last decade include marijuana, rentals (residential & short-term), tobacco, massage, and natural medicine.

From 1914: "One of the most important departments of the city government is the Excise Department, which... issues all licenses granted by the City and County of Denver."

Consumer Protection Examples in Licensing

All licenses can be denied if not in compliance with any applicable state or local law or rule, or if the applicant provides fraudulent, misrepresented, or false statements on their application.

Retail Food



Licensing includes a public health inspection to ensure retail food establishments are following food safety protocols designed to prevent illness

Parking Lots



Licensing ensures that customers who park in paid lots can expect that their vehicle and belongings are protected from theft and damage

Residential Rentals



Licensing helps give renters protection and recourse when landlords don't maintain properties in line with Denver's housing standards

Short-term Rentals



Licensing helps protect Denver hosts and residents from displacement and protects the fabric and character of Denver's neighborhoods

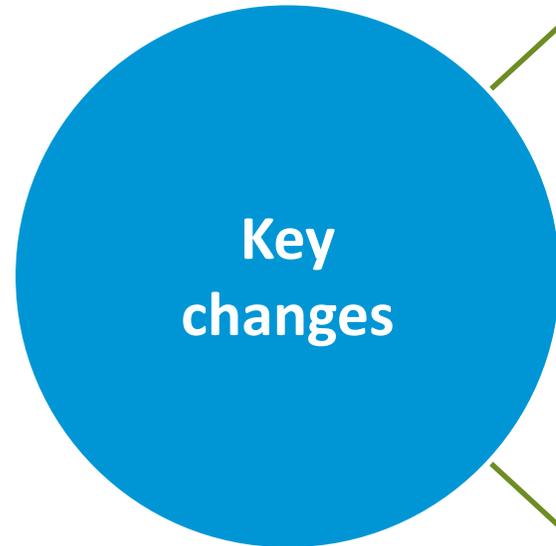
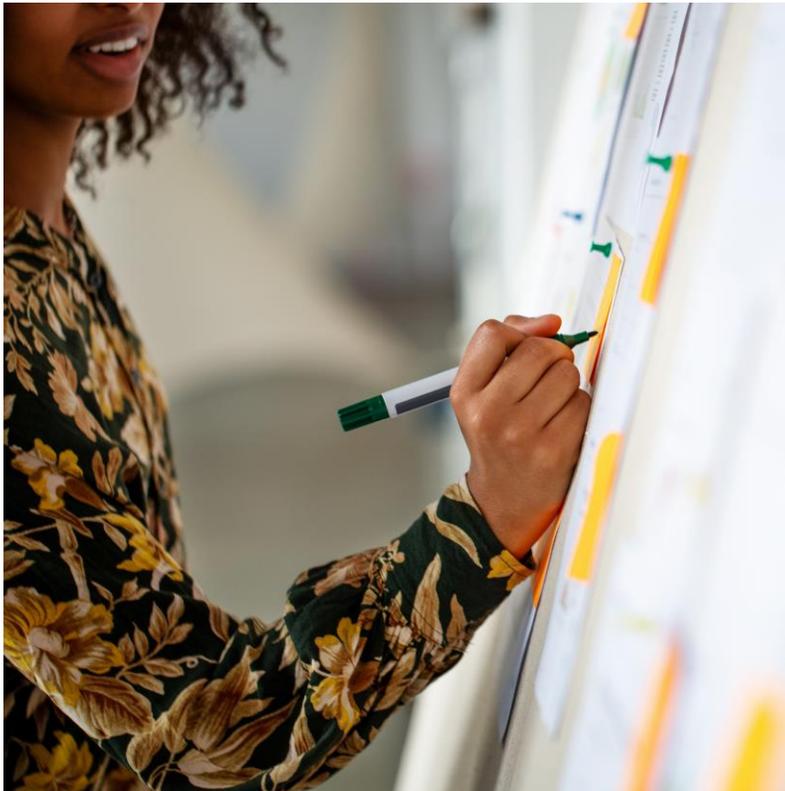
Security Guards



Licensing ensures patrons at locations protected by security guards who have been background checked and trained

*From 1909: "In brief, this body must consider complaints filed against all the many classes of business and individuals licensed by the board, and a reference to the list heretofore set out will show that **the work involved is necessarily almost endless.**"*

Proposed Charter Language Changes



Update all references to Department name and Executive Director

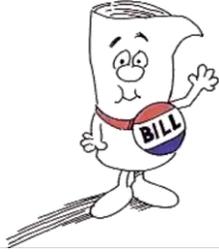
- Deletion of “Excise and Licenses” throughout and replace with “Licensing and Consumer Protection”
- Use the term “Manager” instead of “Director”, consistent with other charter agencies

Update with simplifying language

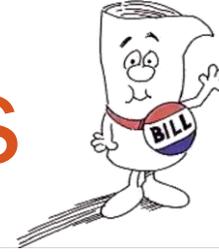
- Remove reference to excise taxes in this section of the Charter
- Use simpler language that’s easier to read throughout these Charter provisions

Clarify the Department is in the Mayor’s Cabinet

- All department inspectors are under the control of the Mayor in the cabinet
- Oddly, the department head is the only head of a charter agency not listed as being in the Cabinet



One Proposal, Two Bills



Council Bill 25-1002

- *For an ordinance submitting to a vote of the qualified and registered electors of the City and County of Denver at the special municipal election on November 4, 2025, a proposed amendment to the Charter of the City and County of Denver renaming the Department of Excise and Licenses to the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection and making conforming amendments in connection therewith.*
- **Council approval of this bill now places the name change proposal on the November ballot.**

Council Bill 25-1003

- *For an ordinance amending the Revised Municipal Code to reflect the Charter amendment changing the name of the Department of Excise and Licenses to the Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection.*
- **Council approval of this bill now ensures that the references in code can be updated automatically if voters approve the name change proposal.**

Both bills are being considered as action items today so the public can see everything we're proposing ahead of Election Day.

Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection

Mission: Protect the public interest by serving our community through the regulation of business

License and regulate businesses

Ensure specific businesses, professionals and industries comply with laws and regulations.

Investigate complaints

Assist residents with disputes, concerns and allegations involving local businesses.

Educate the public

Provide information and resources to help consumers make informed decisions and address unsafe or unfair business practices.

Enforce license requirements

Take action against a business or individual who is violating the laws required to maintain licensure.

Advocate for consumers

Address specific community needs and regulator concerns through development of legislation or policy to adapt to challenges emerging in the marketplace.

Consumer Protection Complaint Intake Portal

Improved Complaint Portal

Processes and Referrals

Continuous Improvement

Submit a complaint

Consumers are urged to submit complaints for investigation and follow-up.

The Consumer Protection Section does not guarantee resolution of complaints.



Some things Consumer Protection Section may be able to help with +

Some things Consumer Protection Section cannot assist with +

Submit a consumer complaint form >

Consumer Protection Complaint

Please select your language.

Select Language

Powered by Google Translate

Use this form to submit complaints related to a business, transaction, or interaction with an establishment in the City and County of Denver. Complaints related to businesses or interactions outside of Denver may be referred to another agency and cannot be resolved by Excise and Licenses. For housing code violations, submit complaints to phicomments@denvergov.org.

If you are facing urgently unsafe conditions, call Denver Police Non-Emergency at (720) 913-2000. If you're having an emergency, please call 9-1-1.

For complaints about an unlicensed rental property, fill out the form here: [tenant complaint form](#)

Some things our office cannot assist you with include:

- Complaints about rideshare services or e-scooters
- Complaints between neighbors or other civil or private agreements
- Legal or business advice
- Bank or financial issues including recovering fraudulent costs or charges
- Small claims matters
- Criminal activity not related to a licensed business

If you are not sure, submit a complaint for review.

If additional information is needed, you will be contacted using the contact information submitted.

Next Page

Stay informed

Sign up for the consumer protection bulletin

Timeline and next steps

Q1 2025

Launched our improved complaint intake portal

July 2025

City Council Process
7/21 First Reading
7/28 Second Reading

2026

Companion Bill effective
Implementation
(website, licensing software, signage, etc.)

Q2 2025

Drafted proposed charter change and companion ordinance changes

November 2025

Election Process
Charter change on ballot
(November 4)





Questions?

licenses@denvergov.org