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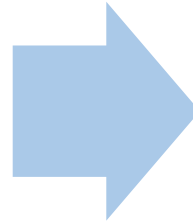
# Department of Excise and Licenses Proposed Charter Change

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

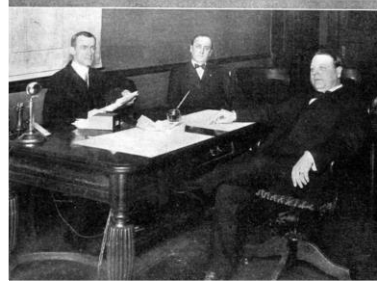
*How Denver's Fire and Police Board Performs Its Varied Duties*



- 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

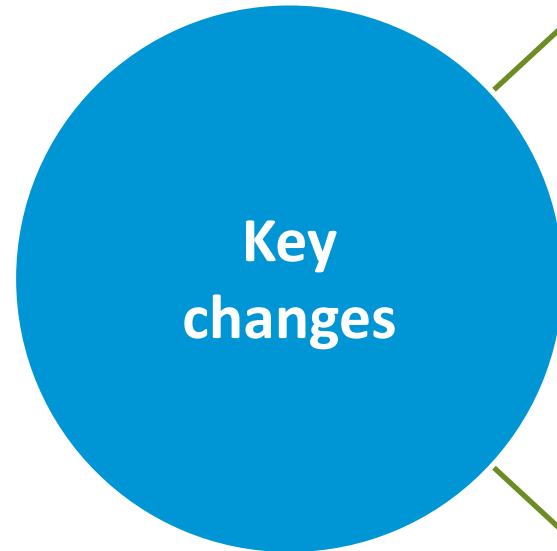


Licensing ensures patrons at locations protected by security guards who have been background checked and trained

*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**

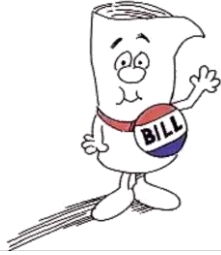
- Deletion of “Excise and Licenses” throughout and replace with “Licensing and Consumer Protection”
- Use the term “Manager” instead of “Director”, consistent with other charter agencies

**Update with simplifying language**

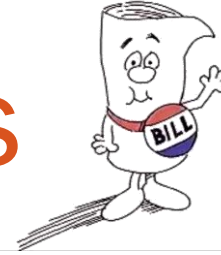
- Remove reference to excise taxes in this section of the Charter
- Use simpler language that’s easier to read throughout these Charter provisions

**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 [phicommments@denvergov.org](mailto:phicommments@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.

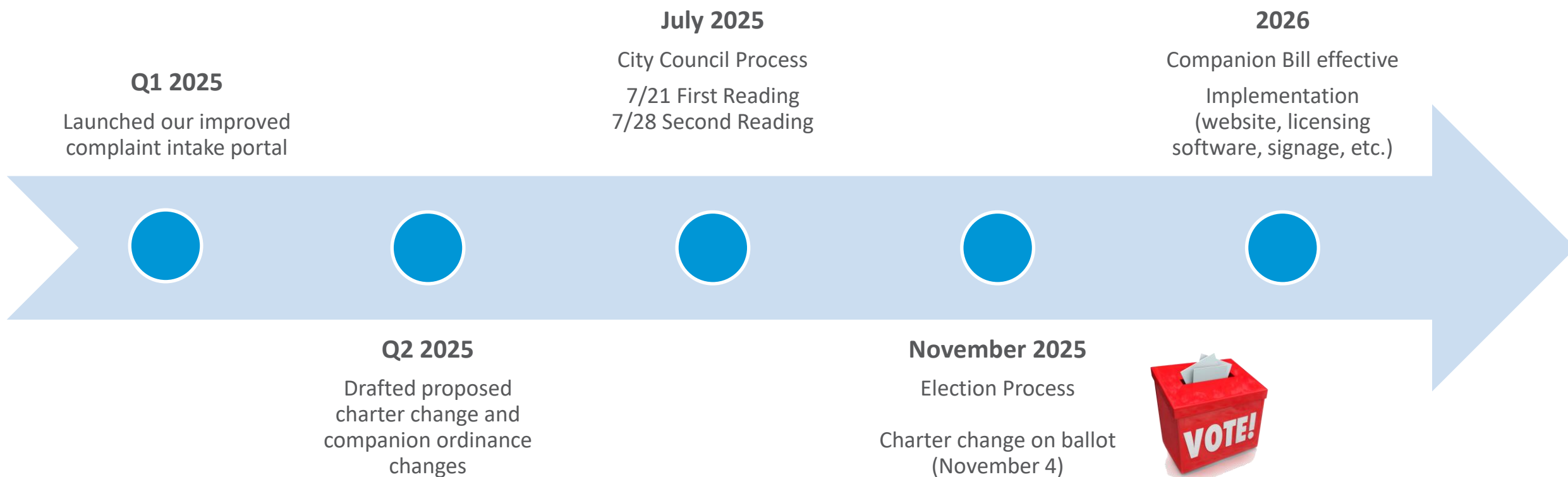
If additional information is needed, you will be contacted using the contact information submitted.

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## Stay informed

Sign up for the consumer protection bulletin

# Timeline and next steps





# Questions?

[licenses@denvergov.org](mailto:licenses@denvergov.org)