START A BUSINESS - MASSACHUSETTS

How to start a mobile mechanic business in Massachusetts

Form the business, register for sales tax and list parts separately; damage repair needs Division of Standards registration.

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1 Is mobile repair right for you?

Mobile mechanics fix cars at customers' homes and workplaces. It suits experienced technicians who want lower overhead than a shop.

2 Form the business and register for sales tax

1. Choose a structure. LLCs file a Certificate of Organization with the Secretary of the Commonwealth ($500) and exist once it is approved. Sole proprietors and partnerships using a trade name file a business certificate with the city or town clerk.
2. Register with the Department of Revenue before you sell taxable goods such as parts. Massachusetts sales tax is 6.25%.

3 Licenses

We found no Massachusetts license for mobile mechanical repair and maintenance. If you repair damaged vehicles for pay, you must register with the Division of Standards ($450 every 3 years, $10,000 bond). Paid A/C work needs EPA Section 609 certification.

4 Sales tax on repairs

Massachusetts treats repair as a service. When the parts and materials are worth 10% or more of the bill, tax (6.25%) applies to the whole charge unless you list the parts price separately; then only the parts are taxed, not the labor. Supplies you use up, like tape and sandpaper, are taxed when you buy them.

5 Your first steps

1. Form the business and register for sales tax.
2. Set up invoices that list parts separately.
3. Buy insurance and tools.
4. List your business on Nearby Car Care

Requirements at a glance

Form the business (Secretary of the Commonwealth or city or town clerk)

Required - State - Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth; your city or town clerk

LLCs file a Certificate of Organization with the Secretary of the Commonwealth and exist only once it is approved. Sole proprietors and partnerships using a trade name file a business certificate with the city or town clerk, which the RMV and DPU ask for.
Fees: LLC Certificate of Organization: $500.

Register for sales tax with the Department of Revenue

Required - State - Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Massachusetts sales tax is 6.25% of the sales price of taxable goods. Register with the Department of Revenue before you sell taxable items such as parts.

Sales tax on parts; state parts separately

Required - State - Massachusetts Department of Revenue

Massachusetts treats auto repair as a service. When the parts and materials you transfer are worth 10% or more of the bill, sales tax (6.25%) applies to the whole charge unless you state the price of the parts separately; then only the parts are taxed, not the labor. Items you use up (tape, sandpaper, brushes) are taxable when you buy them.

Division of Standards registration if you repair damage

Required in some cases - State - Massachusetts Division of Standards

Repairing damaged vehicles for compensation requires Division of Standards registration with a $10,000 bond.
We found no Massachusetts license for mobile mechanical repair and maintenance.
Fees: $450 every 3 years.

EPA Section 609 certification for air conditioning work

Required in some cases - Federal - U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

Required to repair or service motor vehicle air conditioning systems for payment or bartering.

Official agencies and links

Section 609 Technician Training and Certification Programs
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
https://www.epa.gov/mvac/section-609-technician-training-and-certification-programs

Letter Ruling 96-4: Automobile Re-painting
Massachusetts Department of Revenue
https://www.mass.gov/letter-ruling/letter-ruling-96-4-automobile-re-painting

Sales and Use Tax
Massachusetts Department of Revenue
https://www.mass.gov/guides/sales-and-use-tax

Apply for a NEW Auto Repair Shop License
Massachusetts Division of Standards
https://www.mass.gov/how-to/apply-for-a-new-auto-repair-shop-license

Starting a limited liability company (LLC) in Massachusetts
Massachusetts Secretary of the Commonwealth, Corporations Division (Mass.gov)
https://www.mass.gov/info-details/starting-a-limited-liability-company-llc-in-massachusetts

Frequently asked questions

Do mobile mechanics need a license in Massachusetts?

We found no state license for mobile mechanical repair; damage repair requires Division of Standards registration.

This guide is general information, not legal advice. Rules change and can depend on your city or county, so confirm with the official agencies linked below before you apply.