START A BUSINESS - IDAHO

How to start a towing company in Idaho

We found no general Idaho State tow company license; private property tows need posted signs, ISP rotation requires fingerprint checks, and cities such as Boise license non-consent towing.

Sources verified 2026-11-21 - Updated 2026-11-21

1 Is towing right for you?

Towing companies move disabled, damaged and illegally parked vehicles and answer police and motor club calls. It suits owners who can run a 24 hour operation and keep trucks and drivers on the road.

2 Form the business and get a seller's permit

1. Choose a structure. LLCs and corporations file with the Idaho Secretary of State.
2. Get an Idaho seller's permit from the State Tax Commission and collect sales tax on parts and goods.
3. Check your city or county for business licenses and zoning.

3 Licenses

We found no Idaho State license for towing companies. Check your city or county for business licenses and zoning.

4 Sales tax

Parts are taxable; separately listed repair labor is not. Ask the Tax Commission how your towing and storage charges are treated.

5 Private property tows and rotation lists

Private property tows need a conspicuous sign naming your towing firm, or a signed release for abandoned vehicles on non-commercial property. To get Idaho State Police calls, owners, drivers and operators pass fingerprint background checks. Local tow lists publish their own qualifications.

6 Your first steps

1. Form the business and get a seller's permit.
2. Get local business licenses and check zoning.
3. Buy insurance and equipment.
4. List your business on Nearby Car Care

Requirements at a glance

Sales tax on parts; ask about towing charges

Required in some cases - State - Idaho State Tax Commission

Parts are taxable; separately listed repair labor is not. Ask the Tax Commission how your towing and storage charges are treated.

Private property tow rules and the ISP authorized tow list

Required - State - Idaho State Police; your city or county

We found no general Idaho State tow company license. Private property tows need a conspicuous sign naming your firm (or a signed release for abandoned vehicles on non-commercial property). To get Idaho State Police calls, owners, drivers and operators pass fingerprint background checks for the ISP authorized tow list. Cities such as Boise license non-consent tow companies; check local rules.

Official application: https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/statutesrules/idstat/Title49/T49CH18.pdf

Name and USDOT number on trucks

Required in some cases - Federal - Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration

Commercial motor vehicles subject to the federal rules show the carrier's name and USDOT number on both sides, readable from 50 feet in daylight (49 CFR 390.21).

Official agencies and links

49 CFR 390.21, Marking of self-propelled CMVs and intermodal equipment
Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (eCFR)
https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-49/subtitle-B/chapter-III/subchapter-B/part-390/subpart-B/section-390.21

Idaho Code Title 49, Chapter 18: Abandoned and Unauthorized Vehicles, Towing
Idaho Legislature
https://legislature.idaho.gov/wp-content/uploads/statutesrules/idstat/Title49/T49CH18.pdf

Repair Shops (sales and use tax guide)
Idaho State Tax Commission
https://tax.idaho.gov/taxes/sales-use/guides-for-certain-groups/repair-shops/

Frequently asked questions

Does Idaho license tow companies?
We found no general state license. The Idaho State Police keep an authorized tow list with background checks, and some cities license non-consent towing.

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.

https://nearbycarcare.com/resources/business/start-towing-company/idaho/