LICENSES, PERMITS & CERTIFICATIONS - DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

DC car dealer licenses, bonds and permits

What DC requires of these businesses: registration, tax, licenses and the official links to check.

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

1 The rules at a glance

- DC sales tax registration and Clean Hands (repairs taxable, labor included)
- DLCP motor vehicle dealer license
- $25,000 bond
- Separate DC DMV dealer registration
- Salesperson licenses

Requirements at a glance

DC sales tax registration

Required - State - DC Office of Tax and Revenue

Register with the Office of Tax and Revenue and collect DC sales tax on taxable sales and services. A Clean Hands certification is part of DC business licensing.

Register your business entity with DLCP's Corporations Division first. Fees not verified here.

Official application: https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/47-2001

DLCP motor vehicle dealer license and DMV dealer registration

Required - State - DC Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection; DC DMV

Dealers need a DLCP motor vehicle dealer license (certificate of occupancy, police criminal history report, salesperson designation letter, sample bill of sale, tax registration and Clean Hands certification) and a separate DC DMV dealer registration. Salespeople need a DLCP salesperson license.

Official application: https://dlcp.dc.gov/node/1618866

Dealer surety bond ($25,000)

Required - State - DC Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection

Keep a $25,000 motor vehicle dealer bond (surety or cash) for the two-year license period (D.C. Code 50-603).

Amount: $25,000

Official agencies and links

D.C. Code 47-2001, Sales tax definitions (retail sales of services)

Council of the District of Columbia

https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/code/sections/47-2001

Motor Vehicle Dealer business license

DC Department of Licensing and Consumer Protection

https://dlcp.dc.gov/node/1618866

Frequently asked questions

How much is the DC dealer bond?

$25,000.

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.