

Federal Explosives Licenses and Permits

If you intend to engage in the business of importing (for sale or distribution or for personal business use) explosive materials, manufacturing (bringing into the United States for sale or distribution) explosive materials or dealing (distributing at wholesale or retail) in explosive materials, you must first apply for and obtain a federal explosives license (FEL) from ATF.

If you do not intend to engage in the business of importing, manufacturing, or distributing explosive materials, but do intend to acquire and use explosive materials for lawful purposes, you must first apply for and obtain either a federal explosives user permit or federal explosives limited permit (FEP) from ATF.

ATF's Federal Explosives Licensing Center (FELC) reviews and acts upon applications for FEL/FEPs, coordinates applicant inspections with the appropriate ATF field offices, performs background checks on all responsible persons and employee possessors, and issues letters of clearance or denial.

Permits vs. Licenses

Explosives Activity	Explosives License or Permit Required	Duration of License or Permit	Application Fee	Renewal Fee
Importing	Importers License	3 years	\$200	\$100
Manufacturing	Manufacturers License	3 years	\$200	\$100
Distribution/Sales at wholesale or retail	Dealers License	3 years	\$200	\$100
Acquisition of explosive materials for own use from a licensee or permittee in a State other than the State in which the permittee resides, or from a foreign country. Allows the transportation of explosives in interstate or foreign commerce.	User Permit	3 years	\$100	\$50
Receipt of explosive materials on no more than 6 separate occasions only from in-state licensees or permittees. Only allows the intrastate shipment or transportation of explosive materials.	Limited Permit	12 months	\$25	\$12

Note: The chart is for information purposes only, certain exceptions and conditions may apply.

The difference between an explosives license and an explosives permit is that a permit **does not** authorize a person to engage in the business of importing, manufacturing, or distributing explosives materials. A permit

allows the permittee to acquire, use and transport explosive materials for lawful purposes and as allowed by the type of permit obtained.

Application Process

Once you've determined the license or permit you need, follow the instructions to [apply for an explosives license or permit](#). Be sure to include the correct application fee which you can pay by check, credit card or money order.

The Federal Explosives Licensing Center will approve or deny a **properly completed application** within 90 days from the date of its receipt; however, there are factors that could affect this time estimate. Check our [current processing times](#) for ATF applications and eForms. You can contact us at [1-866-662-2750](tel:1-866-662-2750) or by email at FELC@atf.gov for more information about your application.

For additional information on federal explosive licenses/permits, please visit [ATF Explosives Questions & Answers](#).

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