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## Opening a Private Career School (PCS)

# FAQ

### Office of Academic Policy and Authorization, Private Postsecondary Education

The [Office of Academic Policy and Authorization](#), private postsecondary division has two units: the Office of Degree Authorization (ODA), which authorizes degree-granting private post-secondary institutions offering academic programs in Oregon, or to Oregon students from outside the state, and the Private Career School Licensing Unit (PCS), which licenses private career schools.

## Does Private Career School Licensure Apply to Me?

### ➤ Do I need a Private Career School License?

- Possibly, as in Definitions for [ORS 345.010](#) to [345.450](#) and [345.992](#) to [345.997](#), [ORS 345.010](#) (3) a *“Career school or ‘school’ means any private proprietary professional, technical, home study, correspondence, business or other school instruction, organization or person that offers any instruction or training for the purpose or purported purpose of instructing, training or preparing persons for any profession.*

Basically, any business that offers a training program, including online education, that prepares an individual to enter occupations in the State of Oregon must first apply for a private career school license with the Higher Education Coordinating Commission (HECC). Solicitations, advertising, and instruction to students in Oregon may not occur until that license has been approved.

If you have questions about licensure or if you would like an application packet, please visit our website, [CLICK HERE](#), email: [info.pps@hecc.oregon.gov](mailto:info.pps@hecc.oregon.gov) or call 503-947-5716.

The HECC does not license continuing education programs.

### ➤ What if my school offers degree programs, would I need to apply for a PCS license?

- No. If your school offers degree programs, you will be required to connect with the HECC – Office of Degree of Authorization (ODA) at [info.pps@hecc.oregon.gov](mailto:info.pps@hecc.oregon.gov) or by calling 503-947-5716.

### ➤ If I provide a certificate only programs, am I required to obtain a private career school license?

- Possibly, you will need to review the following statute [ORS 345.015](#) to determine if private career school license is needed to operate in Oregon.

### ➤ What if I am an out-of-state school, will I need to obtain a PCS career school license?

- Possibly, please review both [ORS 345.015](#) and [OAR 715-045-0006\(13\)](#) to determine if your school has a physical presence in Oregon and requires licensure.

### ➤ Can I receive an exemption from PCS school licensure?

- That depends. If you believe you do not meet the requirements for PCS school licensure, you can contact Matthew Altman at the following email: [Matthew.ALTMAN@hecc.oregon.gov](mailto:Matthew.ALTMAN@hecc.oregon.gov) to submit a PCS licensure exemption request.



- What entities can license as a Private Career School?
  - We allow most legal entities to own and operate a private career school, as long as your entity can be registered with the Oregon Secretary of State. Sole proprietorship is acceptable.
- Is my curriculum regulated by another Oregon state agency?
  - Possibly, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact the applicable state agency that may regulate the curricular content for their profession.

## How do I get started to open a Private Career School?

- I need to obtain a private career school license, what are my next steps?
  - Contact the Higher Education Coordinating Commission at [info.pps@hecc.oregon.gov](mailto:info.pps@hecc.oregon.gov) or call 503-947-5716 for a New School Application Packet.
- What is recommended to prepare before starting the new school application process?
  - It is recommended that the applicant assemble a support team for advice on business planning and financial management, academic design and curricular mapping, and the development of appropriate policies pertaining to student rights and responsibilities, staff and the legal framework which will guide the operations of the school.
  - We strongly encourage new school applicants to become familiar with Oregon laws and administrative rules that govern Private Career Schools, as well as the pertinent laws and rules that govern the professions for which students will be trained for by the school.
  - Please refer to the [New School Interview Guide](#) for applicable Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR).
- What are some of the key steps PRIOR TO submitting an application for a Private Career School?
  - Refer to the [Guide to Opening/Licensing a Private Career School](#) for key steps in preparing your application and documentation for submission.
- Where can I obtain a new school application form?
  - Contact HECC staff at [infoPPS@HECC.Oregon.gov](mailto:infoPPS@HECC.Oregon.gov) or call 503-947-5716 for an Initial Application Packet to be emailed or mailed to you.
  - Once you have compiled your initial information, scan and submit your packet to [infoPPS@HECC.Oregon.gov](mailto:infoPPS@HECC.Oregon.gov). One of our staff will review your information and will contact you by email to discuss your submission and to set up an initial interview.
- What is in the new school application?
  - Our new school application is an comprehensive eight-step process. Each step has a specific purpose. Details can be found at the top of Page 3 below, and in our informative online [Webinar](#).
- What is the process AFTER submitting an application to open a new private career school?
  - We must receive your new school application AND **new school license fee** to begin the process. The licensure process usually takes approximately 6 months, but could take additional time. It depends on how well prepared your information is, your timely submission of all steps and fees, how much assistance you require from us. You will be sent the next Step Packet after your previous packet is reviewed and approved. We ask that you review the rules and laws that pertain to each Step Packet as you receive them and complete and return each of the 8 steps with **ALL** documentation requested.

- What are the Steps in the new school application?
  - ❖ **Step 1:** Initial application/business plan/fee
  - ❖ **Step 2:** Curriculum/Advisory Committee
  - ❖ **Step 3:** Admission and enrollment requirements
  - ❖ **Step 4:** Student files and recordkeeping
  - ❖ **Step 5:** School Catalog
  - ❖ **Step 6:** Course Syllabus
  - ❖ **Step 7:** Personnel Policies
  - ❖ **Step 8:** Business Structure
- What are the HECC licensing fees of opening a Private Career School?
  - The new school licensing fee to the HECC is in Oregon Administrative Rule. OAR [715-045-0007](#). There is also an amount for the Initial Capitalization for the Tuition Protection Fund which is also based in rules (OAR [715-045-0029](#)), and is dependent upon your projected gross tuition.
- What are the operating costs of opening a Private Career School?
  - You may need to gather a team to help you evaluate the actual costs of opening and operating a school.

## What laws or information should I know before I start the process to open a new Private Career School?

- **What are the laws and administrative rules that govern private career schools in Oregon?**
  - Oregon laws governing Private Career Schools are under [ORS 345.010](#) to ORS 345.997. Oregon Administrative Rules (OARs) governing Private Career Schools in Oregon are under OAR [715-045-0001](#) to OAR 715-045-0220. OAR [715-045-0006](#) outlines new school application requirements.
- **Am I required to obtain comprehensive liability insurance when I start to operate my new private career school?**
  - Yes, in most cases the school is required to obtain comprehensive liability insurance unless your school is under administrative rules established specifically for psilocybin new school applicants. If a psilocybin school cannot obtain liability insurance, they will need to submit additional Tuition Protection Fund (TPF) payments.
- **What is a Tuition Protection Fund and is it required to be paid by the new school applicant?**
  - Yes, the new school applicant will need to plan on paying an initial capitalization payment for the student tuition protection fund plan required by ORS 345.017 and ORS 345.110 (see also OAR 715-045-0029). The purpose of the plan is established to protect students if a private career school cease to provide educational services. The TPF initial capitalization deposit is determined by the school's projected gross tuition income.