

## HOW TO APPLY FOR A LICENSE

Private investigation and security services providers in Ohio are required by law to obtain a license from the Ohio Department of Public Safety (ODPS). There are three types of licenses:

- Class A – Private Investigation & Security Services
- Class B – Private Investigation
- Class C – Security Services

During the licensing process, the state verifies the company is insured and operated by a Qualifying Agent (QA) with the required professional experience, and that the QA has undergone a criminal background check.

**Until approved by PISGS, a company cannot work, advertise or solicit business in Ohio.**

When applying for a license, refer to the [License Application User Guide](#).

### Step 1

You will need online access with Private Investigator Security Guard Services (PISGS) to complete the license application. Click [HERE](#) to request online access.

### Step 2

Gather the required documentation for the company and Qualifying Agent:

#### Company Requirements

- Complete online license application, submit with \$375 payment.
- Certificate from [Ohio Secretary of State](#) affirming the company is registered. (If registered more than six months prior, a certificate of good standing letter is required.)
- If using a trade name, Certificate from Ohio Secretary of State indicating trade name.
- Insurance Acord for Comprehensive General Liability: Must be for at least \$100,000 each occurrence, \$300,000 general aggregate and must list DPS, PISGS Unit, PO Box 182001, Columbus, OH 43218 as certificate holder (proof of insurance not required at time of application, but must be received prior to license being issued). Click [HERE](#) to see a sample insurance acord.

#### Qualifying Agent (QA) Requirements:

- Complete online QA application, submit with \$30 payment.
- 2 x 2 photo (passport style) of head and shoulders. Click [HERE](#) for more information and tips on taking the photo.
- Five character reference letters from people (not relatives) who have known you more than five years. Letter must state in what capacity they know you (friend, work, church, etc.), and must be signed and dated within last three months.
- Verification of Experience (VOE)  
**CLASS A** — Work full-time in security and investigation, in the two years prior to applying for a

license. Past law enforcement and military experience, as well as relevant college degree, also may count toward the required work experience.

**CLASS B** — Work full-time in investigation, in the two years prior to applying for a license. Past law enforcement and military experience, as well as relevant college degree, also may count toward the required work experience.

**CLASS C** — Work full-time in security, in the two years prior to applying for a license. Past law enforcement and military experience, as well as relevant college degree, also may count toward the required work experience.

*Military experience* in related field (military police) — provide DD 214 or current work orders.

*College degree* must be at least an associate in criminal justice or law enforcement — provide diploma or college transcript.

*Attorney* — if you are an attorney, and want your practice of law to count toward the required experience, provide a letter of good standing from the State Supreme Court (must have been practicing for minimum of two years).

- Reciprocity — there is no reciprocity for licenses held in other states. When applying for a license, you must provide copy of licenses from states where currently licensed along with letter of good standing from applicable state licensing boards.
- BCI fingerprint results — must not be older than 30 days from date application is submitted and sent DIRECT COPY to PISGS. When sending an employee to be fingerprinted, we recommend the take this [instruction sheet](#) to ensure proper delivery of results. You can locate a WebCheck facility on the [Ohio Attorney General](#) website.

#### **A QA who wants to carry a firearm, must:**

- Complete online Firearm Bearer (FAB) application, submit with \$15 payment.
- OPOTA Firearm Training Certificate (for non-peace officer).
- Ohio Peace Officer's Basic Training Certificate AND most current re-qualification score sheet (for peace officers).
- FBI fingerprint results – must not be older than 30 days from date application is submitted and sent DIRECT COPY to PISGS.

## Step 4

After submitting your online application with all required documentation, and the paperwork has been approved, the QA will be scheduled for the examination based on ORC 4749 and OAC 4501:7 (click [HERE](#) for PISGS Laws and Rules). If the exam is failed, another \$25 test fee is required for each additional attempt. NOTE: The QA exam is only waived if the applicant was an Ohio-approved QA within the prior six months.

## Step 5

Once your QA passes the exam and your license application is approved, PISGS will print a wall license and QA registration card. At that point, your company is licensed to work and solicit work in Ohio. You must register all security guards and private investigation employees.