As part of the new Customer Self-Service (CSS) portal that launched in June 2021, you’re invited to register an account to manage all of your City of Des Moines licenses, permits and building plans in one place. Receive updates online as City staff process your applications.

While you’ll need to register a new animal license the first time you use CSS, your online account will make it easier to renew online in following years.

DSM.city/animals
(515) 283-4209
Register for Customer Self Service (CSS)

Before you register your pet online, you first need to have an account registered with the City of Des Moines Customer Self-Service (CSS) portal. If you’ve already created a CSS account for other City licenses or permits, you can skip this section of the guide and login to your existing account.

**CSS registration is a one-time process.** Once you have created your CSS account, you can apply for multiple licenses under that same account. For the best experience through this process, we recommend using Google Chrome as your web browser.

1. **Visit DSM.city/CSS to access the Customer Self-Service portal.** Click on “Guest” in the top-right corner of the webpage or the bottom of the mobile menu and then select “Register” to create your account.

2. **Enter your email address for your account and click “Next” to receive a New User Account verification email.**

   **Check your email inbox for the confirmation.** Once you have received it, click “Confirm” in the email to begin selecting a user name and password for your account. Do not share your verification email, as your confirmation link is unique to your account.

3. **After clicking the “Confirm” link in your verification email, your web browser will open a new page to establish your login information.**

   Click the “I’m not a robot” box to verify you’re a person.

   Set your username and a password for your account. Don’t reuse a password you’ve used elsewhere, and use the strength gauge to evaluate how strong your password is.

   Confirm your new password, then click “Next” to continue.

4. **After you’ve set a username and password, enter your first and last name. You may ignore the Middle Name and Company fields.**

   **NOTE:** Click “Additional Contact Information” and enter at least one phone number.

   Use the “Contact Preference” menu to select how you prefer City staff to contact you regarding questions about your applications for licenses, permits and plan reviews. This setting applies to all services available on CSS. Click “Next” to continue.

5. **Finally, enter your physical address. Unlike other online accounts you may have, CSS requires you to enter your street address in pieces.**

   **Address Line 1:** Building/House Number (4730 SW 9th ST)
   **Pre-Direction:** If any, direction shown before Street Name (4730 SW 9th ST)
   **Address Line 2:** Street Name, without including Street Type (4730 SW 9th ST)
   **Street Type:** Select AVE, DR, ST, etc., from the dropdown list (4730 SW 9th ST)
   **Post Direction:** If any, direction shown after Street Type (3225 BIRCH ST SW)
   **Unit or Suite:** Apartment or Unit Number

   Enter your City, State, Postal Code and County. Select “Mailing” as your address type. Click “Submit” to finish creating your CSS account.

Keep your username and password saved in a safe location. You will need it each time you want to apply or renew a permit or license online.
Once you are registered for Customer Self Service and logged into your account, use the process on the following pages as many times as needed to apply for a license for each animal you own. For the best experience, we recommend using Google Chrome to submit your application.

**Locate Animal Licenses**

Once you're logged into your CSS account, click on “Apply” in the navigation menu to see all of the available services you can apply for on the portal.

If you don’t see Animal License, use the search field or the “Show Categories” menu to filter through the available services.

Once you've found Animal License listed, click the “Apply” button to start your application.

**Create Your “Company”**

All applications for licenses, permits, and plans on the CSS portal need to be associated with a “business.” For animal licenses, this is a “business” in name only.

To specify that you’re registering your pet(s) for your home, click the “Select Company Type” menu, select “Owner” to signify the license is for personal use, then click the + sign.

You will then be asked to add a location for your animal license.

Leave the “Site Address” menu alone to make sure “Site Address” is the selected option (not Home). This location should be where your pet resides.

Click the + sign to search for your address.

After clicking the + sign and ensuring “Site Address” is selected, you can search for your property in our database.

Exclude punctuation and abbreviate your Street Type when typing your address into the search bar.

Click “Add” when you locate your address.
Enter Your “Business Details”

Once your home address is added, click “Next” to fill out your “business details” as explained below:

**Company Type:** Make sure “Owner” is selected

**Company Name:** Enter the animal owner’s name

**Business Description:** Ignore this and leave it empty

**DBA:** Enter the animal owner’s name again

**Location:** Select “Residential”

**Industry Classification(s):** Ignore this

**License Type:** Make sure “Animal License” is selected

**Description:** Ignore this and leave it empty

Verify that your business details are complete and accurate. When you’re ready to continue, click “Next.”

Under the “Contacts” step of your application, you should already see your name and mailing address listed as the primary contact for your animal license.

To register an additional owner to your license, select “Applicant” and click the + sign.

If the additional owner has created their own CSS account, you can search for their name in the search field.

If the additional owner does not have a CSS account, select the “Enter Manually” tab and enter their first name, last name and a phone number for the additional owner. Even though it might appear that three phone numbers are required, filling out a single Home, Mobile or Business phone number will meet the requirements.

Once you’ve verified your contact information is correct, click the “Next” button to continue.
CUSTOMER SELF-SERVICE GUIDE: Applying for an Animal License Online

After you've created your “business,” provided your site location, and verified your contact information is correct, you’ll advance to the “More Info” step of the application process. This step is divided into four sections, three of which are optional if you don’t have a service dog or high risk dog and have fewer than four dogs in your home.

Section 1: License Info

Begin by ignoring and skipping the “State where organized” field. This is not applicable to Animal Licenses.

For the first question in Section 1, specify if you would like to apply for:

- Animal License Only
- Animal License and Annual Dog Park Permit
- Annual Dog Park Permit Only
- One-Day Dog Park Permit Only

Next, specify your animal’s name, what species they are, what color they are and what breed they are. If you select “Other” under the species menu, fill out the “Other Species” field. Otherwise, ignore it.

Specify if your animal is spayed/neutered or not.

Provide your animal’s rabies tag number, as well as the date their rabies shot was administered and is set to expire. Also provide the name of the primary veterinary clinic that cares for your animal. If you are unsure about any of this information, please contact your veterinarian for proof of care.

If you are age 65 or older, the City provides a single discounted cat and dog license per household. Select “Yes” if you are at least 65 years old.

Finally, specify if you would like to donate to the City’s Dog Parks and how much you wish to donate.

If the animal you’re registering isn’t a service dog, a high risk dog, or the fourth dog in your home, you can specify “No” for the first question in Sections 2, 3, and 4, and then click “Next” to continue. Skip to page 9 of this guide.

If this license is for a certified service dog, you must complete Section 2. Service Animal before continuing. Page 6 of this guide explains the necessary documentation and how to complete this process.

If this license is for a high risk dog as defined by municipal code, you must complete Section 3. High Risk Dog before continuing. Page 7 of this guide explains the necessary documentation and how to complete this process.

If you are applying for a waiver of the three (3) dog limit as set out by Municipal Code Section 18-136(7), you must complete Section 4. 4th Dog Waiver before continuing. Page 8 of this guide explains the necessary documentation and how to complete this process.
Section 2: Service Animal

There is no fee for animal licenses for service animals, given that proper certification is provided. You can provide a certificate of completion from a service animal program, an accreditation form, or a doctor’s written approval to provide proof that your pet is an official service animal.

A service animal is defined under federal law 28 CFR 35.104 as: “any dog that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual or other mental disability.” The work or task performed must be directly related to the person’s disability. Examples include helping with low vision, alerting persons who are hard of hearing, assisting during a seizure, alerting to the presence of allergens, helping with balance and retrieving items. Service animals do not include “companion animals” - those that provide emotional support, well-being, comfort or companionship - or those that provide a crime deterrent effect.

For this section of the application, specify if your dog is certified as a service animal. You will upload your certification documentation in a later step of this guide.

Specify whether the animal is required because of a disability.

Provide how many years old your dog is (in human years).

Finally, briefly describe the tasks your certified service dog performs.

Visit DSM.city/animals to find, download, complete, and scan the “Service Animal Application Form.” You will upload this form in the Attachments step of this guide.

If your animal isn’t a high risk breed of dog or the fourth dog in your household, you can specify “No” for the first question in Sections 3 and 4, and then click “Next” to continue. Skip to page 9 of this guide.
Section 3: High Risk Dog

City of Des Moines municipal code defines the Stafford Terrier, American pit bull, and American Staffordshire breed of dogs as “high risk dogs” and requires specific insurance coverage and practices meant to keep the dog protected and secure. Failure to comply with municipal code could result in your animal license being suspended and your animal being impounded.

If your dog is one of these breeds or a mix of these breeds, you must specify that this license is for a high risk animal. In a later step of this guide, you will upload your proof of insurance and a letter from your insurance agent naming that the animal is covered by a personal liability policy with at least $100,000 of liability coverage.

For this section of the application, specify if your dog is a high risk animal.

Review each of the provisions of municipal code listed and specify if you agree to follow the terms explained.

Finally, provide the name of your insurance agency, the name of your insurance agent, and your insurance agent’s phone number.

Visit DSM.city/animals to find, download, complete, and scan the “High Risk Dog Compliance Form.” You will upload this form in the Attachments step of this guide.

If your animal isn’t the fourth dog in your household, you can specify “No” for the first question in Section 4, and then click “Next” to continue. Skip to page 9 of this guide.
Section 4: 4th Dog Waiver

City of Des Moines municipal code limits a household to three dogs in normal circumstances. However, the City Clerk is able to grant an exception for one additional dog as long as the following conditions are met:

- The dog’s full grown weight is no more than 20 pounds as certified by a veterinarian;
- The owner provides a current rabies vaccination certificate for the dog;
- The owner provides proof the dog has been spayed or neutered; and
- No more than two cats are owned on the property subject to the waiver.

Falling out of compliance with the exception conditions set in municipal code could result in your animal license being suspended and your animal being impounded.

For this section of the application, specify if there are four dogs in your household.

If there are, review each of the conditions and the statement for exception. If you agree, enter your name as a digital signature and specify today’s date as the signature date.

Finally, use the table at the bottom of the section to indicate the other animals that reside in your household (not including the animal you’re currently registering a license for).

Visit DSM.city/animals to find, download, complete, and scan the “4th Dog Waiver Form.” You will upload this form in the Attachments step of this guide.

Click “Next” to continue to the next step.
Attachments

Before completing your online application, you’ll need to upload supplementary documentation.

- All pet licenses must include a rabies certificate from your veterinarian, and applicable proof of spay or neuter.

- To license high risk animals, you must also include the compliance form from DSM.city/animals and proof of insurance.

- To apply for a service animal, you must also include the service animal application form from DSM.city/animals.

- To apply for a 4th dog waiver, you must also include the 4th dog waiver form from DSM.city/animals.

To upload a document, click the + sign and locate the file on your device.

Once all your documentation has been uploaded, click “Next” to continue to the final step of your online application.
Review and Submit

After your attachments have been uploaded, you’re almost ready to submit your online application.

Carefully review each section of the application you have completed.

If any information appears incorrect or incomplete, click the “Back” button at the bottom of the page to move backward in your application.

Once you’ve verified all of the information, click “Submit” to submit your application and generate an invoice for the fees related to your application. You can’t change your application after clicking the “Submit” button.

If your license application was received, a green notice will appear at the top of the webpage letting you know.

Add to Cart and Pay Fees

Before your license is issued and available for you to print, you’ll need to pay the invoice that was generated from your online application.

Click the “Add to Cart” button to begin the fee payment process.

Your invoice will be added to your CSS portal shopping cart.

Review your shopping cart and click the “Check Out” button to move forward to the secure “MyGovPay” payment portal.

Your invoice number from your CSS shopping cart should be displayed.

Enter your payment details and click the “Pay Now” button to complete your transaction.

After paying your invoice, City Clerk staff will review your application in the order it was received. Once approved, the new license and appropriate tags will be mailed to you, at the address you specified when registering your Customer Self Service account.

**For licenses requesting the Senior discount, fees will be added by City staff and an invoice will be emailed to you. Once your invoice has been paid, your application will then be processed.

For assistance, contact the City Clerk’s Office at (515) 283-4209.