

CHARITABLE SOLICITATION REGISTRATION BUYING GUIDE

WELCOME!

As regulators have struggled with how best to create, manage, and enforce nonprofit compliance regulations, organizations like yours have worked to keep pace. With so many new fundraising methods available, the lines of what is required for compliance have blurred, and many organizations unknowingly find themselves operating outside the lines.

Not being in compliance with charitable solicitation registration requirements isn't necessarily a statement about your organization's passion or purpose. It may be an oversight. But it may also affect how your organization is perceived in the eyes of potential donors.

Charitable solicitation registration isn't a single step, but rather a necessary, ongoing process that works to establish and reinforce your organization's credibility. This Buying Guide is designed to walk you through the basics, and inform you of the options that make the most sense for your capabilities and your goals.

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"The team of professionals at Harbor Compliance handles every detail of the process and provides reports to our leadership team along the way. We're pleased to have found our long-term partner to help us stay compliant in every state."

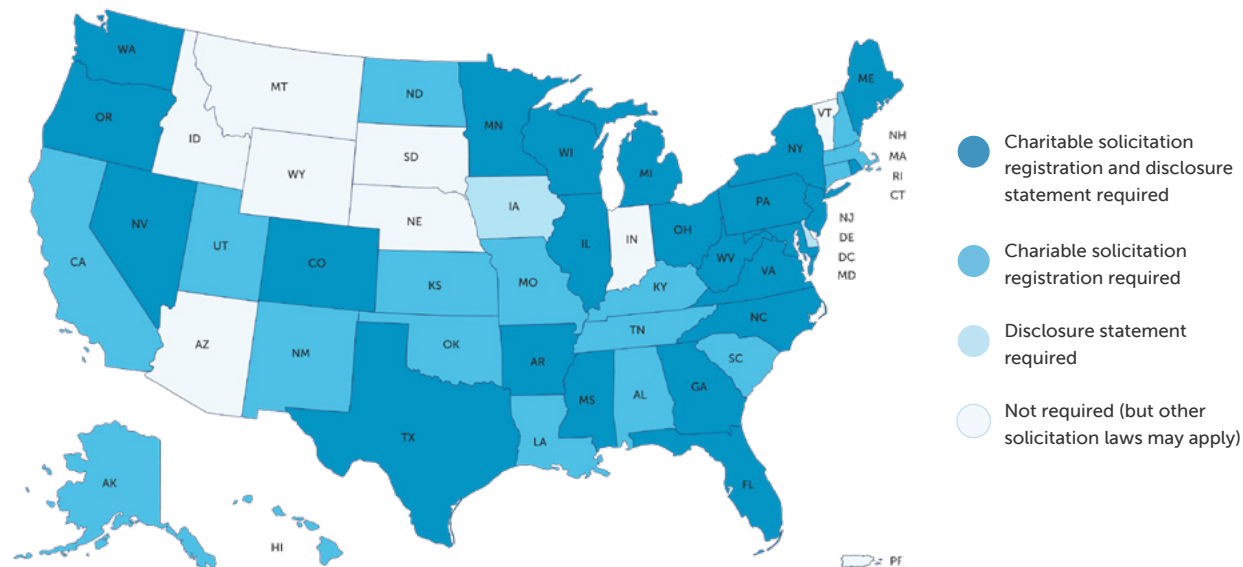


UNDERSTANDING CHARITABLE SOLICITATION REGISTRATION

At its core, charitable solicitation compliance is adherence to the laws and regulations governing an organization that intends to ask for donations. As you'd expect, this is highly regulated.

Keep in mind that the requirement for charitable solicitation registration generally begins prior to asking for donations, not upon receiving them. This varies by state, but is nonetheless an important distinction to make before fundraising begins.

Currently, 41 states require nonprofits to register to solicit their residents, and 25 states require certain information to be disclosed on solicitation materials.



ONLINE DONATIONS

With the myriad changes nonprofits have endured, some struggle to keep up with charitable solicitation registration requirements. Harbor Compliance can help you navigate the "new normal" of fundraising compliance, so your organization can thrive.

With 41 states requiring registration, there's a very good chance you'll need to adhere to these requirements before making solicitations. These requirements aren't new, but with so many new means of fundraising, states have become much more diligent with their enforcement.

Before we go any further, let's start with a list...

- Nationwide online fundraising
- In-person and virtual events
- Direct mail
- Fundraising by phone
- Website donate buttons
- Support options on social media pages
- Donor meetings
- Applying for grants
- Collecting membership dues

If you've taken part in any of the above fundraising activities, you'll likely need to register for charitable solicitation.

WHY YOU NEED CHARITABLE SOLICITATION REGISTRATION

First and foremost, it's the law. And law-abiding nonprofits are successful nonprofits. But there are benefits beyond the obvious adherence to state regulations—benefits that start and end with your organization's primary focus: donors.

By and large, the fundraising landscape has changed. Just as online fundraising has become an option for donors, state online databases have become a resource for donors to research organizations. Those that are registered where they need to receive the benefit of being seen in good standing.

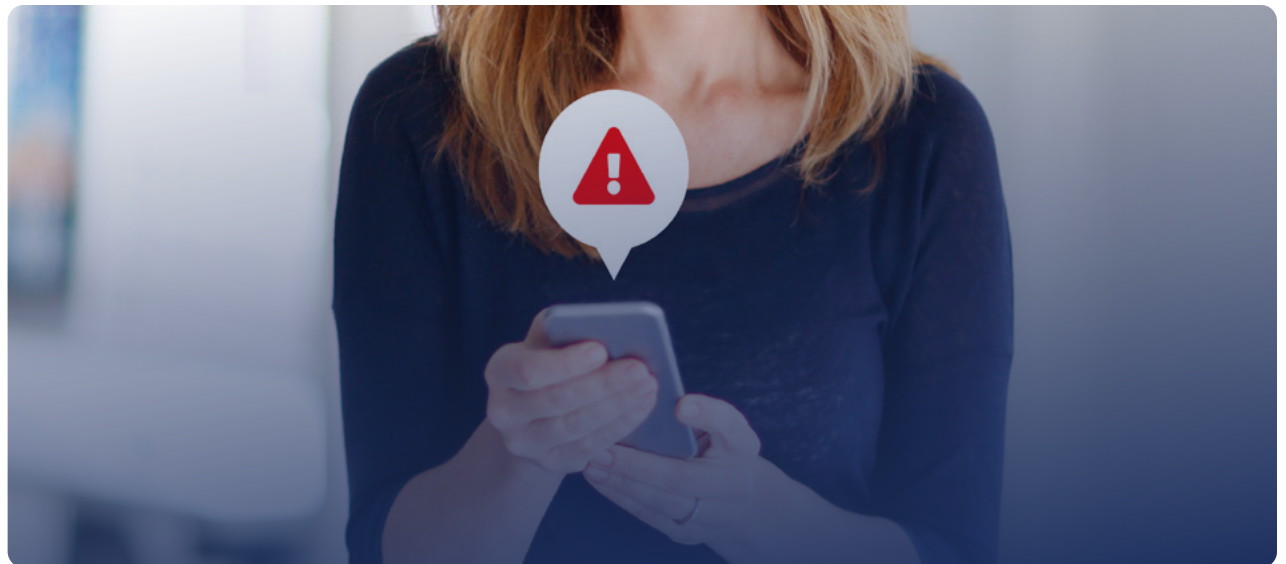
Therefore, these donors are conducting their due diligence to ensure their funds are going to compliant, upstanding organizations.

Charitable solicitation registration allows you to do the following:

- Raise funds nationwide without risk or restriction
- Mitigate potential PR risk
- Avoid potential penalties
- Be listed on state websites for donors to see
- Demonstrate legitimacy and commitment to compliance
- Open your organization into new fundraising markets

Donors don't just want to know that their investments are aimed at the right causes, but also that they're being handled by responsible, accountable organizations they can trust. This is why disclosure statements are so important.

Currently, 25 jurisdictions require some form of disclosure statement when communicating with donors. These disclosures vary by state, but typically include details on a nonprofit's charitable solicitation registration status and information on the entity's mission and financials.



WHY SOME ORGANIZATIONS DON'T REGISTER

Some nonprofits may balk at the idea of registering for something they're doing on a small scale. Others may think their limited reach doesn't warrant the time and financial expense. Some organizations might erroneously think they're exempt. (To see who is exempt please view the sidebar.)

If your organization is restricted by a limited budget, or if it doesn't conduct any fundraising online, you might consider forgoing charitable solicitation registration. This might seem like a cost-saving measure in the short term, but consider the value of being able to fundraise by any method in any state without risk or restriction.

Additionally, know that states are currently increasing their enforcement efforts by hiring more auditors and attorneys. They send more cease and desist letters to organizations that are not compliant. And they publish lists of organizations that have enforcement actions against them—lists that are visible to countless potential donors.

EXEMPTIONS

The requirements for exemption vary by state, but they typically apply to educational, religious, or membership organizations that solicit internally, or organizations that receive below a certain monetary donation threshold.

Revenue levels for exemption also vary—ranging from \$25,000 to just \$5,000 in some jurisdictions. This varies by state, so be sure to check specific guidelines before applying for exemption.



HOW CHARITABLE SOLICITATION REGISTRATION WORKS

As you've probably figured out by now, charitable solicitation registration varies from state to state. And there are a variety of ways to get it done. But no matter how you choose to proceed, the following four steps are needed:



RESEARCH

Investigate requirements, gather applications, identify filing fees.



APPLY

Fill out applications, cut checks, package and mail applications to agencies.



MONITOR

Check with agencies to ensure approval, gather registration numbers, and store licenses.



RENEW

Track renewal deadlines, monitor changes to requirements, and submit renewal applications on time.

Of course, this might be minimizing the process. The research portion alone is time- and labor-intensive, requiring hours of research into registration requirements, exemption status, filing fees, and much more.

Even if your organization qualifies as exempt, proving this to the state may still require application and renewals each year.

Once you've determined your registration requirements, you'll need to know your organization's current status for each state in which you plan to fundraise, prior to submitting any applications. The appropriate application for your situation depends on whether your group has previously registered and whether your registration is in good standing.

These details will determine what state fees and additional documents will be needed to begin charitable solicitation. In some states, you may have to foreign qualify the nonprofit corporation and appoint a registered agent. Knowing these requirements upfront will help you save time and money by avoiding rejected or delayed applications.

CAN YOU DO THIS ON OUR OWN?

Full transparency: Yes, you can handle charitable solicitation registration in-house. But there are many complexities that you should consider.

On your own, you will have to complete the necessary applications accurately and compile required documents as requested by the state. This requires line-by-line review of each form and its instructions.

Once the necessary documents have been compiled, ensuring proper delivery is essential. Sending the applications to the right agencies is a start, but some states require applications to be filed either online or by email. Submission by any other method would result in a rejection, stopping your fundraising until they are filed and accepted.

This process needs to be repeated for every state in which you plan to fundraise. And it needs to be performed annually, for as long as you plan to continue your mission. If you have the workforce and bandwidth to make this happen, this may be a good option.

KEEP THE FOLLOWING THINGS IN MIND:

It's not your mission:

Asking your staff to manage complex paperwork that carries consequences if not handled properly can affect both productivity and focus. Because it draws staff away from their real goal—serving your organization's mission.

It's time-consuming:

Experienced professionals spend 200 hours in the first year and nearly 150 hours annually thereafter on charitable solicitation registration. When you factor in training of new staff, those numbers only grow.

It can be erratic:

Applications are often not properly processed by state agencies. Following up in a timely manner is mandatory.

It's ever-changing:

Charitable solicitation registration requirements and processes are constantly changing. Systems and processes are needed to keep apprised of these changes.

It requires precision:

Registering nationwide means creating dozens of new accounts payable, tracking progress individually, and remitting timely payments based on each state's schedule. Even minor errors can lead to delays and rejections.

Yes, you may be staffed and qualified to handle registration in-house. But outsourcing these tasks to a qualified service provider makes far better use of your team's time and abilities.

SHOULD YOU ENLIST OUTSIDE HELP?

As we detailed above, registering state-by-state is a tedious, often complicated process. Even if many states have requirements that mirror others, the requirements for backup documentation vary. This means more time dedicated to researching and organizing your applications. And we can probably agree this isn't the best use of your talent and time.

An outside specialist will help you go through the process for each state and offer insights regarding:

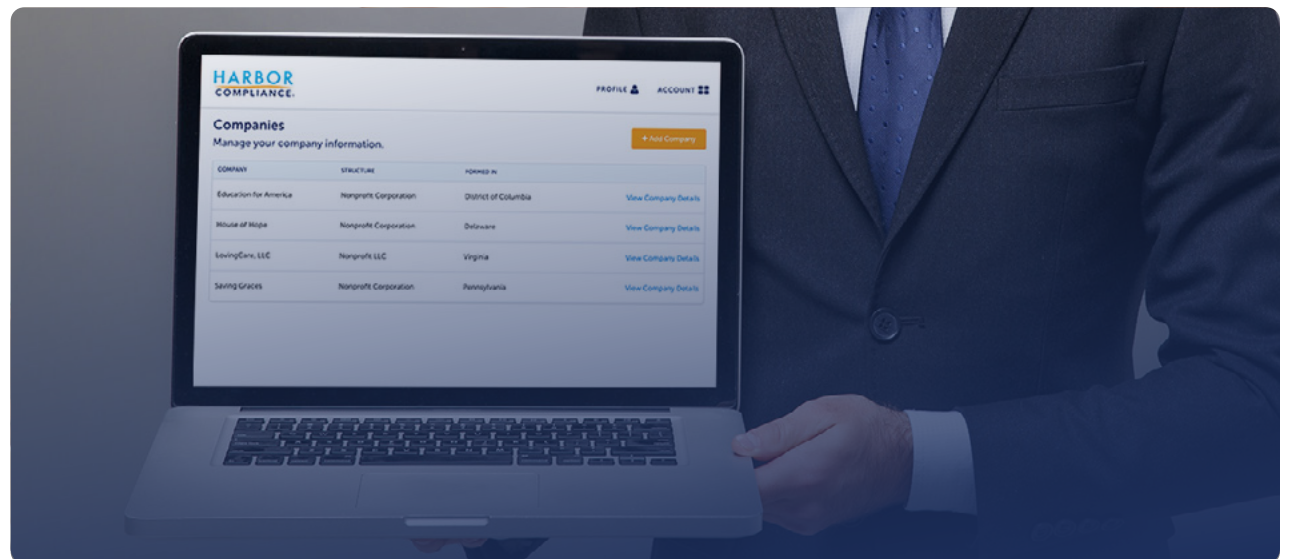
- State-by-state exemption rules.
- Each state's annual report due dates.
- Backup documentation and signature requirements.
- Fees and payment information.
- Available platforms to submit applications (online vs. paper).

Keep in mind that all of the above needs to be done prior to asking for a single donation. If you're planning to solicit nationwide, this means the process needs to be repeated 41 times.

SHOULD YOU HIRE AN ATTORNEY?

Managing charitable solicitation registration does not require legal advice. While an attorney can certainly perform the task at hand, organizations are now seeking out service companies that specialize in efficiently, effectively, and economically completing these registrations.

To do this same task, attorneys will have to familiarize themselves with specific compliance regulations, requiring additional time. In fact, many attorneys even subcontract registrations to service companies like Harbor Compliance.



WHY YOU SHOULD CONSIDER HARBOR COMPLIANCE

Harbor Compliance is a leading authority on compliance for both the business and nonprofit sectors, including registrations specific to fundraisers and charities. We have helped more than 25,000 nonprofits maintain compliance with government regulations since 2012.

We have a proven track record of efficiency, accuracy, and timeliness in all stages and aspects of fundraising compliance, including registrations, exemptions, extensions, renewals, and other related requirements.

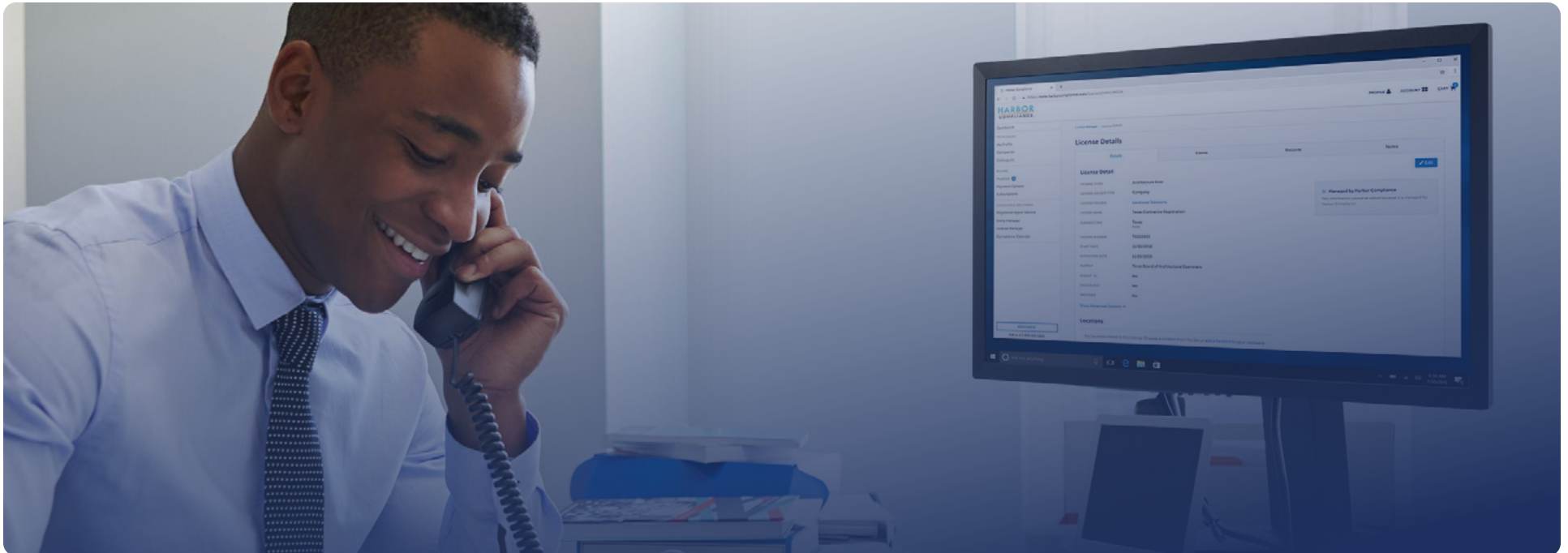
We offer end-to-end services for:

- Fundraising compliance
- Registered agent representation
- Secretary of state annual reports
- Tax registrations and exemptions
- Nonprofit formation

And we offer purpose-built software for all nonprofit needs:

- Entity Manager - entity registrations
- License Manager - charitable solicitation and other licenses
- Records Manager - organizational records
- Tax Manager - tax registrations and exemptions

In short, through a proven combination of expertise and award-winning software, we enable you to focus on your fundraising mission, not paperwork.



OUR PROCESS

No matter where you are in the registration cycle, Harbor Compliance frees you from fundraising compliance tasks, completing them in a fraction of the time as compared to in-house teams or separate vendors.

When you entrust us for charitable solicitation registration, you're immediately introduced to your dedicated Client Success Manager, who will serve as your single point of contact, and your partner throughout the entire process. The initial call will be about getting to know you, and detailing how you will be supported every step of the way.

Research begins

An account in your organization's name is created in our system. Our team of experts collects the information needed to complete the initial research for registrations.

Research audit is completed

During our thorough audit, the team reviews your eligibility for exemption, identifies any potential prerequisites, and verifies the exact state fees required to register or renew.

Roadmap Call occurs

The results of our research are combined into a report you'll review during a detailed call. Your Client Success Manager will work with your Account Manager to determine any additional prerequisites. No matter the situation, we'll make sure you know every step we take, so you can apply with confidence.

Registrations are completed

We take your information and use it to complete all necessary applications, which are sent to you for review and signature, as required. Once we receive your signed applications and filing fee payments, we take care of submitting them to the states on your behalf.

Monitoring is underway

In our dedicated Client Portal, the Project Status tab lets you monitor your projects as they progress, so you know at any time exactly what is happening. Automated email reminders make sure you never miss a deliverable.

Renewals happen

We always begin by auditing your registrations, verifying your statuses, identifying renewal dates, uncovering any lapsed registrations, and offering clarity on next steps so that you have complete peace of mind.

When you work with us, your renewals will be filed accurately and on time each year. You retain visibility into the process through our secure, web-based software and can contact us at any time with questions.

You're never on your own, and you'll never risk a missed filing. As long as you remain a client, we track deadlines, prepare documents, and file renewals as they approach their due dates.

"We're a small organization and if we had been forced to take on this task, it would have pulled us away from important fundraising efforts...Harbor Compliance held our hand every step of the way and kept us informed and up to speed with every detail."



THE QUESTIONS YOU NEED TO ASK BEFORE CHOOSING A VENDOR

What does all of this cost?

When registering in-house, or turning to other vendors, this answer depends on the number of states in which you register. There are numerous filing fees for each state, which can add up if your organization grows. And, of course, you need to factor in the hours a vendor needs to research necessary requirements.

Our transparent, flat-fee service ensures you know what you're paying upfront, so there's no confusion along the way.

Does the service include tax registration and exemption filing?

We manage all Federal and state-level exemption applications and provide full tax registration services in every state.

Will I have access to all necessary documents, forms, and information?

With Harbor Compliance, all documents—from registration to renewals—are completed on your behalf using a single-fill Information Form. Without this convenience, you would need to conduct research and complete individual forms for each state in which you plan to fundraise.

We should also mention that our all-in-one service includes facilitation of payment and submission of online and paper forms.

What does the onboarding process look like?

Other resources may require time-consuming research before registration. We audit your entity and registration statuses and schedule a thorough Roadmap Call to discuss findings. This often occurs within days of your initial outreach.

Does the vendor maintain a regularly updated database of requirements?

Requirements are constantly evolving. While many vendors struggle to keep up with these changes, our database is continually maintained and updated to ensure accurate, reliable information when you need it.

Will I receive personalized attention?

From the moment you connect with Harbor Compliance, you'll work 1:1 with an experienced Client Success Manager throughout the process. In addition to this single point of contact, you'll have the support of a team of experts, so you'll never have to worry about missing or incorrect information. We have it covered.

Does the vendor offer dedicated software and resources?

Your compliance deserves more than a disparate, antiquated series of spreadsheets and calendars. Our purpose-built software offers full visibility into your organization's compliance footprint.

You access our entire suite of tools through a modern, user-friendly Client Portal that centralizes critical data, tracks activity and deadlines, and sends automated email alerts.

Can the vendor do more than charitable solicitation registration?

While other vendors may provide registered agent and managed annual report service, they're likely done through disparate software platforms, or even subcontracted to other outlets.

We offer solutions for total compliance. Harbor Compliance acts as your registered agent to receive legal documents and service of process on your behalf. And our Managed Annual Report Service provides timely and accurate annual report filing, to ensure your good standing.

Compliance is all we do. And we do it well.

PRODUCT AND SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

LICENSE MANAGER

License Manager
Maintain your business licenses and permits.

License Map

Agency Information
Georgia Real Estate Commission & Appraisers Board
[Home](#) [Forms](#) [File Online](#)

Import License To Account

Alabama Real Estate Broker License [Import >](#)

Connecticut Real Estate Broker License [Import >](#)

Florida Real Estate Broker License [Import >](#)

License List

LICENSE NAME	LICENSE TYPES	JURISDICTION	LICENSE HOLDER
Georgia Real Estate Broker License	Real Estate Brokerage	Georgia State	Smith Property Manag. Company

Access copies of your licenses and critical data, including registration numbers, expiration dates, and filing fees.

"License Manager has streamlined an area of our operations that has historically been challenging. Harbor Compliance gives our leadership confidence that our licenses are up-to-date nationwide."



ENTITY MANAGER

Entity Manager
Monitor your secretary of state and other registrations.

Registration Map

Agency Information
Arizona Corporation Commission - Corporations Division
[Home](#) [Records Search](#) [Forms](#)

Registration List

ENTITY	JURISDICTION	REGISTRATION NUMBER	STATUS
AE Demo Firm, Inc.	Arizona State	AZ-299348	332044

JURISDICTION **STATUS**

Arizona State [Good Standing As of 10/23/2019](#)

Connecticut State [Good Standing As of 10/23/2019](#)

New York State [Good Standing As of 10/23/2019](#)

Entity Manager provides a clear window into your entity registrations in every jurisdiction. The software is integrated with secretary of state databases nationwide, allowing you to see where your entities are registered from a single dashboard in our Client Portal.

"...The Harbor Compliance online portal is also a great, centralized place to work from. Overall, we're very pleased with our experience and would gladly recommend their services to any nonprofit organization."



RECORDS MANAGER

AE Demo Firm, Inc.
Corporation Records

Records [+ Add Record](#)

- [Corporate Bylaws](#)
- [Bylaws Amended 1/10/20](#)

Add Meeting

Name:

Date:

CLASS	SERIES	SHARES AUTHORIZED	SHARES ISSUED
Common	Series 1	500	500

CERTIFICATE	SHAREHOLDER	DATE OF TRANSFER	CLASS	SERIES
001	Bob Armstrong	12/02/2019	Common	Series 1
002	Adam Phillips	08/20/2019	Common	None
003	June Cordero	10/16/2019	Common	None

Records Manager is designed to store key documents that are often needed for corporate filings, exemption letters, applying for grants, or fundraising.

It keeps your organization's records, bylaws, articles of incorporation, amendments, leadership tracking, and meeting records centralized and up to date, so your team stays organized.

TAX MANAGER

Tax Manager
Track federal, state, and local tax identification numbers and exemption letters

Tax ID List

Company: Search Tax ID Name: [More Filters](#)

COMPANY	TAX ID NAME	TAX TYPES	JURISDICTION
AE Demo Firm, Inc.	Arizona Transaction Privilege Tax	Sales & Use Tax	Arizona State
AE Demo Firm, Inc.	District of Columbia Corporation Tax	Income Tax	District of Columbia State
AE Demo Firm, Inc.	District of Columbia Property Tax	Property Tax	District of Columbia State
AE Demo Firm, Inc.	Kentucky Employer's Withholding Tax	Property Tax	Kentucky State

Add Tax ID

Tax ID Name:

Tax Types:

Agency Information

District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue

[Home](#)

PHYSICAL ADDRESS
1101 4th Street, SW, Suite 270 West
Washington, DC 20024

Tax Manager is designed to help you track and manage your organization's tax registrations, exemptions, and renewal dates across federal, state, and local revenue departments.

This means you can easily see the jurisdictions in which you have tax registrations, access tax identification numbers, store certificates and agency correspondence, track events, and schedule customized renewal reminders.

It allows for streamlined collaboration between your finance department, accounting team, payroll vendors, and anyone who may need to access your tax information.

"...[Harbor Compliance] guided me through the exemption process smoothly and ensured my corporation would be in full compliance with IRS tax regulation."

BLUELIGHT
DEVELOPING A NEW WORLD

REGISTERED AGENT

Registered Agent Service
As your registered agent, we receive legal documents and govern your business.

The states in which you have our registered agent service are listed below. We provide service in all 50 states plus D.C.

Delivered Documents

DOCUMENT
AE Demo Firm Inc. - PA - Service of Process.pdf
AEC Demo Firm Inc. - PA - Regular Mail.pdf

State Forms

STATE	TEMPLATE
Pennsylvania	Change of Agent
Pennsylvania	Articles of Incorporation
Pennsylvania	Certificate of Authority

Addresses

STATE	ADDRESS
Pennsylvania	Harbor Business Compliance Corporation 1830 Colonial Village Lane Lancaster, PA 17601 Lancaster County

[Download](#)

Our nationwide, all-in-one registered agent service brings exceptional security and efficiency to multi-state organizations.

You'll enjoy the full benefits of our service for every state in which you're registered, while gaining back valuable hours with our pre-filled state forms and user-friendly software. If you need foreign qualification service, special agency appointments, annual report notices, or have more-specific needs, we handle it all.

Our local offices in every state are open during business hours to receive your time-sensitive legal documents. We send email notifications, and you can access your documents securely online. When you receive service of process (notice of a lawsuit), we also call the primary contact for your account.

Perhaps best of all, there's no confusion or hidden fees. Our transparent pricing and volume discounts ensure you know exactly what you're paying, right from the start.

ABOUT HARBOR COMPLIANCE

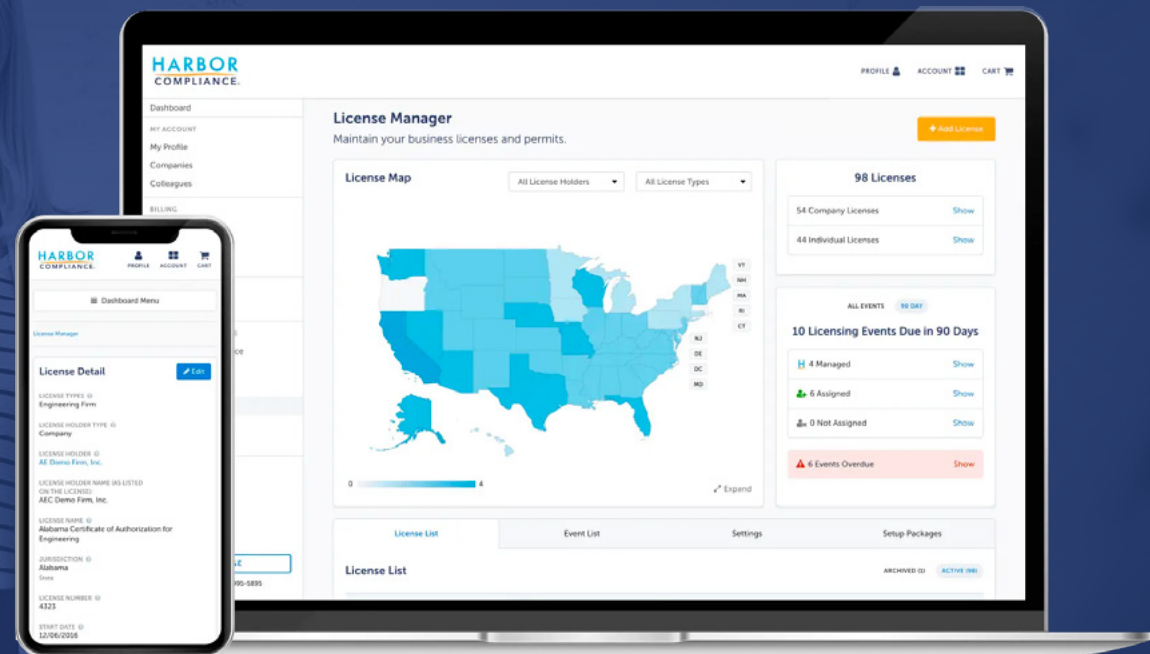
Founded by a team of government licensing specialists and technology trailblazers, Harbor Compliance is a leading provider of compliance solutions for companies and organizations of all types and sizes. Since 2012, we have helped more than 25,000 clients apply for, secure, and maintain licensing across all industries.

We have a proven track record of success with all stages of nonprofit compliance, from securing 501(c) tax exemption to managing fundraising compliance nationwide.

HARBOR COMPLIANCE®

See how we can simplify your compliance, managing every aspect of registration so you can concentrate on your organization's mission and programs.

[Learn More](#)



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