

Starting a Small Food Business?

Your FSSAI Registration/ Licence Is Just the Beginning!

Whether you are running a home kitchen, pop-up stall, cloud kitchen or a small café, your compliance journey does not end with obtaining an FSSAI Registration/Licence. Depending on your business model, location, scale of operations, and activities, additional licences, permissions, and compliance requirements may also apply.



FSSAI Registration / Licence

Your first step towards food safety compliance. Under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 and the Food Safety and Standards (Licensing and Registration of Food Businesses) Regulations, 2011, every Food Business Operator engaged in the manufacture, processing, storage, distribution, transportation, sale, or handling of food is required to obtain the appropriate FSSAI Registration or Licence.

Type of approval:



Basic Registration:
For petty food businesses with an annual turnover of up to **₹12 lakh**.



State Licence: For food businesses exceeding the Basic Registration limit and falling within the eligibility criteria prescribed under FSSAI Regulations (commonly applicable up to **₹20 crore turnover for many categories**).



Central Licence: For large food businesses, importers, exporters, Central Government establishments, businesses operating in multiple States, and other specified categories.

For most small food businesses, **Basic Registration** is the starting point. As the business grows and crosses the applicable limit, the required category of FSSAI approval must be upgraded accordingly. Eligible street vendors notified under the Government's deemed registration scheme are considered registered under this Act.

Renewal:

FSSAI Registrations/Licences are issued for **1–5 years** and must be renewed before expiry.

Note- FSSAI compliance goes beyond obtaining a Registration/Licence. It includes maintaining food safety, hygiene, and sanitation standards, following safe food handling and storage practices, packaging and labelling requirements, maintaining records, accurate health and nutrition claims, and being prepared for inspections and audits by Food Safety Officers.

Municipal / Local Authority Permission

Depending on the location and nature of the business, approvals are required under the applicable **Municipal Corporation Acts, Municipal By-laws and Street Vendors (Protection of Livelihood and Regulation of Street Vending) Act, 2014**. Requirements vary across States and local authorities.

Approvals may include:

- Trade Licence;
- Vending/Hawking Licence;
- Permission to operate from public spaces;
- Commercial use/occupancy permission; and
- Other approvals prescribed by the local authority.

Fire Safety Approval / No Objection Certificate (Fire NOC)

Food businesses are required to obtain a Fire NOC where applicable under the relevant State Fire Safety laws, Fire Rules, the National Building Code of India, 2016, or local Fire Department regulations. This generally applies to commercial kitchens, LPG/PNG-based cooking setups, larger or high-occupancy premises, temporary event stalls, and other locations requiring fire clearance. Compliance includes fire extinguishers, emergency exits, fire alarms, safe LPG storage, and other prescribed fire safety measures.

Event / Police Permissions

Temporary food stalls at fairs, exhibitions, festivals, sporting events, or public gatherings are required to obtain permissions under the applicable State Police Acts, Municipal Regulations, and District Administration Guidelines. Approvals include event organiser permission, police permission, municipal approval, fire clearance, and other permissions prescribed by the competent authority.

GST Registration

Governed by the **Central Goods and Services Tax Act, 2017**, **State GST Acts**, and **Integrated GST Act, 2017**

GST registration is required when:

- Turnover exceeds the applicable threshold (*generally ₹20 lakh or ₹40 lakh, depending on State and nature of supply*),
- Making interstate supplies,
- Selling through e-commerce platforms, or
- Falling under other notified categories.

Registered businesses must issue GST invoices, maintain records, and file periodic returns.

Municipal Health Licence & Waste Management Compliance

Issued by the local **Municipal Corporation or Health Department**, a **Health Trade Licence** confirms that your food business premises meet required health, hygiene, and sanitation standards. It is particularly important for businesses such as restaurants, food stalls, and commercial kitchens, where inspections may cover premises cleanliness, drainage, waste disposal, and overall hygiene practices.

Shops & Establishments Registration (where applicable)

Food businesses operating from commercial premises or employing workers may need to register under the applicable **State Shops and Establishments Act**. The registration covers establishment details, working hours, employee welfare, maintenance of records, and other labour law requirements. Validity and renewal requirements vary across States.

Final Note for Food Entrepreneurs

Starting a food business is exciting, and early success can bring a rush of orders and opportunities. However, compliance should not become an afterthought.

Staying updated with regulations, maintaining hygiene, keeping proper records, and being inspection-ready are not just legal obligations — they are essential steps towards building customer trust and a sustainable business. **Build your food business with compliance from day one, because strong brands are built on more than great food — they are built on trust.**