



## New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry



Chapter 241 of the Laws of 2020, sponsored by Senator Jose Serrano and Assemblyman Daniel O'Donnell established the New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry. The registry is administered by the Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and is for businesses that have been in operation for at least 50 years and have contributed to their communities' history. Local businesses are the backbone of villages, towns and cities across the state and have helped to shape the history, heritage, and identity of the communities they serve. At a time when many businesses face new and unique challenges, the registry recognizes and honors historic businesses, while providing educational and promotional assistance to ensure their continued viability and success.

### Eligibility Criteria

Businesses nominated for inclusion in the New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry are required to meet the following criteria:

1. The business shall have operated in the state for fifty or more years with no break in operations exceeding two years. The business may have operated in more than one location, but shall have operated in the same municipality for a minimum of fifty years.
  - *The business should have a verifiable founding date with appropriate supporting documentation. Acceptable documentation includes material that dates from the period of the business's founding. Materials produced over five years after the business founding date will not be accepted.*
  - *If the business is a franchise or has multiple locations, the first building location or corporate headquarters may be eligible for inclusion in the Registry if that location has remained unchanged within the fifty-year operation period. A business that has moved from one municipality to another during its operation period must be located within the current municipality for a minimum of fifty years.*
2. Demonstrate a contribution to the municipality's history and/or the identity of the municipality.
  - *A business must be able to document their impact on and contribution to the community. A written narrative should be supported with documentation such as (but not limited to) awards, newspaper articles, interviews, letters of support from local officials, patron/customer testimonials, etc.*
3. The business is committed to maintaining the physical features and traditions that define such business, including but not limited to, craft, culinary, or art forms.
  - *Changes that reflect broad historic trends within a specific industry (ex., a carriage company turned automobile manufacturer) are permissible, but businesses that have shifted from one industry to another during their operation period do not qualify.*

**Note:** Inclusion in the Historic Business Registry shall be tied to the business entity within a given municipality and not to a specific building or location. For example, a business occupying a new structure located in the same municipality where it was founded may qualify for the Registry. A business that is less than fifty years old or doesn't meet the full criteria but is housed in a building older than 50 years does not qualify.

The following factors **DO NOT** impact a business's eligibility for inclusion in the Registry:

- The age and/or historic status of the business's building.
  - A business included in the Historic Business Registry is not required to continuously occupy the same building if all other eligibility criteria are met. A business's building is also not required to reflect any specific historic period.
  - The business building is not required to be designated a historic landmark or be determined eligible for inclusion in the State Register of Historic Places.
- The ownership.
  - It is not required for a business to be owned by the same entity (ex., family) for the entire required fifty-year operation period.
- The business's size.
  - Business size (ex., the largest employer or part of the largest industry in a specific municipality) does not automatically constitute eligibility for inclusion in the Registry.
- The name/brand.
  - If a business name or brand shifts or changes over the fifty-year operation period but the core business remains the same, the business may qualify for inclusion in the Registry if all other eligibility criteria are met.

If you have questions about the program, you can call the Division for Historic Preservation at 518-237-8643 and ask to speak to the staff person who handles the Historic Business Preservation Registry.

*The Historic Business Preservation Registry is an honorific program only and inclusion does not subject businesses to any regulatory oversight by NYS OPRHP. All businesses included in the Registry will be featured on an interactive map on the agency's website and be provided with a certificate and window decal. The website is located at <https://parks.ny.gov/historic-preservation/business-registry/default.aspx>.*

