



# New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry Eligibility Criteria for Businesses

## About the Registry

Chapter 241 of the Laws of 2020, sponsored by Senator Jose Serrano and Assemblymember Daniel O'Donnell established the **New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry**. The registry was enhanced by Chapter 146 of the Laws of 2023 by legislation sponsored by Senator Michelle Hinchey and Assemblymember Carrie Woerner. The registry is administered by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) and is for businesses that have been in operation for at least 50 years and have contributed to their community's history. Local businesses are the backbone of villages, towns, and cities across the state and have helped to share 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.

***The Historic Business Preservation Registry (HBPR) is an honorific program only and inclusion in the Registry does not subject businesses to any regulatory oversight by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation.***

*All businesses included in the registry are featured on an [interactive map](#) on the agency's website and are provided with an official registry certificate and window decal. The website includes the map as well as information about the registry program.*

## Eligibility Criteria

*Businesses nominated for inclusion in the New York State Historic Business Preservation Registry must be proposed by a state elected official and meet the following criteria:*

**The business shall have operated in the state for 50 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 50 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 50-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 50 years.

**The business shall demonstrate a contribution to the municipality's history and/or identity.**

- 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, testimonials from patrons/customers, etc.

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## Eligibility Criteria (continued)

**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 Preservation 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 50 years old or does not meet the full criteria but is housed in a building older than 50 years old 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 Preservation 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’s building is not required to be designated a historic landmark or be determined eligible for inclusion in the State or National Register of Historic Places.

#### **The ownership**

- It is not required for a business to be owned by the same entity (example: family) for the entire required 50-year operation period.

#### **The business’s size**

- Business size (example: 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 50-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.

## Questions?

If you have questions about the program, please contact **Kathy Howe**, Community Preservation Bureau Chief at the Division for Historic Preservation, at (518) 268-2168 or [kathy.howe@parks.ny.gov](mailto:kathy.howe@parks.ny.gov).

**Division for Historic Preservation**

P.O. Box 189, Waterford, New York 12188-0189  
(518) 268-2213 | [www.parks.ny.gov](http://www.parks.ny.gov)



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