How to Renew Your Ham Radio License

United States • FCC Amateur Radio Service • Step-by-step guide

This guide covers renewal of an individual U.S. amateur (ham) radio license through the Federal Communications Commission (FCC). All blue link labels in this document are clickable. Links are written as descriptive text rather than pasted web-preview snippets.

Step 1: Find your license and expiration date

Search for your amateur license using your call sign, name, or FCC Registration Number (FRN). Open the record and note the expiration date.

Open FCC ULS License Search

Step 2: Sign in to FCC CORES

Sign in or create a CORES username. If you already have an FRN, follow the prompts to associate it with your CORES account if needed. Your CORES username and FRN are related but are not the same thing.

Open FCC CORES sign-in

Step 3: Open ULS License Manager

Sign in to ULS License Manager using your 10-digit FRN and ULS password. From the license overview, select your amateur license and look for “Renew” or “Renew Licenses.” The renewal option normally appears during the 90 days before expiration and remains available during the two-year filing grace period after expiration.

Open FCC ULS License Manager

Important: If your license has expired, you may file for renewal during the two-year grace period, but you may not transmit using that expired license unless and until the FCC grants the renewal. If the two-year grace period has ended, the ordinary renewal process is no longer available.

Read the FCC amateur radio service guidance

Read the federal rule on amateur license renewal (47 CFR § 97.21)

Step 4: Complete and submit the renewal

1. Review your licensee information and choose the update option if anything is missing or out of date.
2. Select Continue and answer the applicant questions.
3. Review your name, mailing address, email address, and other requested details; correct errors.
4. Complete the certification/signature section as prompted.
5. Review the application summary and submit the application.
6. Save or print the confirmation and application file number.

FCC Amateur Radio Service information

Step 5: Pay the FCC application fee

The standard FCC application fee for an individual amateur license renewal is generally $35. After filing, follow the payment prompts and complete payment through CORES if a fee is due. Filing and payment are separate steps, so verify both are complete. Fees and procedures can change; check the official pages before paying.

Open FCC CORES sign-in and payment access

FCC instructions for paying ULS application fees

ARRL overview of the FCC application fee

Step 6: Check your renewal status

1 Search for your call sign in ULS again.

2 Check the application status until the renewal is granted.

3 After approval, verify the new expiration date.

4 Save or print the updated license for your records.

Open FCC ULS License Search

Need help?

FCC Licensing Support Center: 877-480-3201. Check the FCC support page for current hours and contact options.

FCC Wireless Licensing Support

Quick checklist

- ■ Find my call sign and expiration date
- ■ Locate my FRN and confirm account access
- ■ Submit the renewal through ULS
- ■ Complete any required CORES payment
- ■ Verify the renewal was granted and save the updated license

Timing reminder: You can generally renew within 90 days before expiration. The two-year grace period applies after expiration and is not permission to transmit. For the most current requirements, use the FCC links in this guide.