

ALLIANCE FOR A
SAFE OREGON.
ACTION

March 20, 2025

To: Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and House Judiciary
Committee Members

From: Jess Marks
Executive Director
Alliance for a Safe Oregon Action

Re: Support for HB 3076

Chair Kropf, Vice Chairs Chotzen and Wallen, members of the Committee,

Public safety remains a top concern for Oregonians, particularly as gun-related violence has escalated across the state. Firearm homicide in Oregon has increased 138% over the past decade, a trend accompanied by a rise in the number of firearms associated with crime. “Portland is just awash in guns in the hands of the wrong people,” according to Oregon FBI special agent Kieran Ramsey.

It’s clear that Oregon needs to take stronger action to safeguard its communities. One vital step toward preventing gun tragedies, while respecting responsible gun ownership, is the implementation of HB3076: state-based gun dealer licensing and regulation.

As it stands, the federal government licenses and is supposed to regularly inspect gun dealers; however, the system is vastly under-resourced and lacks enforcement, allowing bad actors to operate without consequences. Data from the ATF shows in Oregon, only 2% of all gun dealers were inspected in 2023 and 2022. The result is an overflow of illegal guns in our communities, used in violent crime. Guns used in crimes are also called crime guns.

ATF data shows over 27,000 guns were recovered and traced in Oregon from 2019-2023 (most recent year data available). Of those traced, 74.4% came from Oregon in-state dealers. On the other hand, in New Jersey, which has strong state-based licensing and regulation of gun dealers, only 18.2% of traced crime guns

were purchased in the state. Overall, Oregon law enforcement finds nearly 3 times as many crime guns per capita than New Jersey. This analysis tells us gun dealers are positioned to play a key role in preventing community gun violence.

Oregon’s crime guns appear to enter the illegal market through several channels, including straw purchases, thefts from dealers, and even collusion by a small fraction of dealers. This research surprised our team, as the common narrative is that guns used from crime are coming from out of state or theft. Rather, the data showed the primary source for trafficking is from gun dealers, followed by theft from gun dealers, followed last by theft from individuals, see:

Table FTC-03: Trends in Percentages of Most Frequent Firearm Trafficking Channel Types

Trafficking Channel	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	%
						Difference
						17 - 21
Trafficking in firearms by an unlicensed dealer (private person)	41.0%	42.8%	38.6%	36.5%	43.8%	2.8%
Trafficking in firearms by a straw purchaser or straw purchasing ring	38.1%	37.9%	38.8%	40.8%	42.6%	4.5%
Trafficking in firearms stolen from an FFL	14.9%	18.0%	18.8%	23.1%	12.5%	-2.4%
Trafficking in firearms stolen from private persons	11.9%	8.1%	7.6%	6.2%	4.8%	-7.1%
Trafficking in firearms illegally exported from the United States	8.4%	8.7%	8.1%	7.0%	6.2%	-2.2%
Trafficking in firearms through online marketplaces	3.4%	3.5%	3.8%	3.1%	4.1%	0.8%
Trafficking in firearms through unlicensed making (PMFs, etc.)	2.4%	3.8%	3.4%	2.0%	3.4%	1.0%
Trafficking in firearms at gun shows, flea markets, or auctions	3.5%	3.1%	2.5%	2.2%	3.5%	0.1%
Trafficking in firearms through social media platforms	2.6%	2.4%	1.8%	2.9%	4.1%	1.5%
Trafficking in firearms by an FFL(s)	1.6%	1.9%	1.8%	1.3%	1.4%	-0.1%
Total	1,868	1,902	1,573	1,504	1,526	8,373

Our research found gun trafficking, or straw gun sales, are far too easy and too common. In one example, 64 firearms purchased through straw sales were trafficked to gang members in the Portland area between April 2020 and September 2021. Edward Charles Green legally bought 64 firearms from gun dealers, which were then sold or traded to local Blood gang members. Only 12 of the firearms have been recovered. Green often bought multiple guns at once, a sign of firearm trafficking, including 46 firearms from a single dealer.

The weakness in federal oversight and the total lack of state-level oversight are contributing to similar disturbing patterns every day. This could be prevented for those who are unintentionally enabling straw gun sales through training and by following, as required by law, the purchases of multiple firearms to alert law enforcement to potential gun trafficking.

Perhaps most importantly, evidence shows that gun dealers who follow best practices and basic security standards have almost zero guns that end up in crime. In fact, some of our states largest gun dealers who sell the highest volumes of firearms have almost zero guns that end up in crimes. As such, our team recommends the

engagement of law enforcement and ethical gun dealers for policy co-creation to ensure this policy is most effective. Gun dealers can thus serve as the first line of defense against gun tragedies in our communities when they follow the law. The reality however, is with so few inspections, we are in effect depending on the goodwill and ethics of gun dealers who make their profit through sales with almost zero regulation.

Polling data show a majority of Oregonians are supportive of gun dealer inspections, safe storage of inventory, training and employee background checks. This support is consistent with Oregon's strong tradition of both responsible gun ownership and meaningful laws to protect community safety.

Oregon mandates state-level licensing and health/safety inspections for nearly all other industries related to public health such as cosmetology services (barber shops, hair and nail salons), food service establishments, liquor-serving businesses, and cannabis enterprises (Please see Appendix I for an overview of regulatory requirements for other industries). Each is overseen by specific state agencies that license the business and conduct periodic inspections to ensure compliance with laws and safety standards. Local city and county authorities often augment state regulations by enforcing local codes or conducting inspections (especially in food service and other health-related fields). In short, for nearly all industries that present potential risk for public health and safety, Oregon has a framework of state-level licensing with enforcement mechanisms that include inspections or audits and penalties for non-compliance. These licensing programs charge the regulated business a reasonable fee to create capacity to hold businesses accountable to standards that protect health and safety. The outcome is preventing harm, and therefore avoiding the social and financial cost of health care, public safety, and fear. We want to know that our businesses that engage in the sale of potentially risky products or services are being responsible. In sharp contrast, no Oregon state agency routinely inspects gun dealers for compliance with either federal or state gun laws.

House Bill 3076 will be a critical step in protecting our communities, and ensuring that dealers have the tools and education to help stem the overflow of guns in our communities. It establishes:

- State-based licensing and annual reporting;
- Inventory control with required tracking and reporting;
- Mandated secure storage of inventory and other security practices, such as cameras;

- Employee background checks and training to recognize illegal purchases;
- Annual inspections to hold bad actors accountable and train those who are unintentionally causing harm.

Fifteen states have already implemented similar laws, and the evidence shows they are working. Strong state-based licensing and regulations of gun dealers are associated with a 36% reduction in firearm homicides (see: [Irvin, Rhodes, Cheney & Wiebe, 2014](#)).

All of us deserve to be safe in our homes and neighborhoods, regardless of what we look like or where we live. Oregon must act with urgency to stop the flow of illegal guns on our streets.

Thank you for your time.

Jess Marks

Executive Director

Alliance for a Safe Oregon

Appendix I: Industry Regulation in Oregon

Oregon Business and Industry Licensing Requirements Overview and Comparison to Firearm Industry

Business Type	Regulatory Agency (License Required?)	Inspection Frequency	Enforcement & Notable Actions
Cosmetology (Barbers/Salons)	Oregon Health Licensing Office – Board of Cosmetology (State license for each shop + practitioners) . Local city business license also often required (general business).	Periodic state inspections (no fixed interval; unannounced). Licensees advised to self-inspect monthly. Must post last inspection certificate in salon .	State fines/suspensions for sanitation or license violations. E.g. failing to post inspection cert = \$200 fine . Repeated or serious health infractions can lead to license suspension (enforced by HLO).
Food Service (Restaurants)	Oregon Health Authority – Food Safety (county health depts issue food service licenses annually). Also requires a local business license.	Twice yearly health inspections (by county, unannounced) . Additional inspections for follow-up or complaints. Scores posted publicly; <70 score triggers recheck .	County health enforcement: correction orders, re-inspection within ~14–30 days for violations. Imminent hazards = closure of restaurant until fixed . Frequent minor violations result in increased inspection frequency .
Liquor-Serving Businesses	Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission (OLCC) (Liquor license required; server permits for staff). City alcohol serving permits in some	Regular compliance checks (by OLCC, often random). No set annual inspection, but minor decoy stings and site visits occur 1-2 year. Aim to visit each licensee	OLCC enforcement: progressive penalties. First minor sale = ~\$1,650 fine or 10-day suspension ; repeat offenses = longer suspensions or revocation .

	cities.	every few years.	Notable: Bar fined \$6.7k (instead of 37-day shutdown) for serving minors, lacking permits .
Cannabis Businesses	Oregon Liquor & Cannabis Commission (OLCC) (Cannabis license required for growers, processors, labs, retailers). Local permits in some cities (e.g. Portland).	Frequent monitoring (state tracking system + unannounced inspections). Annual renewal inspections and risk-based audits. Minor decoy checks at dispensaries (ongoing – 92% compliance in 2024) .	OLCC enforcement: strict. Selling to minor = penalty (suspension/fine akin to liquor). Serious violations = immediate suspension/revocation. Ex: OLCC suspended a farm’s license for diverting ~80 lbs off premises ; 7 labs faced license cancellation for test fraud .
Tattoo/Body Piercing Studios	Oregon Health Licensing Office – Board of Body Art Practitioners (State license for facility and each artist).	Periodic HLO inspections for safety/sanitation (unannounced). No fixed schedule published; advised to self-inspect regularly . Certificate of inspection posted in studio .	State enforcement: fines for health violations or unlicensed practice. Studios can be shut down for sanitary hazards. Enforcement similar to cosmetology (HLO can suspend licenses for infection control breaches).
Child Care Facilities	Office of Child Care, Dept. of Early Learning (State license for daycare centers & homes).	At least annual inspections by OCC specialists. Licensed centers often 2x/year (renewal + unannounced visit). Additional inspections for complaints.	State enforcement: probation, civil penalties, or license revocation for serious non-compliance. (OCC revoked 5 home daycare licenses in 2016 for safety violations) . Operating without a license can draw legal action/closure.
Tobacco	Oregon requires all businesses selling tobacco, nicotine, or inhalant delivery system (IDS) products to obtain a Tobacco Retail License (TRL) from the Oregon Department of Revenue (DOR). The annual fee for this license is \$953 per location. This mandate	The Oregon Health Authority (OHA) or Local Public Health Authorities (LPHAs) are responsible for conducting compliance checks to ensure adherence to tobacco retail laws. Each licensed retailer undergoes two	Violations identified during these inspections can result in escalating penalties, including fines, license suspension, or revocation. For instance, in Benton County, the penalty structure is as follows: • First Violation: \$1,000 fine.

	<p>applies to a wide range of establishments, including convenience stores, bars, hotels, restaurants, gas stations, and music venues.</p>	<p>inspections annually:</p> <p>1. Minimum Legal Sales Age Inspection: An unannounced visit where a youth inspector attempts to purchase tobacco products to verify that sales are not made to individuals under 21 years of age.</p> <p>2. Routine Compliance Inspection: A scheduled inspection assessing the retailer’s overall compliance with all applicable tobacco retail sales laws.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Second Violation (within 60 months): \$2,000 fine and 45-day license suspension. • Third Violation (within 60 months): \$3,500 fine and license revocation, with eligibility to reapply after six months. • Fourth or Subsequent Violation (within 60 months): \$5,000 fine and license revocation.
<p>Firearm Dealers (FFLs)</p>	<p>No Oregon state agency oversight (no state dealer license). Only Federal ATF license required. Oregon State Police runs background checks, but no state licensing of gun stores.</p>	<p>Rare federal inspections. ATF’s goal is each dealer every 3 years, but due to staffing, only ~2-3% of Oregon’s ~2,000 dealers were inspected annually in 2022–23 . No routine inspections.</p>	<p>No state penalties or inspection, since Oregon has no state regulatory scheme for gun dealers. While Federal enforcement is allowed (ATF can issue warnings, revoke FFL for violations of federal law such as selling to prohibited persons, not reporting sales), it’s rare and not enforced. In 2023, only 34 dealers were inspected out of ~2,000 and even a dealer that was recommended for license suspension is still operating.</p>

Oregon Industries and Regulations

Cosmetology Businesses (Barbers, Hair Salons, Nail Salons)

Regulatory Agency & Licensing: Oregon's Health Licensing Office (HLO) – specifically the Board of Cosmetology – oversees barbering, hair design, esthetics, and nail technology. Any person practicing these trades must hold an individual practitioner certificate, and any shop/facility must obtain a facility license from the state (renewed annually). The facility license and practitioner certificates must be prominently posted, and shops may not operate without a current license.

Inspections: The HLO is legally required to “provide for the inspection of facilities” for compliance with health and safety rules (per ORS 690.225). In practice, HLO compliance officers conduct periodic unannounced inspections of licensed cosmetology facilities to check for sanitation, infection control, and licensing compliance. While a set interval (e.g. annual) for routine inspections is not explicitly published, salons are encouraged to perform monthly self-inspections to stay ready for surprise state inspections. During an official visit, inspectors verify that hygiene protocols (sterilizing tools, clean linens, etc.) are followed and that no unlicensed activity is occurring. Notably, salons must post the most recent inspection certificate in public view, indicating that inspections do occur regularly (the certificate serves as proof of the last inspection date).

Enforcement: The Board of Cosmetology (through HLO) can issue citations, fines, or even suspend/revoke licenses for violations of health and safety rules. Oregon Administrative Rules set a schedule of civil penalties for various infractions. For example, failing to post the latest inspection certificate is a violation carrying a presumptive fine of \$200 for a first offense. Other common violations include unsanitary conditions (e.g. improper tool disinfection or storage) or practitioners working with lapsed licenses – these typically result in corrective orders and fines, with higher penalties for repeat offenses. In serious cases (e.g. causing health hazards or repeated non-compliance), the HLO can suspend or revoke a salon's facility license or a practitioner's certificate under state law. Such enforcement actions, while relatively infrequent, do occur to protect public health and maintain industry standards.

Food Service Establishments (Restaurants and Food Vendors)

Regulatory Agency & Licensing: Oregon Health Authority (OHA), through its Food Safety Program, regulates restaurants, food carts, and other food service facilities. Typically, local county health departments are authorized to administer this program. Any establishment serving food to the public must obtain a food service license (usually annual) from the county health/environmental health department, operating under OHA rules. Before opening, new facilities undergo plan review and a site inspection to ensure they meet Oregon's Food Sanitation Rules. Licenses must be renewed each year with a fee, and cannot be maintained without complying with inspection requirements.

Inspections: Routine health inspections are conducted twice yearly (semi-annually) for restaurants in Oregon, as required by state law (ORS 624.060) and OHA regulations. Environmental health specialists from the county visit each restaurant at least every six months to perform unannounced inspections. These inspections check food handling practices, food temperatures, hygiene, facility cleanliness, and other safety measures. Each inspection results in a sanitation score and report; high-priority violations (like improper food temperatures, cross-contamination, or poor employee hygiene) must be corrected immediately or within a short time frame. Inspection results are typically public – for instance, Multnomah County posts restaurant inspection scores online for consumers. If a restaurant fails to meet minimum standards (score below 70), it is re-inspected within 30 days under state rules. Persistently low scores trigger more frequent inspections (quarterly) until problems are resolved.

Enforcement: County health officials have authority to enforce food safety regulations. They can issue warning notices, require on-site corrections during inspections, and schedule follow-up inspections for observed violations. In cases of serious risk, regulators will take stronger action: A restaurant can be summarily closed if an imminent public health hazard is found or if critical violations aren't fixed promptly. For example, if a refrigeration failure causes unsafe food temperatures that aren't immediately addressed, inspectors can shut down the establishment until the issue is resolved. Oregon administrative rules explicitly provide for closure orders when a critical violation is uncorrected within the allotted time or an establishment scores below the acceptable threshold on a re-inspection. Such closures remain in effect until the hazard is eliminated and an inspection deems the business safe to reopen. Enforcement can also include fines or legal action for operating without a license or willfully violating food safety laws, though in practice the threat of closure and reinspections is the primary enforcement mechanism. There are numerous instances of Oregon restaurants being temporarily closed by health authorities due to foodborne illness outbreaks or severe sanitation issues (documented in county health reports and occasional news articles), underscoring that active oversight exists in this sector.

Liquor Businesses (Bars, Taverns, Liquor Retailers)

Regulatory Agency & Licensing: The Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) is the state agency responsible for regulating businesses that manufacture, distribute, or sell alcoholic beverages. Any business serving alcohol – whether a bar, tavern, restaurant with a bar, brewery taproom, or liquor store – must obtain the appropriate OLCC liquor license. Licenses vary by type (e.g. Full On-Premises Sales for

bars/restaurants, Off-Premises Sales for stores, Brewery/Public House licenses, etc.), and each licensee is subject to OLCC rules. Owners and managers undergo background checks, and servers must obtain an OLCC service permit (requiring training in responsible alcohol service). The OLCC license must be renewed annually and can be revoked or not renewed if the establishment fails to comply with regulations.

Inspections: The OLCC does not typically perform “health inspections” like a health department would, but it conducts regular compliance inspections and investigations of licensed liquor businesses. OLCC inspectors (or undercover agents) carry out unannounced compliance checks to enforce alcohol laws – for example, minor decoy operations to test whether staff check IDs and refuse sales to underage customers. These compliance inspections are routine and frequent. After a pandemic-related pause, OLCC ramped up minor decoy stings again in late 2022, finding initially low compliance rates. In 2022, only 71% of checked businesses obeyed the no-sales-to-minors rule, but compliance improved to 78% in 2023 and about 80% in 2024 with renewed enforcement efforts. (OLCC’s target is at least 90% compliance, so inspections continue until that goal is met.) Aside from minor sales, OLCC inspectors or investigators may visit premises to follow up on complaints of overserving intoxicated patrons, illegal alcohol sales after hours, or other violations of liquor laws. Oregon law grants OLCC inspectors and law enforcement the authority to enter licensed premises and examine records or equipment related to alcohol service (usually during business hours). In practice, compliance checks (like ID checks) occur randomly throughout the year, and any serious incidents (e.g. a police report of serving a visibly intoxicated person who then causes harm) will prompt a focused investigation by OLCC.

Enforcement: OLCC has a well-defined penalty schedule and enforcement process for liquor licensees. When a violation is confirmed, OLCC can issue administrative sanctions ranging from warnings or mandatory training, to monetary fines, to temporary license suspensions, or even permanent license cancellation for severe or repeated violations. Penalties escalate for repeated offenses within a two-year period as per OLCC rules. For example, an establishment’s first-time violation for selling alcohol to a minor typically draws either a fine (on the order of ~\$1,650) or a short license suspension (~10 days), whereas a third violation can result in a 30-day suspension or higher fines, and a fourth violation may lead to license revocation. Anecdotal enforcement case: In 2023, the OLCC disciplined a tavern in Yachats after an investigation found three separate violations over two years – including two instances where staff served alcohol to minors and one instance of an employee lacking a valid service permit. The OLCC’s initial action proposed a 52-day license suspension (or a ~\$9,400 fine); ultimately a settlement was reached for a 37-day suspension or \$6,700 fine, and the owner opted to pay the fine to avoid closing the bar for over a month. All three violations were recorded in the business’s file and will factor into any future license reviews. This case exemplifies how OLCC enforces regulations with significant penalties. In serious situations, OLCC can and does revoke licenses – for instance, an establishment that repeatedly served minors or was the source of persistent serious incidents could lose its license. Overall, the liquor industry in Oregon operates under active oversight: compliance checks are ongoing, and enforcement (fines, suspensions, and occasionally revocations) is regularly applied to ensure alcohol laws are followed.

Cannabis Businesses (Recreational Marijuana Industry)

Regulatory Agency & Licensing: Oregon’s legal cannabis industry is overseen by the Oregon Liquor and Cannabis Commission (OLCC) (known as the Oregon Liquor Control Commission before its name was updated to reflect cannabis regulation). All recreational cannabis businesses – including producers (growers), processors (who make edibles, concentrates, etc.), wholesalers, laboratories (testing facilities), and retailers (dispensaries) – must be licensed by OLCC. License applicants undergo a rigorous process (background checks, land use compatibility reviews, security plan requirements, etc.), and licenses must be renewed annually with continued compliance. (Medical marijuana grow sites and dispensaries, by contrast, are registered through the Oregon Health Authority’s OMMP program, but even those have seen OLCC involvement in inspections in recent years.) For the purposes of this report, the focus is on OLCC-licensed recreational cannabis facilities.

Inspections: OLCC uses a combination of electronic monitoring and physical inspections to regulate cannabis businesses. All licensed cannabis products are tracked in the state’s seed-to-sale tracking system (METRC), which allows OLCC to monitor inventory and flag discrepancies that might indicate diversion or other issues. OLCC compliance officers conduct on-site inspections both as part of the initial licensing (to verify security systems, record-keeping, and regulatory compliance before opening) and as ongoing oversight. Routine compliance inspections can be unannounced. Inspectors may check a retailer’s ID checking procedures (often via minor decoy operations similar to alcohol stings) – indeed, OLCC runs underage buyer compliance checks at cannabis dispensaries. These decoy checks show a high compliance rate: by 2023, 87% of cannabis retailers passed ID checks, and in 2024 the compliance rate rose to 92%, exceeding OLCC’s 90% target. This indicates regular inspections are happening (and roughly 8% of checks result in a violation for selling to a minor, which then triggers enforcement). OLCC also inspects grow operations and processors, often focusing on inventory reconciliation (making sure no cannabis is missing/unaccounted) and safety standards. For example, inspectors might visit a farm to ensure plants and harvests match METRC records, or inspect a processor for proper chemical storage and lab testing of products. There isn’t a fixed schedule (like “annual inspection”) published for each licensee; rather, OLCC uses a risk-based approach – businesses can expect periodic unannounced visits especially if their tracking data raises red flags or if there have been complaints. Additionally, any time a licensee undergoes a change (location move, ownership change) or seeks renewal with compliance issues, an inspection may occur.

Enforcement: The OLCC wields broad enforcement powers in the cannabis sector, similar to alcohol. Penalties are tiered by the severity of the violation (Category I violations being the most serious, often calling for license revocation). Common violations include security lapses, sales to minors, product contamination, or “diversion” of cannabis to the illegal market. OLCC can impose fines, license suspensions, or outright license revocations. There have been multiple high-profile enforcement actions in recent years. For instance, in February 2024 OLCC issued an immediate suspension of a licensed cannabis producer (Solray Enterprises Inc.) after discovering egregious violations that posed a threat to public safety. In that case, the company was found to have transferred around 80 pounds of marijuana

from its licensed premises to a private residence, an unlicensed location, and had 100 pounds of product missing according to tracking records. Such large-scale diversion led OLCC to halt the business's operations on an emergency basis pending further legal action. In another sweeping action in late 2024, Oregon regulators moved against several cannabis laboratories: OLCC sent notices to seven of the state's eleven certified testing labs proposing license cancellations or suspensions due to alleged THC potency inflation fraud (doctoring test samples to report higher THC content). This crackdown, reported in October 2024, signaled strict enforcement of testing standards, with the OLCC pursuing the harshest penalties (license revocation, a Category I violation) for labs that intentionally manipulated results. These examples illustrate that the cannabis industry, despite being relatively new, faces a robust enforcement regime in Oregon. OLCC regularly penalizes retailers for any sales to minors (typically a license suspension and fine on the first offense, escalating for repeats), and it has shown willingness to shut down businesses – whether growers, processors, labs, or shops – that flout the rules in ways that threaten public health or the regulated market's integrity. In sum, cannabis businesses in Oregon are as heavily monitored (if not more so) as alcohol businesses, with routine compliance checks and significant consequences for violations.

Other Regulated Industries (Examples)

In addition to the industries above, Oregon rigorously licenses and inspects many other types of businesses that affect public health and safety. A few notable examples include:

Tattoo and Body Piercing Establishments: These are regulated by the Board of Electrologists and Body Art Practitioners under the Health Licensing Office. Like cosmetology, tattoo artists must be individually licensed and must only practice in a licensed facility. Oregon has strict health and safety standards for tattoo/piercing studios (covering sterilization of equipment, use of single-use needles, sharps disposal, etc.). Inspections are conducted by HLO to ensure compliance – studios are advised to perform regular self-checks to avoid violations when state inspectors visit. An inspection certificate must be posted, analogous to salon requirements. Enforcement actions (fines, license suspensions) are taken if a shop is found operating unsafely (for example, using improper sterilization or unlicensed practitioners). These measures are in place to prevent blood-borne infections and protect client safety, and Oregon's enforcement is consistent (HLO can and does cite shops for even minor sanitary lapses, as evidenced by the detailed checklists they use).

Child Care Facilities: Daycares and preschool centers in Oregon must be licensed by the Office of Child Care (OCC), part of the Department of Early Learning and Care. Licensed child care centers and in-home daycares are subject to annual inspections and monitoring visits to ensure they meet health, safety, and staff training requirements. In fact, certified child care centers in Oregon receive at least two inspections per year – typically one unannounced mid-year visit in addition to the annual renewal inspection – while licensed home daycares are inspected at least annually (and additionally if complaints arise). The OCC employs regional compliance specialists who perform these on-site evaluations (checking caregiver-to-child ratios, safety of the physical environment, proper background checks for staff, etc.).

Enforcement in child care is taken very seriously due to child safety stakes: violations can lead to fines or license revocation, and operating illegally (without a license) can result in shutdowns and civil penalties. As an example of enforcement, the Early Learning Division (the OCC's predecessor) reported that it had revoked two child care center licenses in its entire history up to 2017, and in 2016 alone it revoked five licenses of in-home (family) child care providers for serious violations. While revocation is relatively rare (used for egregious cases like abuse, neglect, or willful non-compliance), lesser sanctions are common – providers may be put on conditional licenses or fined for failing to meet standards. Moreover, state law now requires that inspection reports and substantiated complaints for child care facilities be made available to the public, reflecting a push for transparency and accountability in this heavily regulated industry.

Others: Numerous other business activities in Oregon are licensed and inspected. For example, food processors and grocery stores are inspected by the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Food Safety Division; lodging facilities and public pools are inspected by health authorities; pharmacies are licensed by the Oregon Board of Pharmacy, which conducts periodic pharmacy inspections; automotive repair shops and other industries generating hazardous waste get inspected by environmental agencies or OSHA for compliance. Even professions like construction contractors are licensed by the state (Construction Contractors Board) and can be fined or suspended for rule violations (though their "inspections" tend to be complaint-driven rather than routine). The overarching theme is that for most industries with potential impact on health, safety, or consumer protection, Oregon has a framework of state-level licensing with enforcement mechanisms that include inspections or audits and penalties for non-compliance.

Local (City/County) Requirements and Enforcement

While state agencies provide the primary regulatory oversight, local governments in Oregon also impose additional requirements or conduct enforcement that complements state rules in several industries:

County Health Departments: As noted, county agencies carry out the frontline inspections for food establishments on behalf of the state. Counties like Multnomah, Washington, Marion, etc., not only inspect restaurants twice a year, but also handle enforcement of the state food code locally (issuing closure notices or fines under state authority). Counties often have local ordinances aligning with state food safety laws and may set local fee schedules for licensing. The public often perceives this as "county restaurant inspections," even though the standards are set by the state OHA.

City Business Licenses: Many Oregon cities require businesses to obtain a general city business license (or registration) to operate, which is mostly a tax/registration mechanism and not a safety inspection. However, some cities have taken a more active regulatory role for certain industries. City of Portland is a prime example – it instituted a Marijuana Regulatory License program (Portland City Code Chapter 14B.130) for cannabis businesses within city limits. This local license (required in addition to the OLCC license) gave Portland officials oversight on issues like zoning, security, and nuisance compliance.

Portland's program allowed for city inspections of cannabis facilities and enforcement of local rules (for instance, preventing odor complaints or ensuring businesses meet neighborhood requirements). In recent years, as state rules tightened, Portland streamlined some of this, but it still requires cannabis businesses to adhere to local licensing. Portland (and some other cities) also enforces local laws on alcohol service beyond OLCC's work – for example, Portland police or OLCC working with city agencies might conduct “over-service” stings or respond to neighborhood complaints about bars, potentially leading to city nuisance actions or recommendations to OLCC for license penalties.

Fire and Building Inspections: Local fire marshals and building inspectors also play a role by enforcing fire codes, occupancy limits, and building safety for businesses. A new restaurant or salon, for instance, will need a fire inspection and building code approval from the city/county as part of occupancy permitting. These are one-time (for opening or remodel) but in some jurisdictions, fire departments do annual fire-safety inspections of certain high-risk businesses (like nightclubs or large daycare centers). While not focused on the business's operational license, they are another layer of safety enforcement at the local level.

Local Ordinances: Some local governments have ordinances addressing specific concerns – e.g. a city might have stricter noise regulations for bars (enforced by city code compliance), or cleanliness standards for tattoo parlors that supplement state rules. For instance, a county health unit might have rules for massage or bodywork businesses if not fully covered by state law. These local requirements are highlighted separately because they can vary widely: one county or city may impose rules that another does not. Overall, however, none of the local programs eliminate the need for state licensing – they are additional. Notably, if a business loses its state license, no city license can allow it to continue operating; conversely, a city can sometimes effectively shutter a business by revoking a local permit or declaring it a nuisance, even if the state license remains technically valid.

In summary, state and local authorities in Oregon are partners in enforcement. The primary focus of licensing/inspection is at the state level for the industries discussed, but counties and cities often add their own oversight or assist in carrying out state mandates. This dual layer means many businesses face multiple inspections – for example, a restaurant in Portland will have city building and fire inspections, twice-yearly county health inspections, and if it serves alcohol, random OLCC compliance checks – a stark contrast to some other activities (as we will see with firearm dealers).