

TEXAS HISTORICAL COMMISSION

TEXAS TREASURE BUSINESS AWARD

Frequently Asked Questions

NOMINATION PROCESS

Q. How is a business nominated for this award? A. A nomination may be initiated by any elected state official or business representative. Send a completed nomination form (link) along with a brief history of the business and proof of the date it was founded to the Texas Historical Commission (THC).

Q. What is acceptable proof of the business founding date? A. One or more of the following are acceptable: Ledger pages; newspaper advertisements; board meeting minutes; Invoices, bills or checks; state licenses; flyers; city directory listings from that founding year.

Q. When is the nomination due? A. Nominations are accepted anytime throughout the year.

Q. How long will it take the THC to process our nomination? A. Nominators will be notified of the results within 60 days of receipt of a complete nomination.

Q. Who would you consider to be an “authorized representative” who can sign the application? A. Anyone certain that the company wants this recognition and who has the authority to ensure that the company will proudly and publicly display the award will be accepted as an authorized representative.

AWARD QUALIFICATIONS

Q. Do nonprofit organizations qualify for this award? A. Nonprofit organizations contribute greatly to the quality of life in Texas, and we respect their efforts. However, this award is limited to for-profit companies and businesses.

Q. How many years must a business continually operate to receive this award? A. Businesses that have been in continuous for-profit operation in the State of Texas for at least 50 years may be awarded.

Q. What constitutes “continuous operation”? A. Any business that has continued in operation without substantial interruption will qualify for the award. For example, if a business was closed while the owner was serving in the military but it was reopened at the conclusion of that service, it will be considered continuous operation. But if the owner goes into a different line of work, or leaves Texas to move that business to another state and then returns and reopens the original company, the business will not be considered continuous operation.

Q. What is a “very similar type of business”? A. Some wagon companies eventually turned to automobile production. Making cars and wagons is one example of a very similar type of business. But if a wagon manufacturing company stopped doing that and started issuing insurance policies, it would not qualify for this recognition. There may be some flexibility in this requirement, so if you are unsure if your business qualifies for this award, please call the number provided below for clarification.

Q. What if ownership has changed over time? **A.** Businesses that change ownership and location may still qualify for the award as long as the business has been continually operated and owned as an independent business in Texas.

Q. What is an “independent business”? **A.** For purposes of this program, any business that has its corporate offices in Texas or is owned by Texans and operated in Texas is considered an independent company, so long as the business is not a unit of a chain or franchise based outside the state. We certainly value the contributions of out-of-state-based business chains and franchises to the state’s economy, but their role in our state’s history is not the same as a Texas-based independent company. For example, a bank that has been absorbed into a national company is no longer an independent company and so will not qualify for this award. However, national or even multi-national companies based in Texas may qualify for this award at the corporate level. Nominations should always be made at the corporate level since a single business location of a corporation is not eligible on its own.

Q. Our headquarters is located outside of Texas, but we’ve been doing business in Texas for more than 50 years. Do we qualify for this award? **A.** If you are operating as an independent business and not as a chain or franchise unit, you may still qualify for this award.

Q. What do you mean by “continuously owned by the same family?” **A.** Ownership may pass through cousins or in-laws and still qualify for this recognition. Relationship by blood, marriage, or adoption are all acceptable.

Q. What is “architectural integrity”? **A.** If a building still looks much like it did when it was new, it maintains its architectural integrity. If it has been changed so that it no longer looks the way it did (for example, if brick is covered with stucco, windows are replaced or entrances are moved) then it probably doesn’t have its architectural integrity. The THC staff will make this determination using photographs provided by you with your nomination.

AWARD WINNERS

Q. How are businesses notified of award designation? **A.** When an award has been approved, the THC will notify the nominator by an email containing press templates and event planning guidelines. A packet will be mailed containing the award certificate signed by the state senator and representative of the district in which the business headquarters is located, and a window/door decal.

Q. How and when is the award presented? **A.** The THC will send an award packet to you by mail containing press release and media advisory templates, an award certificate (one per award), and a decal for your business door or window. If preferred by all parties, presentation of the award can be held at an appropriate setting as agreed upon by your state senator or representative, their office staff, and/or the staff of the THC. If a public presentation is made, it is typically held in the community where you maintain your headquarters, but other arrangements may be considered. The THC does not plan presentation events but is very happy to participate if scheduling allows.

Q. Our headquarters is located in north Texas, but our primary place of business is in south Texas. May we decide where we want to receive this award? **A.** The presentation of this award should be held in the community where your headquarters is located, but another location can be considered.

Q. We have several branches in senate and house districts all over Texas. Which of our state senators and representatives will be notified if we win this award? **A.** The THC will notify the

senator and representative whose districts are identified on your nomination form as being in the area where your primary place of business is located. We would urge you to let other public officials know about the award.

Q. We operate throughout Texas and we see the receipt of this award as a great public relations tool. Can we hold multiple award presentations at our various branches? A. We strongly support public recognition of your achievement. If you believe that additional presentations /announcements would have a positive impact on the reputation of your business, you might consider contacting us and the state senators and representatives in the districts where your branches are located to see if we can participate in such events.

Q. Will the THC put out press releases about our business winning this award? A. The THC does not send out press releases on individual awards. A template press release and media advisory will be provided in your award packet so you can let your community know about your achievement. Whenever possible and with timely notification the THC will publicize your event on our website Calendar of Events and through our social media outlets. Please use the Presentation Event Notification form found on the THC website to let us know about your event.

Q. Will there be a statewide announcement about this award? A. We hope to have an announcement on the floor of the Senate and the House during the legislative session every two years that will list the recipients of this award during the previous biennium.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Q. What happens if the business is sold or moves to a new location after receiving special awards for being in the same family or preserving the architectural integrity of the previous business building? A. The business deserved that recognition at the time it was presented, and can continue to display the award.

For more information about the Texas Treasure Business Award, please contact Ginny Owens with the Community Heritage Development Division at 512.463.6006 or Virginia.Owens@thc.texas.gov.