

LICENSES – PERMITS FOR STARTING A BUSINESS

Please contact Small Business Administration – Charlotte, NC location go to www.sba.gov/nc for further information.

1. Call the State of North Carolina (Business License Information Office) at: 800-228-8443 to check on any state license requirements for your business. (Out of state: call (919) 715-2864)
2. If you have chosen a specific location site for your business or are planning a home-based business, call the Zoning Department at (704) 866-6746 to make determination of conformity according to zoning regulations.
 - a. If you are planning to sell food items you should contact the Environmental Health Department at (704) 864-9062.
 - b. If you are planning to sell alcohol you should contact Alcohol Law Enforcement at (704) 866-4173.
 - c. Painters, Pressure Washing, Mobile Auto Detailing, Car Washing, Carpet Cleaning, Restoration, Lawn Care, Pushcarts & Carnivals should contact Environmental Protection at (704) 336-5500.
 - d. Restaurants and Car Washes should contact Stephanie Scheringer at the Wastewater Treatment Division (704) 854-6669
3. Decide on your business type
 - Sole Proprietorship
 - Partnership
 - Corporation
 - Limited Liability Company
 - Limited Partnership
4. Register your business:
 - a. A Sole Proprietorship or a Partnership must register with the Register of Deeds office, call (704) 862-7681
 - b. The Secretary of State of North Carolina must charter a Corporation. Go to www.sosnc.com - Corporation Division – (instructions, paperwork, fees) (919) 807-2225.
 - c. Limited Liability Company records are filed in the office of the Secretary of State North Carolina. Go to www.sosnc.com - Corporations Division – (instructions, paperwork, fees) (919) 807-2225.

- d. A Limited Partnership must also be registered with the Secretary of State of North Carolina and Register of Deeds.
5. Once your business type and name have been approved, registered, and/or filed...go to www.irs.gov to file for a Federal Identification Number. Search for form SS-4, print form and fill-in. You can call in the information via telephone at (800) 829-4933 and receive your Federal ID# (EIN#) immediately or file on-line...the easiest way to get to the online EIN application is to type "EIN" in the IRS keyword search on the irs.gov home page. A Sole Proprietor that has no employees and files no excise or pension tax returns is the only business that does not need a Federal ID#. In this instance, the Sole Proprietor uses his or her Social Security Number as their ID#
6. For businesses that need a Sales Tax Number and/or have employees you can go to North Carolina Department of Revenue website, www.dor.state.nc.us/business, obtain form AS/RP 1 (Registration application for Sales and Use Tax, Withholding). You can also contact N.C. Department of Revenue, 500 West Trade Street (704) 342-6121 for forms and/or questions.
7. For businesses with employees you will need to register with the Employment Security Commission (N.C. Unemployment Insurance). Go to www.ncesc.com (Business Services – New Business – Sign Up to Apply).
8. Business License: Unless explicitly provided for in the City of Gastonia Ordinances all business/trade and professions are required a license. All business located inside the City of Gastonia, or outside the City but conducting a trade or occupation or performing services within the City are required to purchase a business license prior to beginning operations. This requirement applies to all businesses, whether profit, non-profit or home based. Any questions, you may call (704) 866-6729.

To obtain your license go to the Building Inspections Division at 450 S York Street. You will need to complete a "Privilege License Application"...your business will be classified which will determine the rate/fees to be paid. The Zoning Department, Environmental Health (if applicable), Wastewater Treatment Division (if applicable) and Alcohol Law Enforcement (if applicable) must be approved before the license is issued. If your business is located within the City limits of Gastonia, or located within the City of Gastonia's ETJ you will need to complete a "Zoning Certificate of Occupancy Application". City of Gastonia Zoning CO fee is \$26.25.