

# Opening Your Business—Simplest Scenarios

## Steps for Opening a Business:

1. In an existing space
2. That was used by a similar business in the past and
3. Where no construction is proposed that requires a building permit and
4. Where the use type is something other than:
  - Restaurant, food service or commercial kitchen
  - Beauty salon, barber shop, or spa
  - Vehicle repair facility or any business with a paint booth
  - Day care or child care facility
  - Hotel/motel
  - Assembly use such as a church, private club, etc.
  - A use that has a hazardous classification
  - A use that is similar to any of the above

**1** Submit a Business License and Commercial Utilities Application through our [Business License Application portal](#). We will process these applications for you—there is no need for you to contact other City departments for help.

- The fee for business licensing is based off the business's gross income.
- Utility deposits are determined by industry comps and history of usage at the location.

At this point, you may also want to request natural gas from [York County Natural Gas](#) and phone/cable/internet from [Comporium Communications](#).



**2** Call us for an inspection at least two business days before you are ready to open, after you have set things up and have brought in your inventory. We will give you a time frame for the inspection in the morning or afternoon.

**(803) 329-7093**

The next page shows the items that our inspector will be looking for. Our inspector will notify you of any items that still need to be addressed and then re-inspected.

**3** When your inspections are approved, the process is complete and you are ready to **open for business!** We will mail your business license to you.

## Fire Code Inspection



### Fire extinguishers:

- Correct type and number:** Generally, a five-pound ABC fire extinguisher is required for every 1,500 square feet, but this can vary depending on the layout or if a large quantity of combustible materials are present
- Recently tested:** Fire extinguishers are required to be serviced and tagged by a licensed fire equipment dealer every year. The last test date will be listed on the tag.

### All lighted exit signs and emergency lights are present and work properly.

You can test the exit signs by pressing the "Test" button, which should be located on the bottom of the sign. After the button is pressed, the sign should stay illuminated if it is working properly. Emergency lights illuminate your exit pathways in case of a power failure so you can safely exit the building.

### Doorways and exits are not blocked and are easily accessible in case of an emergency.

### Any fire sprinkler systems, fire suppression systems and fire alarm systems work properly and have been tested recently.

Check in advance with your landlord to verify the status of these systems and their scheduled testing. Your landlord should have a recent inspection report from within the last 12 months.

### Your address is clearly posted with numbers or letters not less than 4 inches in height.

### Any hazardous chemicals on site do not exceed the maximum allowed.

Hazardous chemicals would include things like oxygen tanks, gas or other fuels, fireworks, etc.

## Building Code Inspection

### Americans with Disabilities Act requirements:

- Handicapped parking space signs and markings are still in place and legible.
- The handicapped accessible route into the building has not been changed.
- Handicapped restroom facilities have not been altered.

### There have not been alterations of electrical, mechanical or plumbing systems.

### City ordinances require a "no smoking" sign to be posted. The ordinance prohibits smoking in all enclosed public places and within 10 feet from any entry. Free "No Smoking" stickers are available in our office.

## Other Notes

If you decide that you need to do more extensive work to your space, we will schedule the inspection of these basics to coincide with the final inspection for your permitted construction. These types of work require a building permit:

- Adding or removing a wall.
- Installing or modifying a HVAC unit.
- Installing any new electrical wiring.
- Installing any new plumbing.

Also, while this will not affect your inspection for opening, you will also need a permit to install a new sign or replace the face of an existing sign, put up a temporary banner, or install a fence.