

NYC Post-Emergency Small Business RESTARTER GUIDE



STAY SAFE

- **Monitor conditions and City response.** Vital information and announcements can be found at nyc.gov/oem and twitter.com/nycgov.
- **Stay clear of unsafe structures.** Follow postings left by the Police Department, the Fire Department, or the NYC Department of Buildings. Use your judgment before going near damaged structures. View safety tips at on.nyc.gov/DOBStormTips.
- **Lock your facility.** Protect yourself from theft and liability for injury to an intruder by locking your doors.



Get help from an NYC Restoration Center. These centers provide services to residents and businesses, such as counseling and temporary housing information. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/NYCRestore.



If your building has a red or yellow sign posted by the NYC Department of Buildings, you cannot reinhabit that space until it is approved for occupancy. Look for additional information in this guide and online at on.nyc.gov/DOBStorm.



STAY OPEN WHERE POSSIBLE

- **Make a plan for how to reopen.** Reach out to the NYC Restoration Business Acceleration Team to understand obstacles you face, steps to overcome them, and resources you can draw on. Contact the team at nyc.gov/rbat.
- **Turn on utilities and clean up.** The NYC Restoration Business Acceleration Team can put you in touch with utilities and the NYC Department of Sanitation to get your business powered and accessible: nyc.gov/rbat.
- **Make sure your licenses and permits remain valid.** City orders posted on your property can void permissions to occupy or operate your business. Otherwise, licenses and permits are valid until their expiration date. If you decide to reoccupy your building and reopen your business, you must comply with laws as you would at any time.
- **Make sure copies of licenses and permits are on site.** This includes those for your business, such as Food Service Establishment Permits, and for individuals, such as Food Protection Certificates. To replace lost permits or licenses, contact the issuing agency or the NYC Restoration Business Acceleration Team at nyc.gov/rbat.
- **Contact your customers, employees, and suppliers to share your plans.**



Get support from business partners. The NYC Economic Development Corporation is coordinating services to help businesses, such as **free supplies** and **cleaning**. View the list at nycedc.com/BacktoBusiness.

Find free workspace. If your space is damaged, you can access temporary space with power, internet, and supplies, at nycedc.com/FreeTemporaryWorkspace.

Retain your employees. Rather than lay off full-time employees during a temporary downturn, enroll in the Shared Work Program to reduce your payroll costs. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/nysharedwork.

Use this restarter guide to help you get back to business.
Get started today at nyc.gov/rbat.



ASSESS DAMAGES

- **Follow instructions found on colored signs posted on your building** or block by the Department of Buildings. These signs help you **assess structural damage** (to foundations, walls, and roofs) and determine next steps. **Green** means that the building appears safe, **yellow** that the building is damaged but that limited entry is permitted, and **red** that the building is unsafe to enter or occupy. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/DOBStorm.
- **Assess structural damage.** If you have a **yellow** or **red** sign, you will need to consult a licensed professional about the extent of the damage and have the professional make repairs before you can reoccupy restricted areas. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/DOBStorm.
- **Assess non-structural damage.** To assess damage from wind, water, and fire, you should consult a licensed contractor about your finished interiors (paint, wallpaper, flooring, and furniture) and equipment (kitchen, boiler). Find a professional at on.nyc.gov/PostStormProsDOB.
- **Document damaged structures and possessions.** For insurance claims, take photos of damages to the structure and to your inventory.



If you can see storm damage on your building but there is either a green sign or no sign on your property or block, call 311 to schedule a reinspection. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/DOBStorm.

Discard perishable/dangerous items after documenting them.



GET COMPENSATION AND CAPITAL

- **Call your insurance company** to discuss measures you must take to qualify for compensation before you begin cleaning up or rebuilding.
- **Keep invoices or receipts if you are cleaning up or repairing damages.** These may be needed for claiming compensation later.
- **Get compensation for damages.** Contact your insurance company to claim damaged inventory, possessions, and structures, and deferred income. The NY State Department of Financial Services has a hotline to assist in filing claims, at 1-800-339-1759 or dfs.ny.gov.
- **Get an emergency loan from the City.** The City, in partnership with Goldman Sachs and the NY Bankers Association, is offering low-interest loans of up to \$25,000. Apply at on.nyc.gov/SandyLoanApp.
- **Get an emergency loan from the federal government** of up to \$2 million. Affected businesses must first register with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (fema.gov/sandy), and then apply with the US Small Business Administration (on.nyc.gov/SandySBAUpdates).
- **Get an emergency grant.** The City is administering matching grants of up to \$10,000 each for businesses that get an NYC emergency loan. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/SandyBizGrant.
- **Help your employees recover lost income.** Employees can apply to NY State Department of Labor for benefits for work cancelled during and following a disaster. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/nysdua.

Get help on financial claims and applications from your local NYC Business Solutions Center. Find a center at on.nyc.gov/BizSolutions.



Special tax exemptions can help you cut costs. The Hurricane Emergency Sales Tax Exemption program helps businesses save 8.875% on purchases for rebuilding (\$100,000 savings maximum per business). Learn more at on.nyc.gov/SandyHESTEP.



REPLAN AND REBUILD

- **Get one point of contact.** The **NYC Restoration Business Acceleration Team** connects you with clean-up, rebuilding, and reopening services from city agencies and public utilities. Learn more at nyc.gov/rbat.
- **Take advantage of streamlined regulations and waived fees** for repair work. The NYC Department of Environmental Protection is easing requirements on boiler repairs (on.nyc.gov/SandyBoiler), and the NYC Department of Buildings is waiving fees and issuing rapid permits for electrical and plumbing work (on.nyc.gov/SandyFeesDOB).
- **Submit required plans for repair work.** Only a registered architect or professional engineer may submit plans to the NYC Department of Building. Plan approval can be monitored on BISWeb at on.nyc.gov/bis.
- **Post approved permits and safety information on your site** as instructed by agencies issuing permits.
- **Begin repairing.** Prepare with your licensed professional for mid-construction and final inspections.



Professional Certification or “Pro-Cert” could save you weeks in receiving permits. Pro-Cert allows a professional to self-certify projects without initial review from NYC Department of Buildings. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/ProCert.

Digital plan submissions save time. Have your professional use the NYC Development Hub, including for Pro-Cert. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/hub.



Replan your space as you correct damage to meet your needs, comply with new codes, and protect your establishment from future disasters. You may be unable to rebuild your space exactly as before if codes have changed since it was first built. Have your licensed professional check up-to-date codes. Find a professional to consult at on.nyc.gov/hireDOBpro.

For major alterations, you must obtain a new Certificate of Occupancy, Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, or Letter of Completion from the NYC Department of Buildings before inhabiting the building. Learn more at on.nyc.gov/CofO.



REOPEN YOUR DOORS

You've cleaned up and are about to begin operating your business again. Make sure your pre-disaster operating permits, licenses, and certificates are still valid. Then plan to keep things running smoothly in the future, no matter what the next turn brings.



BACK IN BUSINESS

If you made major repairs, replaced major equipment, or bought the establishment following the disaster, **you will need to obtain new permits and licenses.** The pre-disaster permits and licenses will not cover new conditions, new equipment, or new owners. To get help quickly obtaining credentials, contact the NYC Restoration Business Acceleration Team at nyc.gov/rbat.

Be ready for normal inspections. Some happen quarterly, and some twice per year.

Mark your calendar. Schedule equipment maintenance and set reminders to renew your permits and licenses.

The City's **Restoration Business Acceleration Team, known as RBAT**, can speed up your rebuilding and reopening efforts by coordinating reviews of your plans, providing consultations, and organizing inspections on your behalf.

Visit nyc.gov/rbat or call **311** and ask for RBAT.



Provide feedback on NYC Restarter Guide v1.0:
on.nyc.gov/guidesurvey1