

# NYC Starter Guide to Opening Your STOREFRONT OFFICE



## CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

- **Create a plan** for the type of business you will open.
- **Register your business.** LLCs, Corporations, and Limited Partnerships register with NY State (visit <http://on.nyc.gov/state>). General Partnerships and Sole Proprietorships register with the County Clerk (visit <http://on.nyc.gov/clerk>).
- **Apply for an Employer Identification Number (EIN),** also known as a Federal Tax ID Number. This is used to identify your business. If you are a sole proprietor, you may be able to use your Social Security Number instead. Visit <http://on.nyc.gov/ein>.
- **Research the insurance you will need,** such as workers' compensation, liability, and disability insurance. Some are required for permits and licenses.

Many professions require NY State professional licenses. The NYC Business Express Wizard (<http://on.nyc.gov/express>) can help you determine which licenses are necessary for you.



If you provide services that are taxable, you will need to get a Sales Tax ID from NY State. Apply early to avoid delays in receiving other permits. Learn more at <http://on.nyc.gov/taxid>.



## PLAN YOUR SPACE

- **Find a location** zoned for your business. Learn more at <http://on.nyc.gov/zoning>.
- **Consult a licensed professional** to review your location and plan any construction. Only a registered architect or professional engineer may submit plans to the NYC Department of Buildings. Changes to your space must comply with NYC Department of Buildings and Fire Department regulations.
- **Sign your lease.** Before you sign, review your location with a licensed professional and a lawyer to make sure it is right for your business.



Allow for time to receive approval from the Landmarks Preservation Commission before performing work on a location that is landmarked or located in an historic district. Learn more at <http://on.nyc.gov/landmarks>.

Use this starter guide to help you plan your way to success. Get started today at <http://on.nyc.gov/express>.



## APPLY FOR CONSTRUCTION PERMITS

- Have your licensed professional submit plans and required documents to the NYC Department of Buildings.
- **Change and resubmit plans as needed.** If there are objections to the proposed work due to safety or compliance issues, your licensed professional will receive notice by email and resubmit the drawings with the necessary changes.
- Monitor your job **on NYC Department of Buildings BISWeb** (<http://on.nyc.gov/bis>). Your status will be listed as "Assigned to P/E (Plan Examiner)," "P/E in Process," "P/E Disapproved," or "Approved." The status does not reflect whether or not your licensed professional has resubmitted plans.

A licensed professional may self-certify minor alterations online through a process called "professional certification" ("Pro Cert"). The application does not receive an initial NYC Department of Buildings plan review, but is subject to an audit. **Pro Cert could save you weeks in receiving your approvals and permits to start construction.**



Accelerate the plan review process for new buildings or major alterations that change a building's egress by directing your licensed professional to submit digital plans to the NYC Department of Buildings Hub. Learn more at <http://on.nyc.gov/hub>.



Consult with your licensed professional to identify utility requirements for your property (gas, electric, water, and sewer).



## BEGIN CONSTRUCTION

- After your plans are approved, your architect or general contractor must apply for and receive all necessary permits. All permits **must be displayed** at the worksite.
- Begin construction.
- **Progress inspections will be made throughout construction.** Consult with your licensed professional about any required progress inspections.



If you **want to install a canopy or signs** on the outside of the building, ensure you comply with the NYC Department of Transportation (for a canopy over the sidewalk) or the NYC Department of Buildings (if you nail or screw into the outside of the building).



## PREPARE TO OPEN

- Make sure your register is equipped to print your **business name and address** on your receipts.
- When the job is almost complete, your architect should arrange for final inspections and sign-off. To avoid violations, **you must obtain a Certificate of Occupancy, Temporary Certificate of Occupancy, or Letter of Completion** before opening your doors.
- **Hire a private carting service** for waste removal. For more information, go to <http://on.nyc.gov/carter>.



Your building may already offer a carting service, so check with your building owner.

If your business will repair electronics or home appliances, you will need an Electronic & Home Appliance Service Dealer License. Learn more at <http://on.nyc.gov/esd>.



## OPEN YOUR DOORS

You've opened your doors and are operating your office. **Congratulations!** Plan ahead to keep things running smoothly.



## STAYING OPEN

**Post all required posters and permits**, such as a No Smoking sign and an occupational health and safety (OSHA) poster.

Mark your calendar and set reminders to **update your professional licenses**.

Work with your accountant to **prepare to pay taxes**. Learn More at <http://on.nyc.gov/biztax>.

For comprehensive information, visit **NYC Business Express** at <http://on.nyc.gov/express>.

**NYC Business Solutions**, a set of services offered by the NYC Department of Small Business Services, can help resolve questions and move your business forward through permit and license approvals. Visit <http://on.nyc.gov/navigate> or call 311 and ask for "NYC Business Solutions Navigating Government."

