



Information Sheet and Check List for Opening a Business

Please review this form prior to opening your business to get a broad overview and better understanding of all the steps and details that are involve in opening a business. We suggest that you check off the various tasks as you complete them.

Zoning
I have met all zoning conditions. A Conditional Use Permit is not necessary or I have obtained one.
Notes: _____

Business License
I have applied for and completed all of the requirements for a business license.
Notes: _____

Home-Based Business
I understand all of the conditions that apply to the operation of a home-based business.
Notes: _____

Building Improvement/Construction Permits
I have obtained all permits for building renovations including building, plumbing, electrical, etc.
Notes: _____

Signage
I have obtained all permissions for a sign permit including approval by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) before ordering my sign.
Notes: _____

Occupancy Inspection
I have scheduled my occupancy inspection.
Notes: _____

Food-Related Business
I am in a food-related business and have contacted the St. Louis County Health Department to receive their approval.
Notes: _____

Alcoholic Beverages
I am serving alcoholic beverages and have obtained a liquor license.
Notes: _____

Other Requirements
I have obtained a sales tax number and am registered with the State of Missouri.
Notes: _____

1. Zoning Requirements

For Questions Call 314-963-5314

All property in the City is zoned as Residential, Commercial, or Industrial. With a few exceptions, businesses may not operate in a Residential Zone. Those exceptions include Home Occupations (see below) and day care centers.

Specific business uses are regulated differently in each commercial and industrial zone. There may be different parking, building placement, and landscaping requirements in a district. Some businesses are allowed “by right” in a district, but some require a Conditional Use Permits (CUP). You should contact the Senior Planner to check these requirements.

2. Home-based Businesses

For Questions Call 314-963-5314

You may operate a business out of your home, provided you have no employees or customers coming to your house, maintain no inventory, use no equipment not traditionally found in a home, have no signage, and there is otherwise no indication from the outside that a business is being conducted therein. A business license is required. Contact the Planner for more information.

3. Business License

For Questions Call 314-963-5300

A City-issued business license is required before a business can open. Application packets for business licenses are available online or at the Customer Service Desk in City Hall. Before the license is issued, the City must first review and approve the zoning, the occupancy inspection, fire department regulations, and state sales tax and registration.

The license fee is based upon the statement of gross receipts (money and other compensation received from business activity) from the previous year. Proof of income is not required, but can be requested any year the business is in operation for a random audit of license fees. Licenses expire December 31st and must be renewed annually.

4. Building Improvements/Construction Permits

For Questions Call 314-963-5325

The City of Webster Groves issues building, plumbing, electrical, and HVAC permits for any new construction and most interior renovations. New buildings and construction that alter the exterior of existing buildings must first be reviewed by the City’s ARB (Architectural Review Board). The ARB meets twice monthly to review construction projects and there are time requirements to be on the agenda.

Moving into an existing commercial space may involve some interior renovations and other improvements, based on the Building Code, which will require permits. The Permit Technician should be contacted to determine what permits your project might require, whether consultation with the Building Commissioner is advisable, and how long the review process may take once construction plans are filed.

It is advisable to do a conditional inspection before you sign a lease to ensure that requirements for your business are met and to determine whether it is your or your landlord’s responsibility for improvements.

5. Signage

For Questions Call 314-963-5314

The City's Sign Code regulates the size, type, and placement of all business signage. **Before** you order any signage be sure that your designer and fabricator understand the sign regulations. All permanent signs require a permit, and must be approved by the ARB.

6. Occupancy Inspection

For Questions Call 314-963-5332

An occupancy inspection is necessary before you open your business. It is advisable to do a conditional inspection before you sign a lease and before you engage in renovations to ensure that requirements for the space (interior and exterior) are understood. This could affect the terms of your lease. You need to schedule a final inspection after improvements to obtain approval which is necessary for your business license and for opening your business. The cost of the occupancy inspection is \$70 which includes one re-inspection.

7. Sales Tax Number and State Registration

If applicable, the City needs a state sales tax number before it issues a business license. It can be obtained from the Missouri Department of Revenue at 573-751-2836 or it can be found online at <http://dor.mo.gov/business/sales>. Most companies operating in Missouri must register with the State. Unincorporated businesses must also file if they do business under any title other than the actual name of the owner. Visit www.sos.mo.gov for information, or contact the Office of the Secretary of State in Jefferson City at 866-223-6535.

8. Food and Drink-Related Businesses

All eating and/or drinking establishments are required to have a St. Louis County Health permit. For instructions and forms, visit the website at www.stlouisco.com/doh/foodcenter/restmt_open.html. Any business selling alcoholic beverages by the package or glass must have a City Liquor License approved by the City Council. Contact the City Clerk at 314-963-5318, or visit www.webstergroves.org/liquorlicense.

9. Special Business Taxing Districts

The Crossroads, Old Orchard, and Old Webster special business districts exist to promote their local districts through marketing, special events, public parking, and other public improvements. Boundaries of the 3 districts may be viewed at www.webstergroves.org/index.aspx?nid=138. Businesses located in these districts pay a business license surcharge to support the activities of these districts.