



CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH NEW BUSINESS INFORMATION



“We are here to help!”

Expanding or starting a new business in Newport Beach? We are here to help! Use this checklist to ensure you have taken into account important requirements and considerations when operating a business in the City. While this information is intended to be comprehensive, keep in mind that different types of businesses have different needs, obligations, and federal, state, and local requirements and regulations.

WHERE DO I START?

We recommend starting by speaking to a [Business Ambassador](#) regarding your proposed business. When doing so, be sure to ask the following questions. An Ambassador will be able to answer your questions or directly connect you with a fellow City employee.

- ⇒ **Is my business allowed at a particular location?** Uses are permitted, conditionally permitted, or prohibited depending on location.
- ⇒ **Does my business require additional parking to be provided? What are parking options?** Most uses (e.g. retail, general office, personal services) require parking at a standard rate of 1 space per 250 square feet of gross floor area. However, other uses that generate a higher parking demand such as assembly uses (religious institutions, banquet facilities, clubs, etc.), food uses, health facilities, medical offices, and massage require increased parking to be provided on-site.
- ⇒ **Are there additional fees that may be responsible for?** See Fees section below for a list of common fees you may be responsible for.
- ⇒ **Would I be responsible for additional improvements?** Depending on the scope of work or nature of proposed use, you may be responsible for constructing improvements for persons with disabilities, energy conservation, fire protection, grease removal, sewer connections, and solid waste and recycling.
- ⇒ **I am running my business from my home (Home Occupation), do I still need permits?** In residential districts, businesses are not normally allowed, except for Home Occupations meeting certain criteria to ensure compatibility with the residential character of the neighborhoods where located and to prevent disturbances or annoyances to neighbors. Home Occupations do require a business license and are subject to other limitations such as no employees, no signage, no outdoor storage, limited customer visits, etc. For a complete list of criteria, click [here](#).

CITY OF NEWPORT
BEACH

100 Civic Center Drive
Newport Beach, CA 92660
Phone: 949-644-3204

Come and Visit Us! For your convenience the City of Newport Beach operates a one stop shop at the Permit Center located at City Hall (First Floor, Bay C). Staff is available for permitting questions, plan checking, and issuance of permits. In most cases, permits can be issued over-the-counter. Our goal is for our team members to address quick permits at the counter, one hour reviews at workstation, or a 2 hour review by appointment. Our collaborative team includes all Departments and Divisions from: Building, Fire, Planning, Public Works and Health. For more information, click [here](#).

NEW BUSINESS CHECKLIST

Zoning Clearance (Where can I operate my business?)

Zoning is the method in which the City regulates the use of property to promote orderly growth and compatibility. Property in the City is delineated into different zoning districts that allow for various land uses, such as residential, commercial, and industrial. It is important to ensure that your business is an allowed use within a particular zoning district.

- * **Look up zoning information for your prospective location.** You can find the zoning district for any particular property by entering in the address online [here](#) or by calling (949) 644-3204.
- * **How to obtain a Zoning Clearance?** Call (949) 644-3204 or make an online request for the information [here](#). You can also visit with a City Planner at the Permit Center in City Hall (First Floor, Bay C).

Permits (What if I want to alter my tenant space?)

A building permit is required for most projects to ensure all buildings meet minimum standards that protect its occupants and neighbors, not only in everyday living, but also in case of emergencies and natural disasters. Even minor improvements to an existing tenant space, such as constructing partitions, installing new lighting and connections, and installing new plumbing fixtures requires a permit.

Building Division- For more information as to when a permit is required, please contact the Building Division at (949)644-3275.

Tenant Improvement Submittal Requirements- For a list of information needed for a building permit on a typical Tenant Improvement project, click [here](#).

Permit Reference Guide- Looking for an easy way to find required forms and/or reference materials for a building permit? Try our new “Permit Reference Guide” navigational tool which can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

Encroachment Permit and Utility Connections- All commercial properties are required to have backflow protection on new and existing water services (including fire and landscaping) and sewer cleanouts on new and existing sewer laterals. Additionally, based on the scope of the proposed tenant improvement, additional public improvements may be required. A public works encroachment permit is required for all work within the public right-of-way and on city utility infrastructure. For more information on Public Works related permits, please click [here](#).

Business License (Do I need a business license?)

A Business License is a City tax for operating your business in the City. You will need a new Business License if you are starting a new business, the new owner of an existing business, opening additional location, or moving your business to a new location. Revenue generated from your license go towards providing City services such as fire and police protection, road and infrastructure improvements, and maintenance. These mutually reinforcing qualities contribute towards making Newport Beach a highly desirable and profitable place to do business.

A common misconception is that a Business License is all you need in order to operate a business, but in fact you may need additional permits and clearances, such as a Zoning Clearance and a Building Permit.

Business License Information- Click [here](#) for information on how to apply for your new business license, including links to application form, renewal information, and frequently asked questions.



Who can I contact for help?

We understand that starting a new business can be overwhelming. Our Business Ambassador Program will provide you with a friendly, experienced staff member to answer your questions and help guide you through the City's various requirements, fees, and other considerations. Click [here](#) to contact a Business Ambassador.

Signage (How can I help others identify my business?)

- * **Temporary Banner**-Grand opening, special sales, and other temporary business signage are permissible on a limited basis with the approval of a Temporary Banner Permit. A Temporary Banner Permit may be issued up to four times a year, not to exceed a total of 60 days. Permits are \$39.40 and can be applied for through the Planning Division. The application is available [here](#).
- * **Permanent**- Sign regulations vary by property. Thus, before you change or add new signs, we recommend you speak to your property manager and a City Planner at (949) 644-3204 to review all of the related sign regulations. Then, if advised, you can apply for a sign permit.

New Business Tools and Incentives (How can the City help me?)

- * **Development Review Committee (DRC)**- The DRC is a committee comprised of staff members from various City departments involved with the development review process. The purpose of this committee is to provide project proponents with an opportunity to present a project proposal and receive preliminary comments early in the development process and become aware of any potential issues or alternatives available.

Prior to scheduling a meeting with the DRC, it is recommended that the project proponent meet with a City Planner to discuss the proposal and identify the scope of work. When it is determined that project is large scale, complex, and/or may be subject to significant or department specific design requirements, the City Planner will direct the applicant to schedule the DRC meeting.

These informal meetings are held at the City Hall every Thursday, excluding legal holidays, at 9:30 a.m. The deadline for submittal is 12 noon on the Tuesday prior to the meeting date. Applicants are asked to submit an accurate site plan of the proposal and a detailed project description including pertinent information about the project and any special questions they have for the DRC.

For more information or to schedule a DRC meeting, please call (949)644-3204.

- * **Business Ambassador Program** - We understand starting a new business can be overwhelming, but we are here to help. Our Business Ambassador Program will provide you with a friendly, experienced staff member to answer your questions and help guide you through the City's various requirements, fees, and other considerations. Initiate the connection with your Business Ambassador by clicking [here](#).
- * **PACE Programs** - Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) is a financing tool for energy conservation upgrades. A PACE program may provide your business with an opportunity to save money while making energy conserving upgrades. For more information on the various PACE programs the City participates in, please click [here](#).
- * **Balboa Village Commercial Façade Improvement Program** - The City of Newport Beach is pleased to announce a newly created [grant program](#) for façade enhancements for nonresidential properties within Balboa Village. This is a great opportunity for business and property owners that will generate positive changes for the community. For more information, click [here](#).

Fees and Other Requirements (What fees am I responsible for?)

Business License- Click [here](#) for business license fees.

Business Improvement District (BID)- Your business may be subject to an additional tax that is allocated for district-specific improvements and/or marketing. Please click [here](#) for more information if your business is either:

Your business is located in [Corona del Mar](#); or

Your business sells [food for on-site or take-out consumption](#) anywhere in the City of Newport Beach; or

Your business is one of [seven Newport Beach hotels](#) with 100 rooms or more that has elected to assess themselves to promote tourism activities.

Traffic Fairshare Fee- Roadway improvements in the City are funded partially through the Fairshare Fee program. For businesses that would result in new floor area or intensification of use (e.g. general office to medical office, retail to restaurant, etc.) a fairshare fee will be assessed prior to the issuance of building permits. Please contact a City Planner to see if this fee is applicable and to estimate an amount.

Transportation Corridor Agency Fees- For businesses involving new construction or additional square footage, the City assesses a fee on behalf of the San Joaquin Hills Transportation Corridor Agency. Please contact a City Planner to see if this fee is applicable and to estimate an amount.

Building Permit Fees- If a building permit is required for proposed improvements associated with your business, a fee is assessed. If the improvements include new floor area, fees are also collected on behalf of the school district. To assist with estimating permit and school fees, the City provides an online plan check and building permit fee estimator [here](#).

Encroachment Permit Fees- If work is proposed in the public right-of-way or anything in the scope requires an encroachment permit, a fee is assessed. The City provides a fee schedule, which lists encroachment permit fees [here](#).

New to Newport Beach? For additional information, you may also check out:

[Small Business Resources - Newport Beach Public Library](#)

[Newport Beach Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Corona del Mar Chamber of Commerce](#)

[Newport Beach Conference and Visitors Bureau](#)

