



CITY OF FORT LAUDERDALE ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY INVESTMENT DIVISION

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OPENING YOUR BUSINESS IN FORT LAUDERDALE IS EASY!



Fort Lauderdale is the heart of a robust, high-growth region. As the geographic center of the **Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)**, Fort Lauderdale has everything you need to succeed - diversified workforce; large market with disposable income; easy access to national/international markets; world-class educational options; business friendly government; and outstanding lifestyle.



In 2016, Fort Lauderdale captured more corporate headquarter relocations than any other city in Florida, generating +\$61 million of investment and +\$98 million in annual wages - Gov. Rick Scott. In 2018, Broward County was #2 in Florida for new jobs created and the most diverse economy - Gov. Ron DeSantis

ONCE YOU HAVE THE BRIGHT IDEA, STARTING A BUSINESS TAKES 3 EASY STEPS!



- 1 Business Structures:** Common forms of business are the sole proprietorship, partnership, corporation (C and S), and various Limited Liability Company (LLC) structures. Each form of business has legal, risk, and tax impacts - consider consulting an attorney.
- 2 Business Registration:** Companies must register their name to establish a business. Corporations must register with the Florida Division of Corporations. Professional businesses must register with the Florida Department of Professional Regulation.
- 3 Employer ID Number:** Businesses should to obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN). You may apply for your EIN online and receive it immediately. This is a free service offered by the Internal Revenue Service. Without an EIN you will have to use your Social Security number to set up accounts, which puts you at risk for identity theft.



Starting a business is easy, but running a successful business is a challenge. Consider taking a FREE Fort Lauderdale BEAMs program to create a SOLID FOUNDATION.



OPEN YOUR BUSINESS IN FORT LAUDERDALE!

- 1 Find the Right Location:** Find the building and location that suits your needs, BUT before you commit to purchase or lease contact the City's Urban Design & Planning Division to confirm that your business is an allowed use at that location. You can do a preliminary check by using the FUTURE LAND USE MAP posted at www.fortlauderdale.gov
- 2 City of Fort Lauderdale Business License:** All entities engaged in any business, profession, or occupation within the City limits (at a commercial or residential location) must obtain a business license from the City.
- 3 Businesses in Residential Zones:** You are permitted to have a limited home business if you live in the residence in which you run the business. Rules are established to assure that a business does not detract from the ambiance of a residential neighborhood.
 - The business is conducted only by persons residing on the premises.
 - There is no external evidence of the business, including advertising or signage.
 - No product or service shall be sold or offered for sale from the residential dwelling.
 - The business may not occupy more than one-quarter ($\frac{1}{4}$) of the area of one (1) floor of the principal structure and not occupy any accessory or secondary building.
 - No traffic shall be generated by the business other than by residents of the premises.
 - No equipment shall be used in the home business which creates noise, vibration, glare, fumes, or odor which is detectable from the exterior of the dwelling.
- 4 Signage for Businesses:** Permits are required for all outdoor signs. Signage in the City is highly regulated and the number of signs is determined by the number of roadways the site abuts. Specific information regarding signage can be found on MuniCode, or the Fort Lauderdale Code of Ordinances, which can be found at www.fortlauderdale.gov.
- 5 Building Services Permitting Process:** Fort Lauderdale has been designated a "Platinum City" for providing first-rate experience when going through the development, permitting, and inspection process for office/industrial properties. Fort Lauderdale has designated a City staff member as a single point of contact to assist a company through the permitting process.



CRITICAL CONTACTS FOR YOUR FORT LAUDERDALE BUSINESS.

- For information about relocating or opening a business; general business resources; or to enroll in the Fort Lauderdale BEAMs Academy, please contact the Economic & Community Investment Division at (954) 828-6430.
- For assistance with obtaining a commercial permit or tracking a pending permit application, please contact the Business Concierge at (954) 828-5102 or across@fortlauderdale.gov.
- Information on zoning, landscaping, parking, signs, setbacks, home-based businesses, or property use, please contact the Urban Design & Planning Division at (954) 828-6163.
- Information on business licenses in the City of Fort Lauderdale, please contact the Business Tax Office at (954) 828-5195 or businesstax@fortlauderdale.gov.

