



Business Startup Guide

OPENING A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT



01: Create Your Business



02: Plan Your Space



03: Apply for Permits



04: Begin Construction



05: Prepare to Open



06: Open Your Doors





Step One

CREATE YOUR BUSINESS

In order to create your business, you will need to know the type of Retail Establishment you want to open.

Registering or Filing a Formal Legal Structure

You will need to know how to register your business properly: Corporations, LLC's and Limited Partnerships need to be registered with the [Oklahoma Secretary of State](#). Formal legal structures must be filed with the Secretary of State, as outlined under the agency's specific procedures and forms. After submission of the necessary documents and payment of the related fees, the Secretary of State will issue a certification that the filing for the legal structure has been accepted.

Business Name and Business Plan

If you know the name of the business you wish to open, you can register the name with the Secretary of State. This is not a required step but registering the name will protect its use in Oklahoma.

+ **CONTACT:** Oklahoma Secretary of State
www.sos.ok.gov/business/default.aspx

Employer's Tax ID Numbers

For a business operating as a sole proprietorship with no employees, the owner can choose to use his or her Social Security number as the identification number for its tax filing and financial accounting. Business that are organized under a formal legal structure are required to obtain and use a Federal Employer's Identification Number (EIN). This number is issued by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) of the U.S. Treasury Department.

+ **CONTACT:** Internal Revenue Service
www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/how-to-apply-for-an-ein

Sales Tax ID

You will need to obtain a Sales Tax ID from the State of Oklahoma. This is an important step that should be done earlier in order to avoid delays receiving other permits.

+ **CONTACT:** Oklahoma Tax Commission
www.ok.gov/tax/Online_Services/Online_Business_Registration.html
(405) 521-3160

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Step Two

PLAN YOUR SPACE

You will need to find a location that is zoned for your business. Investing in a space that was previously a restaurant can save time and construction costs.

Zoning Requirements

The Tulsa Planning Office at Indian Nations Council of Governments (INCOG) can assist entrepreneurs with any zoning requirements for their property.

+ **CONTACT:** INCOG
www.incog.org
(918) 584-7526

Selecting Your Location

All the steps in this document may impact the location of your new business. Will you purchase or lease? You may want to consult a professional Realtor to help guide you through the process.

The Mayor's Office of Economic Development staff may also be available to help you find property that is either on the market or underutilized and suited for your specific needs.

+ **CONTACT:** Mayor's Office of Economic Development
www.cityoftulsa.org/economic-development
(918) 576-5561

Historic Preservation

The property you are considering for your business might exist within a historic preservation district and be subject to specific design restrictions and further approval process. Please contact the Tulsa Preservation Commission or the Tulsa Planning Office at INCOG for more information on HP zoning.

+ **CONTACT:** Roy Malcolm (Jed) Porter, Jr., Historic Preservation Planner
jporter@incog.org
(918) 579-9448



Step Three

APPLY FOR PERMITS

Have your licensed professional submit plans, required documents, and apply for construction permits with the City of Tulsa.

Changes are often made to plans if there are objections due to safety or compliance issues. Ensure that you are in contact with your licensed professional during each step of the construction process.

City of Tulsa Permits

You may be required to obtain permits from the City of Tulsa dependent upon the type of construction your project requires. The City of Tulsa highly encourages any business looking to open in Tulsa to schedule a Pre Development meeting with the City of Tulsa's Development Services Department. The Pre Development meeting for Code Compliance will help entrepreneurs understand the various building codes they must follow when opening a business.

There is a \$350 fee for a Pre Development meeting for Code Compliance, due at the time of application submittal. The fee will be credited towards any permit fees for the project in the future. Please contact the City of Tulsa to schedule a Pre Development meeting.

Please refer to the [City of Tulsa's Commercial Building Permit Process](#) guide for more information on the types of permits required to open a commercial building. You will still need to consult with a licensed building professional before you submit your applications for permits, the information presented in this guide is for reference only.

+ **CONTACT:** City of Tulsa
www.cityoftulsa.org/economic-development
(918) 576-5561



Step Four

BEGIN CONSTRUCTION



Now that you have applied for the necessary permits with the City of Tulsa, you are ready to begin construction.

You should only begin construction with licensed contractors. You can check on the licensing status of a contractor with the Construction Industries Board of Oklahoma.

- + **CONTACT:** Construction Industries Board
<http://cib.ok.gov/are-they-licensed>
(405) 652-6550



Step Five

PREPARE TO OPEN

Once all inspections are completed, you will need to apply for a Certificate of Occupancy (CO).

Certificate of Occupancy

Once all inspections are completed, you will need to apply for a Certificate of Occupancy (CO). The Certificate of Occupancy assures that all new construction and redevelopments meet with appropriate zoning, building, electrical, plumbing, mechanical, safety, fire and environmental codes. Its purpose is to protect the health, safety and welfare of owners, occupants, and the general public.

All newly constructed restaurants must have a Certificate of Occupancy. If your project is located within an existing building that has changed in its use of functions, you will also need a Certificate of Occupancy.

- + **CONTACT:** City of Tulsa
www.cityoftulsa.org/media/2913/commercial_app_06012016.pdf
(918) 576-5561



Step Six

OPEN YOUR DOORS

Congratulations! You have opened your doors and are operating a retail establishment!

Financing Considerations

i2E | INNOVATION TO ENTERPRISE

i2E assists business, companies, investors, researchers, and entrepreneurs to turn technological innovations into business opportunities. i2E has provided funding and business expertise to more than 700 of Oklahoma's emerging small businesses. Contact i2E for information on funding availability, start up assistance, and business planning.

OKLAHOMA SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER (OKSBDC)

OSBDC's mission is to promote and enhance economic growth through business development and innovation. OCBDC provides business resources to existing and prospective businesses.

TULSA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION (TEDC)

TEDC supports small business development and expansion in the Tulsa region by utilizing public and private resources to give entrepreneurs and business owners access to financial and technical assistance.

Business Incentives

The Mayor's Office of Economic Development provides programs that assist with start-up capital, capital improvements to commercial and public properties and tax incentives. Through the relationship between the Mayor's Office of Economic Development and the Tulsa Regional Chamber, companies who may qualify for state incentives are connected to the state's Cabinet for Economic Development.

- + **CONTACT:** Mayor's Office of Economic Development
www.cityoftulsa.org/economic-development
(918) 576-5561