

Licensing and Permits Information

Business License (also called an Occupational Tax)

If you plan to operate a business in the state of Georgia, you must obtain a city or county business license. At the current time, businesses located in county areas outside the incorporated city limits do not require a license. You should discuss the details of your situation with the licensing department. The fee for a license is contingent on the location, type and size of your business. They are completely dependent on what business you will be in and where your business will be located.

If your business will be located within the city limits of Canon:

Canon City Hall
Highway 17
Canon GA 30520
(706) 245-8155

If your business will be located within the city limits of Carnesville:

Carnesville City Hall
9518 Lavonia Road (Hwy 59)
Carnesville GA 30521
(706) 384-3905

If your business will be located within the city limits of Franklin Springs:

Franklin Springs City Hall
2135 E. Main Street (Hwy 29)
Franklin Springs GA 30639
(706) 245-6957

If your business will be located within the city limits of Lavonia:

Lavonia City Hall
12221 Augusta Road (Hwy 17)
Lavonia GA 30553
(706) 356-8781

If your business will be located within the city limits of Royston:

Royston City Hall
634 Franklin Springs Street
Royston GA 30662
(706) 245-7232

If your business will be located outside the city limits but within the County:

Franklin County Board of Commissioners
145 Athens Street
Carnesville, GA 30521
(706) 384-2483

Zoning

Once you have chosen a tentative location for your business, contact the zoning department at the local City Hall or the Franklin County Planning and Zoning Department to determine the permitted uses of that location. There might be special restrictions on that area. **DO NOT INVEST ANY MONEY IN A LOCATION UNTIL ZONING HAS BEEN THOROUGHLY RESEARCHED!!!**

The Franklin County Planning and Zoning Office, or local City Hall can help you determine if your location and type of business are in compliance with ordinances. You will be required to submit your business plans to the planning commission office and zoning departments to determine if the business complies/can be adapted to comply with the following:

- 1 – Current zoning classification
- 2 – Building setbacks
- 3 – Off-street parking availability and service entrance requirements
- 4 – Buffer yards or required screening
- 5 – Lot area minimum
- 6 – Sign regulations

*** Sign permits are required for erecting and placing any mounted or free-standing signs. Applications are filed through the planning and zoning department.

Franklin County Planning and Zoning

Franklin County Board of Commissioners Office
PO Box 159
Carnesville GA 30521
(706) 384-3028

Building Construction/Renovations/Occupancy

A building permit must be obtained for both new construction and renovations of and additions to existing buildings. Before you may construct a new facility or renovate an existing one, you must have this permit. Once you have obtained a building permit, complied with the regulations pertaining to the area you are in, and construction is complete, your facility will be inspected. You will then apply for a Certificate of Occupancy. Without this certificate, it is illegal for your business to reside in the facility.

Health Permits

If your business is to involve food processing, handling, storage, or distribution, you must obtain permits from the Franklin County Health Department, which handles the permits for the entire county and cities. If you are unsure if your business needs a permit, contact the Health Department.

Franklin County Health Department

Highway 145
Carnesville GA 30521
(706) 384-5575

Trade Name Registration

In the State of Georgia, every person, firm, or partnership that conducts business has two options regarding trade name registration: 1) The business name must include the last name of the individual owner of the business. 2) If using a fictitious name (one not including the last name of the individual owner), the fictitious name must be registered in the office of the Clerk of the Superior Court of the county where the business is located. A corporation or limited liability company will not need to file this registration, as it will already be registered with the office of the Secretary of State. The fee for Trade Name Registration is approximately \$10.00.

The Clerk's office will provide any paperwork that needs to be completed. Similar to publishing your intent to incorporate a business, you must publish a notice of your Trade name registration in the local newspapers. You must also file the required affidavit. Notice of the filing of the Trade name registration must be published once a week for two weeks in the legal section of the publication. In order to run your legal advertisement, contact:

Franklin County Citizen
Legal Advertisement Department
PO Box 580
Lavonia GA 30553
(706) 356-8557

Failure to register a trade name will not nullify contracts signed by the unregistered entity. The court, however, is authorized to assess court costs against the parties who have failed to register the trade name or partnership name at the time an action is filed. Thus the trade name registration prevents a company from having to pay all court costs in an action by or against a company. If you have a question as to whether your business needs to register a tradename, contact the Clerk's office.

To file your Tradename registration, contact:

Real Estate Department
Clerk of the Superior Court
Franklin County Courthouse
PO Box 70
Carnesville GA 30521
(706) 384-2514

Federal Licensing

Most new small businesses will not require any type of federal licensing to conduct business, unless you will be engaged in one of the following activities:

- Rendering investment advice
- Making alcohol products
- Making tobacco products
- Preparing meat products
- Making or dealing in firearms

You would need a Federal permit also to start large operations such as a television station, radio station, common carrier, or producer of drugs or biological products. The aforementioned businesses are all heavily governmentally regulated. For information on federal licensing for these types of businesses, contact:

The U.S. Department of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms

2600 Century Parkway Suite 3430
Atlanta GA 30345
(404-679-5130)

The U.S. Federal Drug Administration

60 8th Street
Atlanta GA 30309
(404) 347-4265

The U.S. Federal Communications Commission

3575 Kroger Boulevard
Duluth GA 30096
(888) 225-5322

State Licensing

Many licensing regulations should be considered when establishing a business or practicing certain regulated occupations in Georgia. Contact the Secretary of State's office for a listing of all occupations that require state licensing. You can find a complete list of occupations requiring state licenses in Appendix 1 (Section X). Before applying, you would be well advised to check the current licensing regulations through the office of the Secretary of State, the county and the city. For information, contact:

Georgia Secretary of State

Licensing Boards Division
166 Pryor Street SW
Atlanta GA 30303
(404) 656-3900

www.sos.state.ga.us/corporations/regforms.htm

The Office of the Secretary of State offers a timesaving booklet entitled *Consolidated Registration Information for Businesses*. This book is more familiarly known as the BLUE BOOK. This packet includes request forms for governmental departments and agencies that will be instrumental in starting your business. It also contains important phone numbers, addresses, and internet addresses of offices and departments essential to your business.

The Office of the Secretary of State's BLUE BOOK provides postage paid response cards so you may access the following forms or agencies:

- Business Incorporation Forms
- Professional and Occupational Licensing Forms
- State Tax Application
- Internal Revenue Service Forms
- Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism U.S. Small Business Administration
- UGA Small Business Development Centers
- Georgia Tech Services for Business and Technology
- Governor's Office of Consumer Affairs
- U.S. General Services Administration
- Georgia Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Labor
- Georgia Department of Consumer Affairs – Office of Business and Economic Assistance U.S. Export Assistance Center
- Georgia Department of Insurance
- Georgia Department of Agriculture

Also available through this booklet are various books and publications on starting a business and entrepreneurship.