



# STARTING A BUSINESS? START HERE!

- CHOOSE A BUSINESS BASED ON YOUR SKILLS AND INTERESTS
  - RESEARCH THE BUSINESS IDEA
  - RESEARCH COMPETITORS
  - DETERMINE IF THERE ARE ANY PATENT OR TRADEMARK RESTRICTIONS
  - CHOOSE A BUSINESS NAME
  - VERIFY YOUR RIGHT TO USE YOUR CHOSEN NAME
  - SEE IF THE BUSINESS NAME IS AVAILABLE AS A DOMAIN NAME
  - REGISTER THE BUSINESS NAME AND GET A BUSINESS LICENSE
- RESEARCH NAME  
To make sure the business name you want to use is not already licensed visit: [apps.sos.wv.gov/business/corporations](https://apps.sos.wv.gov/business/corporations)
- REGISTER YOUR ACCOUNT  
For information on registering for your state account visit the Secretary of State website at [sos.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx](https://sos.wv.gov/Pages/default.aspx) or check out this helpful pdf guide [tax.wv.gov/Documents/TaxForms/busapp.booklet.pdf](https://tax.wv.gov/Documents/TaxForms/busapp.booklet.pdf)
- GET YOUR FEIN  
In order to get a business license, you will need to obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN) from the IRS. FEIN's are free and can be obtained online. Visit: [www.irs.gov](https://www.irs.gov), and type in FEIN in the search box.

You'll need the FEIN in order to finish the registration for the business license, so be sure to write it down when it comes up on the IRS screen. A hard copy will be sent to you via mail as well.

REGISTER YOUR BUSINESS DOMAIN NAME (even if you aren't ready to use it yet)

WRITE A BUSINESS PLAN

There are several resources available to you including:

- **West Virginia Small Business Development Center**

Contact: Marsa Myers  
Workforce & Education Building  
300 Campus Dr., Room 117-B  
WVU-Parkersburg  
Parkersburg, WV 26101-9577  
Office: (304) 424-8213  
Cell: (304) 926-4169  
[wvsbdc.com](http://wvsbdc.com)

- **SCORE**

[www.score.org/business-plans-startup-assistance-resources](http://www.score.org/business-plans-startup-assistance-resources)

WRITE A MARKETING PLAN

DEFINE YOUR END GOAL.

MAINTAIN A CONSISTENT BRAND AND MESSAGE.

DETERMINE YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE.

FIND THE SOCIAL CHANNEL FOR YOUR STARTUP.

BUILD A REFERRAL NETWORK.

CULTIVATE RELATIONSHIPS WITH INFLUENCERS.

CREATE ADS THAT APPEAL TO PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS.

ASSEMBLE THE RIGHT TEAM.

CHOOSE A LOCATION FOR YOUR BUSINESS OR MAKE SPACE IN YOUR HOME TO RUN IT  
For available Wood County, West Virginia properties for sale or for lease, please visit:  
[www.woodcountypropertydatabase.com](http://www.woodcountypropertydatabase.com)

SCHEDULE A COURTESY WALK THROUGH (if buying or leasing a property)  
Before buying or signing a lease on a property you're interested in, please schedule a courtesy code walk through to ensure you're educated about what improvements must be made to the building to be compliant with code and to receive a certificate of occupancy.

CHECK ZONING LAWS

#### Wood County, West Virginia

Sarah Farnsworth	1 Court Square, Suite 204
Building Permit/Compliance Officer	Parkersburg, WV 26101
Wood County Commission	304-424-1988
Wood County, WV	304-424-0194 fax
	<a href="mailto:sfarnsworth@woodcountywv.com">sfarnsworth@woodcountywv.com</a>

#### Parkersburg, West Virginia

- [parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/downloads/pkbgzoningapp.PDF](http://parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/downloads/pkbgzoningapp.PDF)
- Can be obtained in the Building and Zoning Office on the 4th floor of the City Municipal Building. Any owner or authorized agent who intends to construct, enlarge, alter, repair, move, demolish, or change the occupancy of a building or structure, or to erect, install, enlarge, alter, repair, remove, convert or replace any electrical, gas, mechanical or plumbing system, the installation of which is regulated by the applicable code, or to cause any such work to be done, shall obtain a building permit before the work has begun.
- MUST BRING: Photo ID, site plans and Business license (if commercial). For more information please visit: [parkersburgcity.com/pc/services-2/building/obtaining-building-permit/](http://parkersburgcity.com/pc/services-2/building/obtaining-building-permit/)
- 2019 Building and Zoning Schedule of Fees for the City of Parkersburg: [parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019\\_Building\\_and\\_Zoning\\_Schedule\\_of\\_Fees.pdf](http://parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019_Building_and_Zoning_Schedule_of_Fees.pdf)

#### Vienna, West Virginia

- For zoning requirements, please call the building code & inspection department at (304) 295-5070, Ext. 348.

#### Williamstown, West Virginia

- For zoning requirements, please call the City of Williamstown (Paula Lankin) at (304) 375-7761.

SETUP YOUR FUNDING AND CREATE A BUDGET FOR STARTING THE BUSINESS

FILE PARTNERSHIP OR INCORPORATION PAPERS

GET ANY REQUIRED LICENSES AND PERMITS

*ALL COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS AND APARTMENT BUILDINGS CONSISTING OF 3 UNITS OR MORE MUST ALSO SUBMIT PLANS TO THE WV STATE FIRE MARSHALL'S OFFICE FOR APPROVAL*

#### Wood County, West Virginia

- [woodcountywv.com/files/docs/county-offices/building-permits/bpform.pdf](http://woodcountywv.com/files/docs/county-offices/building-permits/bpform.pdf)

#### Parkersburg, West Virginia

- [parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Code\\_Department\\_Building\\_Permit\\_Application.pdf](http://parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Code_Department_Building_Permit_Application.pdf)
- Code Enforcement Requirements for Building Permits on New Commercial Construction: [parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/COMMERCIAL-REQUIREMENTS-NEW.pdf](http://parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/COMMERCIAL-REQUIREMENTS-NEW.pdf)
- Code Enforcement Requirements for Building Permits Commercial Interior Remodels: [parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/COMMERCIAL-INTERIOR-REQUIREMENTS-NEW.pdf](http://parkersburgcity.com/pc/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/COMMERCIAL-INTERIOR-REQUIREMENTS-NEW.pdf)

#### Vienna, West Virginia

- For a building permit, please visit the City Building front office located at 609 29th St, Vienna, WV 26105 or call the code & inspection department at (304) 295-5070, Ext. 348.
- Effective building codes for Vienna: Effective building codes for Vienna: [vienna-wv.com/departments/building/effective\\_wv\\_building\\_codes.pdf](http://vienna-wv.com/departments/building/effective_wv_building_codes.pdf)

#### Williamstown, West Virginia

- For new development, a prospective business would need to call the City of Williamstown (Paula Lankin) at 304-375-7761 and request to present to City Council. Then, Council would have the prospective business present to the Planning Commission.
- For remodeling, a prospective business would need to call the City of Williamstown at 304-375-7761 and request to present to City Council. Then, Council would have the prospective business present to the Planning Commission. Then, the business would need to bring in a set of blueprints, copies of contractor's licenses + liability insurance, fill out a permit application and remit a \$10 fee plus \$2 per thousand of development.

DETERMINE IF THERE ARE HEALTH OR SAFETY LAWS WITH WHICH YOU MUST COMPLY

Mid- Ohio Valley Health Department

211 Sixth Street M – F: 8:00AM–4:00PM

Parkersburg, WV 26101 Saturday & Sunday: Closed

Call: 304-485-7374



## APPLY FOR A SALES TAX NUMBER IF NEEDED

Tips from: [blog. taxiar.com/register-sales-tax-permit-west-virginia/](https://blog.taxiar.com/register-sales-tax-permit-west-virginia/)

### 1. Who needs a sales tax permit in West Virginia?

Retailers doing business in West Virginia need a sales tax permit. You can find out what conditions create sales tax nexus in West Virginia here.

### 2. How do you register for a sales tax permit in West Virginia?

You can complete the form WV/BUS-APP found in this booklet or register online at Business for West Virginia.

### 3. What information do you need to register for a sales tax permit in West Virginia?

- Personal identification info (SSN, address, etc.)
- Business identification info (EIN, address, etc.) - Always use your home business or business address, even if you are located outside West Virginia.
- NAICS code
- Date you began doing business in West Virginia (Not sure what to enter here? Read more about "When to Register for a Sales Tax Permit")

### 4. How much does it cost to apply for a sales tax permit in West Virginia?

It's free to apply for a sales tax permit, but other West Virginia business registration fees may apply. Some businesses based in West Virginia may be required to pay a \$30 business registration fee. You can find out more about that here.

### 5. How long does it take to receive your West Virginia sales tax permit?

West Virginia doesn't specify how long it takes to receive your sales tax permit, but for most states it's within 2-3 weeks at most.

### 6. Do you have to renew your West Virginia sales tax permit?

You do not need to renew your West Virginia sales tax permit.

## BUSINESS & OCCUPANCY TAX

For Business & Occupancy Tax please call, (304) 424-8581.

For city service user fee please call, (304) 424-8495.

REGISTER A TRADEMARK FOR YOUR BUSINESS NAME OR APPLY FOR A PATENT OR PROVISIONAL PATENT FOR INVENTIONS (IF APPLICABLE)

- To register a trademark, go to the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's Web site, [www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov).

REGISTER COPYRIGHTS FOR BUSINESS INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY (IF APPLICABLE)

- You can file online with the copyright office and pay a \$35 fee, or you can register your work by submitting a Form CO and a non-returnable copy of your work along with a \$50 fee. Keep in mind that if you register online, the Library of Congress still needs hard copies of a "best edition" of your work. (Info from Rocket Lawyer)

GET APPROPRIATE BUSINESS INSURANCE FOR YOUR BUSINESS

INQUIRE ABOUT WORKERS COMPENSATION INSURANCE AND UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE IF YOU WILL BE HIRING EMPLOYEES

ARRANGE FOR HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE IF NEEDED

OPEN A BANK ACCOUNT IN THE BUSINESS NAME

ORDER BUSINESS CHECKS (WITH THE NAME IMPRINTED)

HAVE A BUSINESS PHONE LINE INSTALLED IF YOU WILL BE WORKING FROM HOME

ORDER PHONE, INTERNET AND ANY UTILITY SERVICES NEEDED FOR A BUSINESS

LOCATION THAT ISNT HOMEBASED

TALK TO AN ACCOUNTANT ABOUT YOUR TAX OBLIGATIONS & RECORD KEEPING REQUIREMENTS

SET UP AN ACCOUNTING SYSTEM OR ACCOUNTING SOFTWARE FOR THE BUSINESS

- HAVE A LOGO CREATED
- ORDER BUSINESS CARDS, ENVELOPES AND STATIONERY FOR THE BUSINESS.  
(if needed. Alternately, print them yourself, if you have the capability.)
- PURCHASE NEEDED EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES
- ORDER SIGNAGE
- ORDER FIXTURES
- ORDER INVENTORY
- FIND A WEBSITE HOSTING COMPANY OR CLOUDBASED STOREFRONT PROVIDER AND SET UP YOUR SITE
- SET UP A BUSINESS EMAIL ADDRESS (PREFERABLY USING THE BUSINESS DOMAIN NAME)
- SET UP SOCIAL MEDIA PAGES FOR THE BUSINESS & LIST HOURS OF OPERATION
  - Google, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.
- START BUILDING A PERMISSION-BASED CUSTOMER EMAIL LIST FOR NEWSLETTERS AND PROMOTIONS
  - The Wood County Economic Development office uses MailChimp and Downtown PKB uses Constant Contact, but there are others out there as well!
- PREPARE BROCHURES, FLIERS AND OTHER HANDOUTS. PRINT OR ORDER A SMALL QUANTITY TO PROMOTE YOUR BUSINESS OPENING

SEND OUT PRESS RELEASES ANNOUNCING YOUR BUSINESS TO:

- The Parkersburg News & Sentinel
- The Marietta Times
- WTAP

DECIDE WHERE AND HOW TO ADVERTISE YOUR BUSINESS

PLAN AND IMPLEMENT LOW-COST BUSINESS PROMOTION TACTICS  
TO MARKET YOUR BUSINESS AFTER THE “NEW BUSINESS” CROWD SUBSIDES

CONTACT FRIENDS, FAMILY AND ACQUAINTANCES AND LET THEM  
KNOW YOU’VE STARTED A BUSINESS

OTHER: IF OPENING A RESTAURANT:

1. Contact the health department to acquire a plan review form, this form must be submitted 45 days in advance of construction.
2. Submit an application to operate to the health department at least one week before opening.
3. Complete a walk through approximately one week before opening in order to give the owner plenty of time to fix any issues.