



CHAMPIONS GROW HERE!

DOING BUSINESS IN THE CITY OF CLERMONT

There are several key steps to launching a business in the **City of Clermont** and they will vary according to the type of business you intend to start. Follow these guidelines to help you move in the right direction. Please contact us at any step of the way with any questions.

1. Create a business plan and do a needs assessment – A business plan is the blueprint for your new venture. It is a guide, mapping out the course of your business. Determine what your future needs will be, where your business location will reside. Below are links to resources, which may guide you in the process:

- <http://sbdcorlando.com/lakecounty/>
- <http://www.floridatrend.com/article/19875/work-the-plan>

2. Establish a legal business structure – Consult an attorney or tax accountant for guidance on determining how your business is established. Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations:

www.sunbiz.org and any required special licensing with the Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation <http://www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr/>. You may also visit: <http://www.floridatrend.com/article/19876/get-organized> for additional information business structure.

3. Choose a location and check zoning regulations – Determine if you will have vendors or customers who come to you, employees, etc. you should also contact the City’s Development Department before finalizing location plans or lease agreements to determine if your business location is zoned for the type of business you want to run. There are other considerations for the building that you would want to discuss with them: **Development Services at 352-394-4083 Ext. 300 or 301**

4. Explore the options for financing a business – Financing a startup business may require personal savings, a second income stream, help from family and friends, or a combination. External financing sources are also options and a worthwhile first stop is the Small Business Administration.

- <http://www.floridatrend.com/article/19880/financing>
- <http://sbdcorlando.com/fsbdc-resources/>

5. Register a fictitious business name – If your business will use any name other than the owner’s legal name, or if a corporation will use a name other than its legal corporate name, a fictitious name (also referred to as a D/B/A) must be registered with the state. Forms and additional information are available from: Florida Department of State, Division of Corporations, (850) 245-6058. www.sunbiz.org/fichelp.html

6. Obtain a business operations tax certificate - Details on obtaining a City Business Tax Receipt can be provided by contacting **Development Services at 352-394-4083 Ext. 300 or 301**. Home businesses must be aware of possible limitations. Please ask Planning & Zoning staff before submittals to make sure you can adhere to these conditions. Businesses must have a Local Business Tax Receipt (formerly known as Occupational License) prior to opening a business in Clermont.

The application must be filled out, signed (original signatures) and submitted with proof of registration for a corporation, LLC, etc. and proof of fictitious name filing.

Note: Business may be required to have a Life Safety Inspection prior to occupancy. The Building and Fire Inspector will inspect the unit/building to verify that it is code compliant.

*This does not apply to home based businesses (other than residential care homes).

7. Review the hiring process before you hire – Here are the basics:

- Get a Tax Identification Number. If you intend to employ anyone outside of your immediate family, you must obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN) from the [Internal Revenue Service](#) (IRS).
- Contact [Social Security](#). Those who are self-employed and employers with one or more employees must pay Social Security taxes.
- Additional hiring information:
<http://www.floridatrend.com/article/19879/follow-the-laws>

8. Obtain tax information – Development Services issues business tax receipts to those having a commercial and/or residential business within the city limits of Clermont. Prior to applying and paying for a Business Tax Receipt, it should be determined if the skill/trade or business requires Federal and/or State certification/inspection and obtain the necessary proof. If the business name will be different than your legal given name, it is required that the name is registered with the Florida Division of Corporations and provide proof that the registration is active. Home occupations additionally are required to provide proof of residency at the location where the business will be operating from.

Details on obtaining a City Business Tax Receipt can be provided by contacting **Development Services at 352-394-4083 Ext. 300 or 301**. Home businesses must be aware of possible limitations. Please ask Planning & Zoning staff before submittals to make sure you can adhere to these conditions.

- <http://www.clermontfl.gov/departments/development-services/zoning-division-business-tax.shtml>
- www.myflorida.com/dor
- www.irs.gov/businesses

9. Obtain important local permits – Several permits may be needed to comply with building codes, including: <http://www.clermontfl.gov/departments/development-services/>

Permit fees can be found online at <https://www.clermontfl.gov/core/fileparse.php/106866/urlt/fee-schedule-2016-17.pdf> or in person at City Hall, Building Services First Floor.

10. Other useful resources:

- Safety and Health Regulations - All businesses with employees are required to comply with state and federal regulations regarding the protection of employees. OSHA outlines specific health and safety standards adopted by the U. S. Department of Labor. For

information contact: Federal Occupational Safety & Health Administration **OSHA**:
www.osha.gov/dcsp/smallbusiness

- Federal Immigration Reform and Control Act - Requires all employers to verify the employment eligibility of new employees. The law obligates an employer to process Employment Eligibility Verification Form I-9. Filing for I-9s online is available at: www.uscis.gov
- Workers' Compensation - If the business has four or more employees, or if a construction-related business has any employees, workers' compensation coverage is required. For more information, contact an insurance carrier or the Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of Workers' Compensation, (850) 413-1600. www.fldfs.com
- Florida Unemployment Tax - Businesses with one or more employees may need to apply for a state Unemployment Tax Number. Employers pay a quarterly tax based on the gross quarterly payroll of their employees. Information and forms are available from the DOR's Web site: www.myflorida.com/dor or call the Taxpayers Services at (800) 352-3671.
- Florida Intangible Personal Property Tax - Florida corporations and individuals who control intangible personal property (such as stocks, notes, bonds, mutual funds and leases) must file annually. Accounts receivable not arising from a company's normal course of trade or business is also taxable.

11. Local business networking and support:

- South Lake Chamber of Commerce <http://www.southlakechamber-fl.com/>
- Clermont Downtown Partnership <http://clermontdowntownpartnership.com/join-cdp/>
- University of Central Florida <https://incubator.ucf.edu/>
- National Entrepreneur Center Orlando <http://www.nationalec.org/>
- Hispanic Initiative Fund <http://hbiffl.com/contact-us/>
- SBDC South Lake, Cesar Gomez <http://sbdcorlando.com/lakecounty/>
- Florida Trend Small Business Resources <http://www.floridatrend.com/small-business/links>

12. Social entity support

- South Lake Community Foundation <http://cfslc.org/>
- Rollins College Edyth Bush Institute <http://ebi.rollins.edu/>

13. Grand Opening Signage.

Information on the types of signage and duration signage can be placed in front of your business to promote your grand opening can be found online at:

https://library.municode.com/fl/clermont/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PTIICOOR_CH102_SI_S102-8PRSIEX

Additional information can be obtained by phoning the Development Services Department at 352-394-4083.

14. Special Events

To learn more about Special Events at your business, including necessary Special Event Permits, please contact Clermont Fire Department at (352) 241-7317.