

BUSINESS STARTUP GUIDE



MIAMI BEACH
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

www.miamibeachfl.gov/economic-development
305.673.7577

Introduction

Welcome to the City of Miami Beach! Thank you for making the decision to invest in our community. The Business Startup Guide will help you get your new business up and running.

Requirements to start your business may vary according to the type of business you wish to start or expand, but the following steps will provide you with the proper foundation and insight to be able to avoid unnecessary delays and obstacles along the way.



Mayor

- Dan Gelber

City Commissioners

- Micky Steinberg
- Joy Malakoff
- Mark Samuelian
- Ricky Arriola
- Michael Góngora
- John Elizabeth Alemán

City Clerk

- Rafael Granado

City Manager

- Jimmy Morales

City Attorney

- Raul J. Aguila

1. Structure your business.

Determine your organization's legal structure. This includes selecting advisors such as business consultants, lawyers and/or accountants.

- **Sunbiz**

Whether you're looking to begin a partnership or start a corporation, Sunbiz is a valuable aid as you seek to establish your business structure.

[850.245.6051](tel:850.245.6051)

www.sunbiz.org

For more information on Federal taxes and obtaining a FEIN:

Federal: All forms of structure, with the exception of sole proprietors with no employees, must obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (FEIN), which is your federal tax ID number.

- **Internal Revenue Service**

[800.829.1040](tel:800.829.1040)

www.irs.gov

Determine the location of the business. To officially register your business:

- **Florida Division of Corporations**

The division establishes state and federal trademarks for use and protection in Florida only. They also offer an extensive archive of information to the various types of business legal structures.

www.dos.myflorida.com/sunbiz

[850.245.6051](tel:850.245.6051)

State: Search your business name availability and register it by consulting with the below organizations:

- **Florida Secretary of State**

R.A. Gray Building

500 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250

[850.245.6500](tel:850.245.6500)

www.dos.myflorida.com/SecretaryofState@DOS.MyFlorida.com

- **U.S. Patent and Trademark Office**

The federal office recognizes businesses across the nation.

[1.800.786.9199](tel:1.800.786.9199)

www.uspto.gov

For more information on small business advisory services:

- **Florida International University Small Business Development Center**

The center provides professional aide and advice in operating and opening a new business in South Florida.

www.business.fiu.edu/centers/sbdc

305.779.9230

- **Miami Dade SCORE**

SCORE provides entrepreneurs with the necessary consolation and mentorship needed to succeed.

www.miamidade.score.org

786.425.9119

- **Florida Small Business**

The organization offers small businesses helpful tips and advise in operating their business.

www.floridatrend.com/small-business

727.821.5800

- **U.S. Small Business Administration**

The SBA connects entrepreneurs with lenders and funding to help them plan, start and grow their business.

www.sba.gov

800.827.5722



2. Select a location, determine zoning, licensing, and site permitting.

Whether you're setting up a bricks-and-mortar or online business, the choices you make could affect your operations, taxes, legal requirements and revenue. There are several factors to consider including: building type, zoning, parking, licensing and permitting.

Here are the documents you need to operate a business in Miami Beach.

1. Certificate of Use (CU)

A Certificate of Use certifies that your business can operate in a location that is allowed by the applicable zoning. Applications for Certificate of Use are reviewed by the Planning Department and the Building Department. The Fire Department conducts an inspection prior to final approval and issuance of the CU. Please note that all new businesses are required to obtain a CU before applying for a business tax receipt (BTR). Additionally, new Certificate of Use will be required if you expand or reduce your business as well as if additional services or goods are provided.

Depending on the business type, operators may be required to obtain an occupancy load certificate from the Fire Department. For more information or to schedule an inspection, please visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/fireprevention or call the Fire Department at [305.673.7120](tel:305.673.7120)

You may need a building permit if the proposed location requires buildout or other physical improvements. You may also need a new certificate of occupancy from the Building Department depending on the proposed use. Before you commence any work, please confirm with Planning that the business can operate in the proposed location and contact the Building Department at [305.673.7610](tel:305.673.7610) for permitting requirements.

To apply for a CU, please visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/planning or contact the Planning Department at [305.673.7550](tel:305.673.7550) for additional information.

Other Resources

Signage

All business signs require permits. A Building or Planning permit will be required, depending on the type of signage proposed. For more information please consult the Storefront Guidelines, this will provide a quick illustrative reference of permitted signage. The city's Storefront Guidelines as well as the city's regulations can be reviewed by visiting www.miamibeachfl.gov/planning

Zoning Verification Letters

A zoning verification letter provides information regarding the applicable zoning for the proposed location. The letter will include as-of-right allowable uses, and if requested, the department will confirm a specific proposed use. More impactful uses may require Land Use Board approval prior to opening. Please visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/planning or contact the Planning Department at 305.673-7550 for assistance.

2. Business Tax Receipt

The city requires every business, regardless of type, to obtain a BTR in order to operate. To obtain a BTR, call 305.673.7420 or visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/finance.

For more information on obtaining permits for your place of business:

- [City of Miami Beach Zoning Verification Letter](#)

This letter verifies that the business owner location of business has been verified and meets zoning requirements.

www.miamibeachfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Zoning-Verification-Letter-Request.pdf

[305.673.7550](tel:305.673.7550)

- [City of Miami Beach Zoning Classification and Permit Application](#)

To look up zoning for a property, consult the zoning map. For more details on zoning classifications, visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/planning or visit

www.miamibeachfl.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/P-Z-Permit-Application.pdf for Permit Applications.

[305.673.7550](tel:305.673.7550)

- [City of Miami Beach Building Permits](#)

The Building Department offers an array of permits regarding specific business types and usage. www.miamibeachfl.gov/building

[305.673.7610](tel:305.673.7610)

- [Certificate of Occupancy](#)

The Building Department is responsible for the administration of the Certificate of Occupancy. Keep in mind, an inspection may be required prior to opening your business.

www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/building/

[305.673.7610](tel:305.673.7610)

- [Miami-Dade County Health Department](#)

The county requires all prospective restaurant owners to apply for the following license before they can serve food.

www.myfloridalicense.com/DBPR

[850.487.1395](tel:850.487.1395)

3. Register your business with the taxing authorities at the city, state, and federal level.

Taxes that may be levied on a business include resort, alcohol, sale, city business tax and income tax.

Any rentals of a room in any hotel, motel, apartment or restaurant that sells food, beverage and alcoholic beverages are required by to register and remit resort tax to the City of Miami Beach. There is a 4 percent rental tax on any rental occupancy and a 2 percent sale tax on the total sale price of all consumables sold in any restaurant, bar or nightclub.

For more information on registering your retail business in the city and state:

- **City of Miami Beach Resort Tax**

The city has a special resort tax that is divided into two separate brackets. There is a 4 percent rental tax on any rental occupancy, and a 2 percent sale tax on the total sale price of all consumables sold in any restaurant, bar or nightclub. For more information, visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/city-hall/finance/filepay-resort-tax.
[305.673.7420](tel:305.673.7420)

- **Sale of Alcoholic Beverages**

The State of Florida, Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco regulate and license the sale of such items. For more information on the State's licensing requirements please visit www.myfloridalicense.com/dbpr or contact their offices.
[850.487.1395](tel:850.487.1395).

Please note that the State requires zoning confirmation from municipal authorizes. The Miami Beach Planning Department will review the State application to confirm that the sale of alcoholic beverages is permitted in the proposed location. Please visit www.miamibeachfl.gov/planning for more information.

For more information on sale taxes:

The State of Florida has a 6 percent sale tax. Register with the Florida Department of Revenue in order to receive a sale tax ID number.

- **State of Florida Sale Tax**

www.stateofflorida.com/taxes
[850.488.1234](tel:850.488.1234)
411Assist@dms.myflorida

- **State of Florida Department of Revenue**

www.floridarevenue.com/taxes/
[850.488.6800](tel:850.488.6800)
DORGTa@floridarevenue.com



Open your business. It's time to cut the ribbon.

After completing these steps, you have built the necessary foundations that will enable your business to successfully thrive in Miami Beach!

To learn about the various programs and services to guide your new and expanding business, consult with the following organizations:

City of Miami Beach Economic Development

Our mission is to establish, maintain and grow the city's business community by supporting businesses, real estate development and creating a diverse and resilient economy.

www.miamibeachfl.gov/economic-development, ed@miamibeachfl.gov / [305.673.7577](tel:305.673.7577)

Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber was formed in 1921 to promote the economic well-being of Miami Beach's citizens, improve the quality of life, the community, and to communicate the view of the business community on major issues of public policy.

www.miamibeachchamber.com / [305.674.1300](tel:305.674.1300)

Miami Dade Beacon Council

As the official economic development organization for Miami-Dade County, the council provides business owners with the necessary resources to succeed in our diverse economy.

www.beaconcouncil.com / [305.579.1300](tel:305.579.1300)

Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau

701 Brickell Avenue, Suite 2700 Miami, FL 33131 USA

[1.305.539.3000](tel:1.305.539.3000) / [1.800.933.8448](tel:1.800.933.8448)

CustomerService@gmcvb.com