

1. DETERMINE YOUR LEGAL ENTITY

- **If you plan to do business as a Sole Proprietor or General Partnership** in Illinois, under an assumed name (a name other than your own), you will need to obtain an Assumed Name Certificate from the Cook County Clerk's Office. You may register:
 - a. Online by downloading and printing an application @ www.cookctyclerk.com > Vital Records > Assumed Business Name Registration;
 - b. In-person @ Bureau of Vital Records, Assumed Name Unit, 50 W. Washington, West Concourse Level, Suite 114, in Chicago;
 - c. By mail @ Bureau of Vital Records, Attn: Assumed Name Unit, P.O. Box 642570, Chicago, IL, 60664-2570.

Please call 312-603-7790 for more information.

- **If you plan to do business as a legal business entity** in Illinois, regardless if you are based in Illinois or not, you will need to register with the Illinois Secretary of State:
 - a. Online @ www.cyberdriveillinois.com > Business Services;
 - b. In-person @ 69 W. Washington, Suite 1240, in Chicago;
 - c. By mail @ 501 S. 2nd St., Room 350, Springfield, IL, 62756.

Please call 312-793-3380 for more information.

- Illinois based businesses may file a new application as a Limited Partnership (LP), Limited Liability Partnership (LLP), Limited Liability Corporation (LLC), Corporation, or Not-for-Profit Corporation (NFP). You will be provided a State of Illinois File Number, which you will need to provide us at application.
- Businesses not based in Illinois are considered "foreign" and must file an application for authority to transact business in Illinois. You will be provided a State of Illinois File Number, which you will need to provide us at application.

2. REGISTER YOUR BUSINESS

- **Obtain an Employer Identification Number (EIN):** An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number, and is used to identify a legal business entity. Businesses are required to obtain an EIN to file and pay any federal tax obligation. You may register for an EIN with the United States Internal Revenue Service (IRS):
 - a. Online @ www.irs.gov > Businesses > Employer ID Numbers (EINs);
 - b. In-person @ 230 S. Dearborn, in Chicago;
 - c. By mail @ Internal Revenue Service, Attn: EIN Operation, Cincinnati, OH, 45999.

Please call 800-829-4933 for more information.

- **Obtain an Illinois Department of Revenue (IDOR) Account ID Number** (formerly known as Illinois Business Tax Number (IBT): You must register with IDOR if you conduct business in Illinois, or with Illinois customers. This includes sole proprietors (individual or husband/wife), and all legal business entities, including exempt organizations, who plan to hire employees, buy or sell products wholesale or retail, or manufacture goods. You may apply for an IDOR Account ID Number:
 - a. Online @ <http://www.revenue.state.il.us/Businesses/> > Business Registration;
 - b. In-person @ 100 W. Randolph, in Chicago;
 - c. By mail @ Central Registration Division, Illinois Department of Revenue, PO Box 19476, Springfield, IL, 62794-9476.

Please call 800-732-8866 for more information.



3. APPLY FOR YOUR BUSINESS LICENSE

- **Applying for a City of Chicago Business License:** Unless the business is exempted by State of Illinois law, every business operating in the City of Chicago requires a City of Chicago business license. A Department of Business Affairs and Consumer Protection (BACP) Business Consultant can help you determine the type of license you need based on your business activity. Applications may be processed:
 - a. Online @ www.cityofchicago.org/bacp > Apply for a License; or
 - b. In-person @ our Small Business Center, 121 N. LaSalle, Room 800, in Chicago. Business Consultants are available on a walk-in basis; however, appointments are recommended and may be made online at our website or by calling 312-74-GOBIZ (744-6249).
 - **Complete a Business Information Sheet (BIS):** This pre-application form for in-person applicants will provide us with the necessary details about your business to begin the application process. BIS forms are available at our Small Business Center and our website.
 - **All applicants must provide the following:**
 - The business name and ownership information
 - The business location address
 - Square footage of the business location
 - A detailed description of the business activity
 - Identification (i.e. valid driver's license, voters registration card, state ID card or another government-issued photo ID)
- If applicable:
- State of Illinois File Number
 - Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN)
 - Illinois Department of Revenue Account ID Number

Additional document requirements will vary and depend on the type of license. Please check our website for additional information.

- **Zoning:** Depending on the license type, a Zoning Review will need to be completed in order to determine if your business activity is permitted in the zoning designation of your business location. Businesses that are zoned accordingly will automatically be approved when applying for a business license. Check your business address location zoning classification ahead of time at www.cityofchicago.org/zoning.
- **Application Fees:** Application fees vary and are based on the license type.
 - Online applications must be paid online; and in-person applications must be paid in-person.
 - Any outstanding debt to the City, such as parking tickets, or Illinois Sales Tax must be paid before any license can be issued or renewed.
- **Inspections:** Depending on the license type, an inspection by one or various City departments must be conducted prior to license issuance. Please check our website to find out about the specific inspection requirements of business licenses.

SMALL BUSINESS CENTER HOURS:

- In-Person: Monday – Friday; 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
- 312-74-GOBIZ: Monday – Friday; 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

SMALL BUSINESS CENTER SERVICES:

- Business start-up and expansion information
- Business license applications and changes to renewals
- Public Way Use applications and permitting
- Business license Zoning and Inspections information
- Guidance and assistance to all City business processes
- Access to common business solutions

v.05.31.13

