

PERMITS

Which permits are required to open a business in New Westminster?

Anyone operating a business in New Westminster must apply for and obtain a business licence. Depending on the circumstances additional permits may be required, but often they are not.

Would I need any additional permits for renovations, displaying a sign, or a patio?

Yes. Depending on the scope of the renovations, you may be required to apply for and obtain a Building Permit and/or a Plumbing Permit. Cosmetic upgrades to the space, such as painting or replacing flooring, do not require permits. To ensure smooth processing of your application check with the Business Licence Coordinator at 604-527-4566 or call the Building Department directly at 604-527-4580.

A Sign Permit is required if to make changes to an existing display sign. Contact the Planning Department at 604-515-3767 for information on applying for a Sign Permit.

The process for operating a patio, or sidewalk café, is dependent on whether or not it is located on public property or private property, whether it is an existing patio or a newly constructed patio, and whether liquor service is anticipated on the patio. Once staff have a clear understanding of what is being proposed they will be able to provide you with guidance and direction. To discuss questions on patios, contact the Business Licence Coordinator at 604-527-4566.

Are you able to give an estimated wait time on turnaround time for permits?

Each situation is different and permit applications are assessed on a case by case basis. The scope of the changes being made, the number of permits required, and the complexity of the permit applications all play a role in how long processing takes. You can help to ensure the processing is proceeding as quickly as possible by responding to requests for information in a timely manner and providing accurate information when asked.

LICENSING

Which business licenses are required in your city?

One licence is required per activity. It is important to remember however that one location may contain many different activities. For example a hotel may have 4 business licenses: one license to rent rooms; one licence to operate a restaurant; one licence to serve alcohol in the restaurant; and one licence for the ATM in the lobby.

There are also situations in which several contractors work out of the same location. In those cases each contractor requires a separate licence. For example a health clinic may have a licence to operate the clinic and 6 licenses for each Registered Massage Therapists working on site.

Staff in Business Licensing will assess your business model and provide guidance about what best fits your business situation. Call 604-527-4565 for more information.

Am I able to apply for a business license online? If not, what is the procedure, or could you send me the necessary documents?

We are working on being able to offer applications online but we are not able to provide that option at this time. You can pick up a licence at the business licence counter or print an application from our website by going to www.newwestcity.ca and choosing the Business and Economy section located at the top of the homepage.

Are you able to give an estimated wait time or turnaround time for licensing?

Non-Resident Contractor licenses and Inter-Municipal Business Licenses are issued in 15 to 20 minutes. Home-Based Business licenses are generally issued in 2 to 3 weeks. Commercial business licenses are usually processed within 4 to 6 weeks from the date of submission.

Are you able to give an estimated cost breakdown for licensing?

The cost of the licence is specific to the activity and the number of employees. For specific pricing access our website at www.newwestcity.ca and go to the Business and Economy section or call 604-527-4565 to speak to staff in Business Licensing.

BYLAWS

Where can I get information about bylaws I need to comply with?

A person applying for a business licence must comply with all federal, provincial, and municipal laws, bylaws, regulations and rules applicable to that type of class or business. The Zoning Bylaw, British Columbia Building Code, Building Bylaw, British Columbia Fire Act, Fire Protection Bylaw, Business License Bylaw, and Sign Bylaw are bylaws that touch on most applications but there may be others, dependent on your business requirements. The Business Licence Coordinator works closely with staff in other city departments and will assist you in understanding whether or not there are issues of non-compliance and how to address them.

To bylaws are available for viewing on our website at www.newwestcity.ca in the City Hall section under Bylaws.

Are there additional bylaws I should be aware of?

There may be. Each situation is different and business licence applications are assessed on a case by case basis. The Business Licence Coordinator works closely with officials in all City departments and will assist you in understanding whether or not there are issues of non-compliance and what is required for you to address them. You can speak to the Business Licence Coordinator by calling 604-527-4566.

BUSINESS INITIATIVES

Do you offer assistance to entrepreneurs who want to start a business in your city?

Yes. Staff in the Economic Development Office are available to hear your ideas, provide guidance, and refer you to staff and agencies that can help you implement your plan. They can be reached by calling 604-527-4536. The Business Licence Coordinator is available to navigate you through the application process and get you up and running! For assistance with the application process call 604-527-4566.

Do you offer any financial support for small businesses, or businesses starting up?

No, we do not offer financial incentives for any type of business. We are however available to provide assistance navigating the regulatory processes at City Hall and are available to answer any questions you may have on starting a business in New Westminster.

Do you have any tools or resources for small businesses, or businesses starting up?

Yes. The Economic Development section of our website (<https://www.newwestcity.ca/business-and-economy/economic-development>) features a wealth of resources to assist businesses and entrepreneurs including: local data on demographics, customers, business climate and workforce; business stakeholder contacts; available government assistance programs and funding; and a searchable database of available commercial space in New Westminster.

OTHER

Is there any other information I should know before starting a business in your city?

Yes...that we appreciate your interest in New Westminster and are here to help!