



City of Beaufort
1911 Boundary Street, Beaufort, SC 29902

Frequently Asked Questions

Business License

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1. Who needs a business license?

Any business that is located within the City of Beaufort (resident), OR out-of-city business (non-resident) who performs work within the city limits, is required by City Ordinance Section 7-10014 to purchase a business license.

Annual licenses are valid from January 1st thru December 31st of each year. Renewals are due by April 15th of each year to avoid penalties and non-compliance.

Temporary one-time licenses are issued when appropriate and are valid only for the event or job for which they are issued.

Violation of the Business License ordinance carries a maximum fine of \$1,092.50 per day or 30 days in jail or both.

2. How do I obtain a business license?

When opening a business within the City of Beaufort, there are several approvals and forms that are required. An owner or authorized representative will be required to fill out the necessary forms and have these forms approved by the appropriate city departments.

All applications for a *NEW RESIDENT* business license must be approved by Zoning and Building Official. A Safety Permit Application must be filled out and submitted to 1911 Boundary St., Beaufort, SC 29902.

All applications for a *NEW RESIDENT HOME BASED* business license where the business is being conducted from the residence must be approved for a Home Occupation by the Codes Division).

For more information, contact the Codes Division at 843-525-7049.

3. What information will I be required to submit?

All new resident business license applicants will be required to submit the following:

- Business License Classification and Rates
- Business Personal Property Tax Form (for IN-CITY Businesses only)
- Annual Business License Application
- Temporary Business License Application
- Statement of Rental Property Income
- Safety and fire inspection report (for Commercial)
- Home occupation application (for Residential)

Completed and signed County affidavit for business personal property tax. All applications for **NONRESIDENT** business licenses are required to present a copy of any S.C. State license or registration for their profession or trade along with a completed business license application.

Remember to verify the city business license division of any and all businesses that perform work at your location. This includes, but is not limited to, service, repair, cleaning, maintenance or renovation work and also placement of vending or amusement devices. Any person or business conducting business within the city, whose revenue is not reported through your business as an employee, is required to obtain his or her own business license.

4. Are there any other special requirements for a business license?

- All businesses or trades must have copies of any required SC licenses, registrations, and/or inspections for your type of business
- All restaurants and prepared food related businesses require Health Department approval
- Retail sales businesses are required to obtain a SC sales tax ID number
- If alcohol, beer, or wine is to be served, State law requires a DOR permit, a copy of which must be presented with the business license application
- Vending and amusement machine distributors are required to provide a list of machines and their locations. A business license is required, as well as a machine permit for all amusement machines prior to placement

5. Will I be subject to any other City fees or taxes?

Hospitality Fee - There is a 2% local fee imposed by the business on each customer for the purchase of prepared foods or beverages. This 2% hospitality fee is then reported and paid monthly to the Business License department.

Accommodations Fee - There is a 3% local fee imposed by the business on each customer nightly accommodations provided by hotels, motels, inns, beds & breakfast, etc. This 3% accommodations fee is then reported and paid monthly to the Business License department.

Other fees may apply depending on the nature of your business. Please contact the department with any questions.

6. Are there any incentives for new businesses?

The City offers a graduated rate for new businesses locating in Beaufort. In the first year of operation, the business will only pay the base rate as determined by the NAICS Code.

- First renewal - the business will pay 40% of the applicable rate.
- Second renewal - the business will pay 60% of the applicable rate.
- Third renewal - the business will be required to pay 100% of the applicable rate.

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