



2017

New Business Guide

Your guide to doing business in Lancaster, SC



City of Lancaster

216 South Catawba Street

Lancaster, SC 29720

(803) 286-8414

www.lancastercitysc.com

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Important Contacts

Who to know and how to contact them throughout the process



City offices are housed in various buildings throughout the City of Lancaster. The following are those you are most likely to visit while starting your new business.

City Hall Departments:

Administration	216 South Catawba Street	(803) 286-8414
Building & Zoning (Business License)	216 South Catawba Street	(803) 283-4253
Finance	216 South Catawba Street	(803) 286-8414
Human Resources	216 South Catawba Street	(803) 286-8414
Support Services	216 South Catawba Street	(803) 286-8414
Utility Services	216 South Catawba Street	(803) 283-9991

Fire Department:

Station 1	401 E. Arch Street	(803) 283-4385
Station 2	453 Hubbard Drive	(803) 283-4663

Municipal Court:

Court Office	405 E. Arch Street	(803) 285-7622
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Police:

Business Office	405 E. Arch Street	(803) 283-3313
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Public Utilities:

Business Office	1150 Lockwood Lane	(803) 285-9430
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Public Works:

Business Office	916 15th Street	(803) 285-9431
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Solid Waste:

Business Office	1309 Lynwood Drive	(803) 289-1474
Vehicle Maintenance	1320 Lynwood Drive	(803) 285-9110

City Business License

Non-Residential / Retail:

Any business located within the City of Lancaster, or any non-residential business that operates within the city limits of Lancaster, that engages in, causes to be in, and/or represents itself/himself/herself to be engaged in any occupation or activity with the object of gain, benefit, or advantage, either directly or indirectly, is required to purchase an annual business license for the fiscal year, as well as any project only applicants.

Call the City's Business License Specialist at (803) 289-1462.

Prior to being issued a business license, the applicant's place of business must meet all applicable Zoning, Building, signage, and Zoning & Occupancy permits, must have received a final inspection by the City's Building Inspections Department and must have received its Certificate of Occupancy. Call the City's Building and Zoning Department at (803) 283-4253

Residential, Home-Based, Cottage Industry Businesses:

If your business operates outside of a non-retail or residential property, you are required to obtain a City of Lancaster Home Occupation Permit prior to applying for a City Business License. For information regarding the Home Occupation Permit, call the City's Building Inspections Department at (803) 283-4253.

Businesses that qualify under this category are not required to maintain a Retail License issued by the State of South Carolina. Even so, these businesses are urged to check with the South Carolina Secretary of State Corporations Division (803)896-1350, or visit www.sctax.org

Charitable and Nonprofit Organizations:

All Charitable and Nonprofit Organizations must register with the South Carolina Secretary of State. Call (803) 734-0629, or visit www.scsos.com.

To apply for exemption from sales and use tax on items sold for charitable purposes, your organization must file Form ST-387 with the South Carolina Department of Revenue at (803) 896-1350, or visit www.sctax.org.

Some nonprofits operating within the City of Lancaster are exempt from obtaining a City Business License for any charitable activities directly covered by their tax-exempt status. For activities that are not within the approved exemption, an organization may be required to obtain a business license. Call the City's Business License Specialist at (803) 289-1462.

Alcohol

If your business sells or serves alcohol, it must obtain a permit from the South Carolina Department of Revenue's Alcohol Beverage Licensing section. If your business serves alcohol by the drink, you must also collect and remit a liquor by the drink tax. Call (803) 898-5864, or visit www.sctax.org

City Hospitality Tax

Restaurants, bars, private clubs, coffee shops, internet cafes, bakeries, bagel shops, confectioners, delicatessens, and other businesses that prepare, serve, repackage, or sell food or alcohol within the City limits are required to collect and remit a 2% hospitality tax to the City of Lancaster's Business Licensing Department. Call the City's Business License Specialist at (803) 289-1462.

Tobacco

If your business sells tobacco products, you must obtain a license from the South Carolina Department of Revenue.

Restaurants, Grocery Store, Convenience Stores

If your business handles food it must first obtain a license from the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control prior to operation. Call DHEC at (803)286-9948.

Mobile Businesses, Carts, Street Vendors

Must apply for and receive approval from the City's Business Licensing Department.

Contractors

Must possess a South Carolina General Contractor's License or Home Builder's License from the SC Contractor Licensing Board before applying for a City building permit. Call (803) 896-4694 (residential), or (803) 896-4686 (commercial), or visit www.llronline.com

Construction Permits

Prior to any demolition or construction of real property, permits must be obtained from the City's Building and Zoning Department. Call (803) 283-4253.

Certificate of Occupancy

Businesses located within the City limits must be inspected and receive a Certificate of Occupancy from the City's Building and Zoning Department before receiving a Business License, or before opening the premises to the general public. Call (803) 283-4253.

Business Names and Trademarks

Prior to publicizing and circulating the name of your business and/or graphics, check the name's availability with the South Carolina Secretary of State to assure it is not already in use within the state. To trademark the name, you must register it with the Secretary of State's Trademark division. Call (803) 734-0629, or visit www.scsos.com.

Incorporation

To incorporate your business, contact the South Carolina Secretary of State at (803) 734-2158 or visit www.sos.sc.gov.

If your business sells items at the retail level, you must obtain a retail license and collect and remit sales tax to the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Call (803) 898-5000 (Columbia) or visit www.sctax.org.

Fire and Security Alarms

Must be registered with the City's Police department. Call (803) 283-3313

Precious Metals

Businesses that purchase precious metals, or precious/semiprecious stones or gems for profit, must obtain a Precious Metal Permit from the Lancaster County Sheriff's Department. Call (803) 283-3388.

Scrap Metals

Ferrous and Non-Ferrous:

If you transport and sell ferrous or non-ferrous scrap metals to a scrap metal recycler you will need to contact the Sheriff's Department for a permit. Call (803) 283-3388.

Garbage Collection

Businesses located in the City of Lancaster are eligible for curbside pick-up. Call the City's Solid Waste Department at (803) 286-8471.



New Business Checklist

Tips on setting up your business with the City

The Checklist

Following the checklist is a description of offices involved in the process of business development, including contact names, phone numbers and email addresses. Certain information is repeated for the ease of access to the reader.

I. Address

Verify address of intended business location.

Source:

- Realtor
- Physical inspection of premises

II. Zoning

Confirm zoning and required parking for the intended business.

Source:

Louis Streater, Director of Building and Zoning
 City Hall
 Building and Zoning Department
 216 S. Catawba Street
 Lancaster, SC 29720
 (803) 283-4253

III. Signage

All business signage or banners must be permitted through the City prior to any fabrication or installation of signage. Submittal of plans and application for a sign permit (available on our website) should be made a minimum of four weeks prior to the anticipated opening of your business in order to allow for review and the subsequent fabrication and installation of signage.

Allow five working days from the time of submittal of plans to the return of comments. Application for a sign permit together with sign drawings/plans must be submitted to:

Louis Streater, Director of Building and Zoning
 City Hall
 216 S. Catawba Street
 Lancaster, SC 29720
 (803) 283-4253

IV. Business License

All businesses operating within the city limits must obtain a Business License from the City of Lancaster. The application for the business license can be made when applying for building permits. The license will not be issued to the applicant until all construction and all inspections are finalized and the Certificate of Occupancy has been issued .

Information required for the Business License Application:

- Business Name
- Type of business activity
- Category of legal business organization (LLC, Inc., Partnership, etc.)
- Owner's social security number or business Federal Identification Number
- Name, mailing address and phone number of each owner, partner or chief officer
- Physical address and phone number of business
- Legal Notice address
- Estimate of expected gross receipts

Business Classification and Calculation of Business License Fee

Due to the number of business classifications utilized by the City of Lancaster, it is not recommended that a business owner attempt to "self-classify" for the purpose of estimating its first business license fee. Please call the Business License specialist at the below number to determine the appropriate classification for your business and the fee that will result.

Karen Proctor, Business License Specialist

City Hall
216 S. Catawba Street
Lancaster, SC 29720
(803) 289-1462

V. State Registration

All businesses operating within the State of South Carolina must register with the South Carolina Department of Revenue.

Source:

Department of Revenue

Lancaster: (803) 285-7424
Columbia: (803) 898-5300
www.sctax.org

VI. Contractor's License

All contractors must be licensed by the State of South Carolina Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulations and must have a business license from the City of Lancaster.

Construction and/or demolition activities cannot commence until necessary permits have been issued.



Other Important Contacts

Who to know and how to contact them throughout the process

Lancaster County Economic Development:

Business Office 101 N. Main St. (803) 286-3633

Better Business Bureau:

<http://charlotte.bbb.org> (704) 927-8611

Duke Energy:

Business Services 136 Grace Ave. 800-777-9898

Comporium:

Business Services 703 North White St. (803) 286-9000

Lancaster County Water and Sewer:

Business Office 1400 Pageland Hwy. (803) 285-6919

Lancaster News:

Business Office 701 North White St. (803) 283-1133

EMS:

Business Office 2006 Pageland Hwy. (803) 283-4134

Chamber of Commerce

Business Office 453 Colonial Ave. (803) 283-4105

Library

Main Library 313 South White St. (803) 285-6004

Lancaster Council of the Arts

Business Office 201 W. Gay St. (803) 285-7451

Lancaster County School District

Administrative office 300 S. Catawba St. (803) 286-6972

Lancaster County Administration Building:

Administration Building 101 N. Main St. (803) 285-1565



Thank you for your interest in our City.

