

The

Business Manual

Starting & Growing a Business in the City of York



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The Commerce Manual: Starting and Growing a Business In the City of York was prepared by the staff of the Department of Economic & Community Development (DECD). Comments and inquiries on the subject matter should be addressed to: City of York, Department of Economic & Community Development, 101 South George Street, York Pennsylvania 17401. 1-717-849-2875. www.yorkcity.org

CITY OF YORK BUSINESS START-UP CHECKLIST

The items in this booklet are intended as a guide only and have been carefully researched and deemed correct. However, the City of York and DECD cannot be held responsible for errors or omissions. The information provided herein is not meant to constitute legal advice. Please contact DECD with any suggestions or corrections to improve the quality of the resource guide.



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A Message From

C. Kim Bracey, Mayor of York

Dear Business Investor,

York is a great place to do business. And the help you need to succeed in York is available at the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD). Whether yours is an existing company, a new business, or a business wishing to relocate to York, you will find services at DECD to help reach your goals. If you need help to expand, renovate, invest in new technology or upgrade equipment, call DECD. Through DECD, the City partners with other units of government – county, state and surrounding communities – and with industrial development organizations like the York County Economic Alliance – for a coordinated effort to aid economic development and encourage job creation.

The strong alliance of private businesses, non-profit organizations and government agencies has given rise to a renewed entrepreneurial spirit in York. This spirit has created a thriving downtown district and an active retail industry, supported by national corporations that have made the City their home.

Our prime location in the foothills of the Susquehanna Valley is enhanced with the development of parks, walking and biking trails and tree-lined streets. York is a friendly, caring, growing community offering desirable housing, including downtown residences and many charming historic neighborhoods. Arts, entertainment, historical, recreational and sports centers provide enjoyment for all ages.

In York, your business matters. As a general reference, you will find this guide useful in contacting the appropriate departments for your needs. It is intended to be your one-stop resource for obtaining contact information for permits, licenses, and other information necessary for conducting business in the City of York. Please feel free to contact the DECD at (717) 849-2875 for help to ensure your business will grow and prosper.

Sincerely,



C. Kim Bracey
Mayor, City of York



A Message From

Kevin J. Schreiber, Director of Economic & Community Development

Thank you for your interest in bringing your business to York. We welcome your investment in our growing city. The private sector is the muscle and mind behind our local economy and job creation; city government is here to assist you in planning, facilitation, advocacy, public safety, and infrastructure. We're also here to streamline the process of getting started.

Like all municipalities in this country, the City of York has certain requirements, licenses and other procedures with which new and growing businesses must comply. If you're ready to begin the process of starting or expanding your business this information must be completed and submitted to the Office of Permits, Planning & Zoning before you begin to alter your building.

Any renovations or remodeling necessary to accommodate the business will require the appropriate permits such as building, electrical, plumbing, roofing, HVAC, etc. Most building permits also require a blueprint that our building inspectors will review. After review, you will be notified whether your business is ready to go or if your application has been denied. If it has been denied, we'll tell you what needs to be done in order for your business to meet the requirements mandated by local ordinances, necessary to move forward with your business.

Our staff is here to help you in a timely and professional manner. We work with citizens like you every day and hope that you'll contact us for assistance during this process. Once you have met the requirements to open or expand your business, a Certificate of Occupancy inspection will be scheduled. All businesses operating in the City are required to pass an on-site inspection prior to taking occupancy of the building.

On behalf of the Economic and Community Development Department, I welcome you and look forward to your success.

Sincerely,



Kevin J. Schreiber

Director of Economic & Community Development





Mudhook Brewing Company opened its doors and began brewing craft beer in 2011. Located at Clarke Avenue and Cherry Lane, in the annex of Central Market, Mudhook has all the brewing equipment on site and has partnered with market vendors to provide much of its pub fare.



At 24 North Beaver Street, in the Market District, **Park Street Pantry** sells gourmet cooking ingredients, offering the highest quality additives to turn food into an unforgettable culinary experience. Shown here are sisters and owners, Beth Bulk and Krista Darr.



In the 200 block of West Market Street, **Growing Up Green** opened its doors in 2011. Here proprietor Heather Klinefelter prepares to cut the ribbon to her new shop which sells eco-friendly children's products.



Just Cupcakes Cafe' at 9 West Philadelphia Street celebrated the opening of its second location in Downtown York in October of 2011. Pictured here: Chad Myers, Downtown Business Development Liaison; Mandy Arnold, Downtown Inc volunteer; proprietors Sarah Loveleski and her mother, Chris Martin; and Ben Chiara, Rock Commercial Real Estate.

The New Business Startup Process

Starting a business in the City of York



Step 1

Propose new business

by filling out and submitting new business application.

New business application is reviewed by Zoning Officer.

If approved

If denied

Step 2

New business applicant is notified. Certificate of Occupancy Inspection must be scheduled and paid for by the applicant.

Official letter notifying determination is sent to the applicant with recommendation to remedy.

Zoning officer notifies approval of business to the York/Adams Tax Bureau.

Certificate of Occupancy occurs.

Inspection fails

Certificate of Occupancy is issued.

Inspection passes

Failed items must be addressed. Certificate of Occupancy Re-inspection is scheduled and paid for by the applicant.

Inspection passes

Food vending in business?

Step 3

No

Yes

Health inspection is scheduled and paid for by the applicant. Health inspection is performed by the Health & Sanitation Officer.

Inspection fails

Health License is issued.

Inspection passes

Failed items must be addressed. Health Re-inspection is scheduled and paid for by the applicant.

Inspection passes

**Ok to open.
Congratulations!**

Schedule a ribbon cutting and Grand-Opening with Downtown Inc or YCEA.

- - passed/approved
- - ok to open
- - failed/denied
- - requires action from you
- - requires action from the City/Third Party



The Cheesesteak Spot opened at the corner of Princess and Beaver streets in 2011, bringing authentic Philly Cheesesteaks to York City. Shown here is the ribbon cutting celebrated by proprietors Shawn Neely and Chaz Miller along with many of their friends and supporters.



York City's newest center for the visual arts, which opened in spring, 2012, is located at 37 West Philadelphia Street. "**Marketview Arts - A Studio for Creativity**" provides gallery space, event space, two residential apartments, and an arts orientation center directly across the street from Central Market.



At 50 East North Street, adjacent to the stadium, **Liquid Hero Brewery** brews delicious craft beers for its pub and for distribution throughout the region. Seen here are brew masters and proprietors Josh, Christian and Matt. Liquid Hero is available on tap at several York City restaurants.

Zoning

Before purchasing or renting any building for commercial purposes, please check with the Bureau of Permits, Planning & Zoning to ensure that the proposed type of business can be operate at the selected site. Prior to moving forward on a project, determination must be made as to whether your chosen business location is permissible in accordance with the city's Zoning and Planning Ordinances. All land use activities in the City of York are subject to the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, which was adopted in August, 2011. The zoning regulations and districts set forth have been made in accordance with the City's community development goals designed to address:

- HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE – Promote, protect and facilitate any or all of the following:
 1. Public health, safety, morals and general welfare;
 2. Coordinated and practical community development and proper density of population;
 3. Emergency management preparedness and operations and national defense facilities;
 4. Provision of adequate light and air to provide a healthy community;
 5. Provision of adequate police protection, vehicle parking and loading space, transportation, water, sewerage, schools, recreational facilities, public grounds and safe reliable water supply; and
 6. Preservation of natural, scenic and historic resources and preservation of wetlands and floodplains.
- OVERCROWDING – To prevent overcrowding of land, blight, danger and congestion in travel and transportation, loss of health, life or property from fire, flood, panic or other dangers.
- COMMUNITY GROWTH – To accommodate reasonable community growth including population and employment growth, and opportunities for development/redevelopment of a variety of residential dwelling types and nonresidential uses.
- ECONOMIC STABILITY – To facilitate appropriate development and redevelopment activities while protecting the tax base and encouraging economy in public expenditures.
- QUALITY OF LIFE – To facilitate orderly, safe and aesthetically pleasing development/redevelopment within an urban environment that enhances the quality of life for current and future residents of the City.

The City of York has both a Zoning Officer and a Zoning Hearing Board. The Zoning Officer has the authority to allow permitted uses by right, and the Zoning Hearing Board has the authority to allow uses by special exception. The Zoning Hearing Board also grants decisions on variance requests and appeals of the Zoning Officer's determinations. The Zoning Hearing Board meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. in City Council Chambers located at 101 South George Street in York.

Permits, Plan Review & Inspections

Most people begin the development process by talking to staff of the Bureau of Permits, Planning and Zoning. This is where applications for building, electrical, mechanical, signage, health and plumbing permits originate and where zoning interpretations are made.

Most new businesses will require a pre-development meeting. This meeting brings together all of the individuals involved in the permitting, inspecting and licensing process. The purpose of the meeting is to answer any and all questions pertaining to the development of the business. All questions should be as specific as possible, so staff can give the most correct and thorough information. City staff will work with and help you understand the review process and help determine what must be accomplished to have your business up and running as soon as possible. Pre-development meetings are scheduled every Wednesday afternoon at City Hall, 101 South George Street in York.

After the pre-development meeting, the applicant will have a better understanding of what is expected and required for permits, inspections and licenses in the City of York. All plans related to the project should then be submitted to the Bureau of Permits, Planning and Zoning to initiate the review process. The following criteria must be met at the time of plan submission:

- All commercial projects plans, new construction or renovations, are required to be designed and stamped by a Pennsylvania licensed design professional
- All commercial plans must be submitted in triplicate
- All plumbing work in the City must be completed by a City of York licensed plumber

All plan reviews will be conducted under the Uniform Construction Code (UCC) and ordinances. The Commonwealth establishes building codes to ensure projects meet the minimum public safety standards for building design, construction, quality, use and occupancy, location and maintenance. A third party contractor and City staff conduct all formal plan reviews. The time afforded for commercial plan review is 30 business days.

Licensing

Health License

The City of York employs a full time Health and Sanitation Officer who oversees all health inspections and health licensing guidelines. Any new business that deals with making, selling or distributing food must obtain approval from the City's Health and Sanitation Officer before commencing operations.

Business License

Conducting any business in the City of York requires filing for a Business Privilege Tax License with the York Adams Tax Bureau. All businesses must register to establish an account; the initial \$25.00 New Business fee covers the processing of the application.

York Adams Tax Bureau
1415 N. Duke St.
P.O. Box 15627
York, PA 17405-0156
(717) 812-0759 Fax (717) 854-6376
<http://www.yatb.com>
info@yatb.com

Parking

All new businesses must meet the off-street parking requirements established by the City Zoning Ordinance. However, any business operating in the Central Business District is exempt from the off-street parking requirement.

For information on parking regulation, as well as assistance with your parking needs, contact the City of York Parking Bureau, located at 50 West King Street. The Parking Bureau's garages and surface lots are designed to serve long-term parking needs. The on-street parking meters are for short-term parking; therefore, continuously feeding the meters is prohibited. Meters are enforced citywide Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays in the Central Business District.

Resources for New Business Owners

Community First Fund

www.commfirstfund.org

Community First Fund creates lasting economic growth for communities by providing equitable financial services, technical knowledge, and advocacy for its customers. They also have an outstanding history of providing loans and technical assistance to entrepreneurs, affordable housing developers, and community groups in under-served communities in its service area.

Entrepreneurial Support Alliance

www.esaonline.info

The Entrepreneurial Support Alliance (ESA) is the one stop shop to find the resources that you would need for all of your entrepreneurial needs. We help you navigate the many providers to direct you to the organization which is best suited for your particular need.

HACC Institute For Entrepreneurial Studies

<http://www.hacc.edu/NonCredit/InstituteForEntrepreneurialStudies/index.cfm>

HACC formed the Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies to assist individuals in turning their dreams of business ownership into a profitable reality. Their focus is one-on-one counseling and educational programs that serve entrepreneurs from the initial idea stage through the first three years of operation. The HACC Institute for Entrepreneurial Studies can help with the tough questions and uncertainties of people in the preliminary stages of starting their businesses. It is one of the few entrepreneurial assistance programs that work with clients before they decide on a business.

J.D. Brown Center for Entrepreneurship

<http://groups.ycp.edu/browncenter>

The J.D. Brown Center for Entrepreneurship was established in 2006 to promote initiative, creativity, individual opportunities and to add value to the local community. The center helps to enable growth by offering various support programs and development of entrepreneurial skills. At the

J.D. Brown Center, their mission is to fuel the entrepreneurial engine of central Pennsylvania and northern Maryland. Local, state and federal funding programs are available to serve the needs of start-up companies and companies expanding within or relocating to York County. The York County Economic Development Corporation and related entities market and administer various loan, grant and tax credit/abatement programs available for capital development, environmental assessment and/or remediation, training and technical support.

Junior Achievement

www.jascpa.org

Junior Achievement is a non-profit organization comprised of business and community leaders all focused on the goal of impacting the lives of young people throughout South Central Pennsylvania. JA is the world's largest organization dedicated to educating students in grades K-12 about work readiness, financial literacy, and entrepreneurship through experiential, hands-on programs.

The Pennsylvania Technical Assistance Program (PennTAP)

www.penntap.psu.edu

PennTAP supports technology-based economic development by helping Pennsylvania companies improve competitiveness by providing a limited amount of free technology assistance to help resolve specific technical needs. Additionally, PennTAP continues to serve the Food Industry as a Penn State Outreach program. PennTAP's partnership enhances your ability to help your business clients grow with services and training targeted to their needs. For the food manufacturer, we provide fee for service technical consulting expertise and training excellence in critical subjects like: HACCP, GMP, food safety assessments, and preparation for GFSI food safety schemes like SQF and FSSC 22000. We also offer well-tuned business development and training programs.

Shippensburg SBDC

www.shipsbdc.org

The Shippensburg University Small Business Development center has a team of professionals that can work confidentially with local entrepreneurs. They are available in Adams, Cumberland, Franklin and York counties to help your new business retain a competitive edge. Shippensburg USBDC is an accredited affiliate of the National Network of Small Business Development Centers.

SCORE

www.yorkscore.org

Formed in 1964, SCORE is a premier source of free and confidential small business advice for entrepreneurs. SCORE considers themselves the "Counselors to America's Small Business" and additionally provides training to small businesses. Not only is SCORE a resource partner with the U.S. Small Business Administration, but they are also a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the formation, growth and success of small businesses nationwide.

Technavate

www.technavate.com

Technavate is a collaborative partnership with a broad range of educational, community and industry partners for the purpose of supporting knowledge and technology transfer activities. This effort will build an easily accessible, accountable, and responsive process and a shared resource comprising in-reach to the Penn State University system and outreach activities to the business community.

Technology Council

www.tccp.org

The mission of the Technology Council of Central Pennsylvania is to create, attract, grow and retain technology companies in the central PA region. TCCP's four full-time employees and small army of more than 100 committee volunteers work together on initiatives, events and projects to accomplish their mission. Some accomplishments by the Technology Council: Lead efforts to attract, retain and train the best technology workforce in the nation. Lead efforts to make Pennsylvania a leader in Broadband and Wireless deployment focused on deploying the fastest, most reliable and most affordable telecommunication systems in the nation.

York County Economic Alliance

In January, 2012, the York County Chamber of commerce and the York County Economic Development Corporation joined forces and formed the new York County Economic Alliance, a 501©3 corporation. These two very significant organizations in York County – the Chamber and the EDC – are now affiliates of the Economic Alliance, retaining, and build on, the best characteristics, structures and programs of the founding entities.

The mission of the YCEA is to benefit everyone who lives and works in York County and to provide initiatives which offer members access and marketing to a larger population of companies, a bigger pool for group buying power, and the opportunity to offer new and unique programs and services. The ultimate goal of the Economic Alliance is to be a resource for facilitating economic and community development.

Loan Programs

Fresh Food Fund

Based on a grant from the United States of Department of Agriculture and seed money provided by the City of York Re-development Authority, The York City Fresh Foods Fund (FFF) is a revolving loan fund that has been created to modestly assist the development of new and existing restaurants and other food service establishments in the City of York. Our goal is to help entrepreneurs and business owners start and expand successful businesses in an effort to bring jobs and economic prosperity to the City.

To reach this goal, FFF loans, at an interest rate of approximately prime, will be provided to qualifying applicants through PeoplesBank. The intent of the FFF coincides with the mission of the Department of Economic Development to create the conditions that create a diversely vibrant economy throughout York City. Please note that there are limits to the total capitalization of the loan fund. The city respects and thanks each and every eatery, restaurant, market vendor, and food vendor that does business in our city. We apologize, in advance, for not being able to award loans to all of the excellent and able proprietors of fresh food establishments who could use additional support. We will administer the program based on the objective procedures and criteria explained below.

The FFF will make loans to a variety of food service establishments that, for many reasons, do not qualify for additional bank financing and support. The typical borrower the FFF anticipates serving are ineligible for the conventional lending products due to and insufficient operating history, inadequate collateral or poor credit.

Many eateries within the City will be able to apply for revolving loan funds for a variety of purposes, including:

1. Equipment and inventory purchases
2. Building improvements and tenant fit-outs
3. Facade improvement and signage
4. Gap financing for business development projects
5. Fixed Assets

Under this program, please note that only eateries and restaurants, defined, as those food-service operations that provide sit-down seating, and food vendors at Central Market or the Farmers' Market at Penn and Market are eligible. Carry out establishments are not eligible for this program.

Artist Homestead Information

York City extends an invitation to artists of a broad range of mediums to join other emerging and renowned artists as part of our Artist Homestead program. A dozen live-above-work artists have already set up shop and home in the city as part of the program. We want to continue that momentum by incentivizing artists of other mediums to own a home in York. Therefore, juried visual artists, sculptors, architects, landscape designers, computer designers, marketing and public relations designers, wallpaper and other design professionals, licensed engineers, culinary artists, restaurateurs, bakers, performing artists (e.g., musicians, acoustic and vocal performers, comediennes), art instructors and professors, artisans, woodworkers and craftspeople, hand-made soap and candle makers, hand-made jewelers, florists, dressmakers and clothing designers, professional writers and drafters, including reporters, poets, and cartoonists who derive a portion of their income from their artistic endeavor are encouraged to apply. One need not be a full-time artist to apply.

In addition, the Redevelopment Authority automatically will approve as “artists” those recent graduates (i.e., Artist Homestead application signed and submitted within five years of one’s date of graduation for an associate degree or other appropriate degree) of the Art Institute of York, the Culinary Arts Institute of the York Technical Institute, or the fine arts program of York College of Pennsylvania

The Citywide Artist Homestead initiative, the only citywide artist relocation and homeownership program in the United States, offers two tiers of financial and amenity incentives to artists who purchase homes in the City of York, with priority given to artists who establish live-above-work studios.

If you would like to learn more about our unique and growing program for creative artists, call 717-849-2248 to plan a visit and personalized tour.

Tax Abatement Programs

The Residential Tax Abatement Program (ReTAP) and the Local Economic Revitalization Tax Abatement (LERTA) are tax abatement incentives to encourage improvements, rehabilitation and new construction throughout the entire City of York.

Both programs apply tax abatement to the value of the increase in property tax assessment due to property rehabilitation or new construction. Generally, major improvements to a property will trigger a property reassessment by the York County Assessment office. Both ReTAP and LERTA are citywide and apply to current as well as new owners. They both provide a 10-year abatement that RUN WITH THE LAND, so subsequent owners, within the 10-year abatement period will still benefit from the abatement incentive.

ReTAP

The York City ReTAP program is one of the most aggressive programs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. A healthy housing stock is vital to the revitalization and stability of all city neighborhoods. The City & County ReTAP provides for a 100%, ten year tax exemption on the value of new residential construction or residential rehabilitation. This incentive runs with the land for 10 years; therefore, if the property owner should change, the incentive remains until year eleven.

The companion York School District ReTAP provides ten year phased out exemptions: 100% in year one, 90% in year two, 80% in year three and so forth until a 10% abatement is granted in year ten for the value of new construction & rehabilitation of houses & condominiums

LERTA

The Local Economic Revitalization Tax Abatement (LERTA) program provides ten year phased out exemptions. 100% in year one, 90% in year two, 80% in year three and so forth until a 10% abatement is granted in year ten value of new construction of houses & condominiums to all three taxing entities: city school district, city, and county. The program applies to commercial and retail-related new construction and rehabilitation projects.



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