



Town of Surfside Beach

“Open for Business”



A brochure to provide assistance on requirements for opening a new business in town. Helping you cut through the “red tape” and prevent delays.

“The Family Beach”



WELCOME... We're glad you're here! Opening a new business can be intimidating and a little overwhelming, to say the least. The Town of Surfside Beach understands this and wants to encourage and assist you by making the process faster and easier.

Where Do I begin?



Before leasing or purchasing a property within the Town limits of Surfside Beach, we **strongly** recommend you stop by the Planning, Building and Zoning Department. Checking the current zoning of the property before leasing or purchase can prevent unwanted and unnecessary complications.

Once you've verified the zoning district allows the type of business you're planning to open, schedule an appointment with the Planning, Building and Zoning Director. The director can arrange for all pertinent parties from the town staff to be available to meet with you at that time. There, you may have your questions answered in a "One-Stop" process. We want to ensure you have a clear understanding of any code restrictions or any additional requirements that may affect your operation, and any building and site modifications that may be necessary to open your business. This will help prevent any delays in your scheduled opening. We will also explain the Code Clearance Form that must be completed prior to obtaining your Business License.

Design Overlay District

When we meet, you will be advised on whether your business is located within the Design Overlay District.

Additional code requirements apply to this area and depend on many factors. The director will also provide you with a Design Overlay District packet, if applicable, with a checklist of information that must be returned for review and approval.

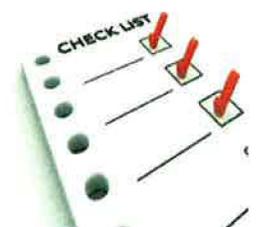
Planning, Building and Zoning Department

After we meet to discuss the zoning and feasibility of your business opening at your chosen location, we will make a "Feasibility Inspection" of the site. This inspection is not intended to be construction inspection or safety inspection and in no way certifies the overall soundness or suitability of the building construction, site or other elements. The feasibility inspection will be made to give you an idea of any improvements or modifications that may be required to meet the Town zoning codes and flood codes (if applicable), so you can determine anticipated costs and

expenses to finalize your budget and plans. If you are considering purchasing the building, we recommend securing the services of a certified and licensed inspection agency as well.

The feasibility inspection covers the site (parking, landscaping, signage, building colors and façade of the building, etc.) to see what changes, if any, will be required for compliance with town codes. There are different requirements depending on different scenarios.

After the feasibility inspection Planning, Building and Zoning will meet with you again to go over the results, explain any required changes and explain the next steps in your process. This meeting can be in our office or on site. You will receive a copy of the feasibility inspection report along with appropriate checklists to help you prepare plans for any necessary changes.





New Business Inspection

Once you have completed the zoning feasibility inspection a “New Business” inspection will be made by the Building Official. The Building Official will look for any visible electrical violations, exit lights, emergency lighting etc. If the building is having a change of use, the Building Official may have separate requirements based on current codes. A copy of the “New Business” inspection will be provided to you.

Preparing Plans for Submittal

If either the feasibility inspection or the New Business inspection indicates changes or improvements are required, your next step would be to prepare the site and/or building plans. You should use the new business report and checklist provided to prepare complete plans for your specific project. A design professional should draw the plans. You should provide them a copy of these forms. Some plans must be prepared by a South Carolina licensed architect and/or engineer and you will be advised if that is the case.

Submitting Plans for Approval

When your plans are complete, submit the site and/or building plans to the Permit Technician in the Planning, Building and Zoning Department. The plan will be reviewed within five business days. You and your design professional will be notified if the plans are approved or require revisions. You will receive a detailed list of review comments. Our goal is to provide enough information so the plans can be approved when first submitted however, most plans go through one or two revisions.

Selecting the Right Licensed Contractor

If you have not already done so, when your plans have been approved you will want to begin your contractor selection. Having an approved set of plans to put out for bids or estimates is helpful in avoiding costly and unexpected expenditures. It also gives your contractor a more complete picture of the work necessary. This generally means a more accurate estimate and better pricing.

Your Contractor obtains the permits and calls for Inspections

Building permits (for building code requirement changes) can only be obtained by an appropriately licensed South Carolina general contractor who must also hold a current town business license. They must provide a list of any subcontractors that he or she plans to use, and they must also be appropriately licensed. We provide your contractor with an approved set of plans to use as the field copy.

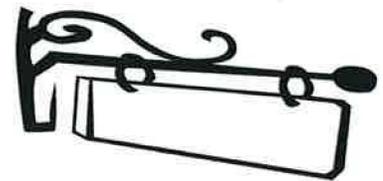
Zoning permits for required façade changes must be obtained by an appropriately licensed South Carolina general

contractor who must also hold a current town business license.

Zoning permits for required changes to the parking area to include landscaping must be obtained by a landscaper who has a current business license with the town.

No work may begin until all permits have been obtained.

Your general contractor must call for the required inspections of the work as it progresses. This is to avoid premature requests by others resulting in reinspection fees. Inspections must be requested 24 hours in advance.



Don't forget your signs

An important part of any business is its signs. Signs are issued a separate permit and must be handled by a licensed sign company that can often help you design, manufacture and install the most effective signs. Most area sign companies are familiar with the sign regulations in the Town of Surfside Beach and the process of securing the sign permit.



Health Department Approval

If your business is regulated by the Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC). You must obtain their approval before you can get a business license to open your business.



Fire Department

The fire department will perform an inspection once your business is set up and ready to open. The inspection will include, but not be limited to: Ensure all portable fire extinguishers have been serviced by a licensed technician within the last year, and ensure all fixed fire extinguishing systems; i.e., kitchen hood and duct fire suppression systems, have been serviced by a licensed technician within the past six months. Check the kitchen suppression system (if applicable) to ensure system is UL300 compliant. The required exits must be equipped with proper hardware and must not be obstructed. The inspection must certify the address and suite numbers are clearly visible from the fire department approach; all ceiling tiles must be in place (no holes and open areas); all sides of building are free from weeds, trash, debris or combustible storage; all exit signs and emergency lights must be functioning and have been properly maintained and the records kept on site; front of electrical panel must maintain a minimum of thirty (30) inches of access width; owner/tenant must provide two 24-hour emergency contact names and telephone numbers. The fire department must sign off on a business license application before a license is issued.



Police Department

The police department will require a "Night Reference Form" is completed prior to opening. You may drop it off at the police department, and once received, they will sign off on your business license application.



Public Works

New commercial accounts for Sanitation:

- ⇒ Only the Town or its authorized representatives are permitted to collect garbage within the Town.
- ⇒ When notified by a new business owner/tenant, the sanitation supervisor will meet them on site; review the type of business and/or materials that may be generated. This assessment will determine the type of service required. Service can vary from simple roll-cart service to 6-8 yard container service. Frequencies depend on type of business and individual needs. Billing is simply added to the customer's water bill through Grand Stand Water and Sewer.
- ⇒ The Town provides roll-carts, but larger containers must be leased or purchased from private companies. Contact names/numbers for some of these companies will be provided to anyone interested.
- ⇒ Recycling opportunities are provided by the Town and are encouraged.
- ⇒ Free recycling roll-carts are provided, and dedicated cardboard containers are available through the Horry County Solid Waste Authority.



Will your business be located in a Flood Zone?

Many things should be considered before purchasing or leasing your ideal business location. One of the most important is whether the property is located within a special flood hazard area (SFHA). If it is, protect yourself with flood insurance. At least 25 percent of businesses that close after events like a flood never reopen. Flood insurance is the best way to protect yourself from devastating financial loss and is available to commercial owners/renters. Costs vary depending on how much insurance is purchased, what it covers and the property's flood risk. Coverage for your building and contents is available. The Planning, Building and Zoning Department will gladly help you with all flood information.

Important Numbers to Remember:

Surfside Beach Business License Department

115 Hwy. 17 North
Surfside Beach, SC 29575
843-913-6342 or email at:
businesslicense@surfsidebeach.org

Surfside Beach Planning, Building and Zoning Department

115 Hwy. 17 North
Surfside Beach, SC 29575
843-913-6341 or email at:
zoning@surfsidebeach.org

Zoning approvals, New Business Inspections and Planning requirements must be approved by this department prior to the opening of the business.

Surfside Beach Fire Department

810 First Avenue North
Surfside Beach, SC 29575
843-913-6369 or email at:
pwilliams@surfsidebeach.org

Safety inspections must be conducted by this department before opening a business.

Surfside Beach Police Department

811 Pine Drive
Surfside Beach, SC 29575
843-913-6368 or email at:
amiller@surfsidebeach.org

The Night Call Reference Form must be accepted by the Police Department prior to opening of business.

Surfside Beach Public Works Department

740 Sandy Lane
Surfside Beach, SC 29575
843-913-6360 or email at:
publicworks@surfsidebeach.org

This office will provide additional information on sanitation, or to request new/changes to service.

Other things to take care of while your location is being finalized...

There are several other agencies you may need to contact before you are ready to open, depending on the type of business you have, such as:

SC Department of Revenue

1330 Howard Parkway
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
843-839-2960
www.sctax.org

All new businesses must register with the DOR, which administers the majority of taxes and licenses need to operate in South Carolina.

DHEC—Horry County Food Protector

1196 Airdome Avenue # 362
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577
843-205-8931
www.scdhec.org

Restaurants and other food service businesses must contact the Horry County Health Department to get the appropriate Food Service Permits.

SC Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

110 Centerview Drive
Columbia, SC 29210
803-896-4300
www.llr.sc.us

LLR administers the licensing for more than 130 regulated professions and occupations.

SC Secretary of State

1205 Pendleton Street, Suite 525
Columbia, SC 29204
803-734-2158
www.scbos.sc.com

Corporations, limited liability companies and limited partnerships must complete their business filings with the Secretary of States office.

SC Department of Social Services

2638 Two Notch Road, Suite 220
Columbia, SC 29204
888-202-1469
www.dss.sc.gov

DSS provides child-care regulations and licensing for all child care businesses, including those operated in a home.



Frequently Asked Questions on Business Licenses

WHAT IS A BUSINESS LICENSE?

A business license is an excise tax levied on the privilege of doing business within the town limits of Surfside Beach.

WHO MUST HAVE A BUSINESS LICENSE?

Every person engaging in or intending to engage in any calling, business, occupation or profession within the town of Surfside Beach is required to pay an annual license fee and obtain a business license. If your business is operated in your home or if you maintain an office within the town limits, you must obtain a business license. All real-estate rentals are considered a business. Each rental is considered a separate business.

WHEN IS THE BUSINESS LICENSE FEE DUE? JUNE 1

The business license year starts June 1 and ends May 31. Beginning June 1, penalties are assessed at the rate of 5 percent per month (with a 30 percent cap) until all license fees and penalties are paid.

WHAT ARE THE LICENSE FEES BASED ON?

Fees are based on the gross receipts of your business as reported for federal tax purposes. Gross receipts are the total revenue generated by the business. State and federal sales and excise taxes are not considered income and are exempt. No other exemptions or deductions are allowed. Gross receipts for business done outside the town limits for which a license tax is paid to another municipality may be exempt when proof is provided.

The license fee for a new business is based on an estimation of gross receipts from the first day of operation until May 31. If you were in business for less than the full license year, the second year license fee is based on an estimation of gross receipts for the next full year (12 months). Thereafter, the reporting period for renewals is based on the preceding calendar or fiscal year, as reported on your federal tax return.

WILL ONE LICENSE COVER MY BUSINESS?

A separate license is required for each place of business and for each classification of business conducted at one place.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I OPERATE WITHOUT A LICENSE?

Violations are subject to a fine of up to \$500, and all court fees or imprisonment. Each day of violation is considered a separate offense. You are also subject to a penalty of 5 percent or \$25.00, whichever is greater.

Frequently asked Business License questions continued....

HOW DO I OBTAIN A BUSINESS LICENSE?

The approval process depends on the classification of the type of business being conducted and its location. For businesses located within the town limits, applications are subject to approvals of certain Town departments and other agencies. Approval is required from the Planning, Building and Zoning; Fire Department, Police Department, and DHEC if your business deals with food.

WHERE SHOULD THE BUSINESS LICENSE BE DISPLAYED?

The business license must be displayed **conspicuously**, and it is subject to inspection by any officer of the Town of Surfside Beach. Contractors must carry the license or a copy of the license on their person or in their vehicle at all times.

MISCELLANEOUS

Business Licenses are **not transferable** with a change of ownership.

License fees are **not refundable and are not prorated.**

A business license is required for **all property rentals.** Hospitality fees and accommodation taxes are required for short-term rentals.

Out-of-town businesses are charged for only the actual work performed inside the town limits of Surfside Beach. The license fee is based on the gross receipts of the actual work done in the Town for the previous full calendar year or, if a new businesses, the estimate for the current licensed year.

Home occupations are regulated. *(Call the Planning, Building and Zoning Department for more information.)*

Amusement machines which are licensed pursuant to SC Code 12-21-2720(A)(1), (A)(2), and (A)(3) require a town-issued sticker costing \$12.50 per machine in addition to any requirements of the South Carolina Department of Revenue. Approval from the Planning, Building and Zoning Department must be obtained before the decals will be issued by the Business License Office **before** placing any new machines in additional locations.

General contractors, mechanical contractors (HVAC, electrical and plumbing), residential builders and residential specialty contractors must meet state standards and be licensed by the state.

If your business involves hospitality (food, amusement, admissions) or short-term accommodations, you will be subject to hospitality fees of 1 percent and accommodation taxes of 1/2 percent. Horry County also imposes a 1 1/2 percent Hospitality fee and the State of South Carolina has a 5 percent sales tax and a 2 percent SC Accommodation Tax. There are also additional local option sales taxes for Horry County.

So, the simple process goes like this...

Here's a brief summary of what you will need to do to open for business.

1. Participate in an initial meeting with the Planning, Building and Zoning Department regarding what will be required. You must obtain signatures on the Code Clearance Form. At this point, you can obtain the first (zoning) approval signature.

As you continue to work with the Planning, Building and Zoning Department, complete the following steps:

2. Turn in the completed "Night Reference Data Form" to the police department and obtain signature.
3. As applicable, obtain approval from DHEC (Health Department) and other South Carolina government departments. (Obtain DHEC signature, if that is applicable.)
4. Arrange for the fire marshal to conduct an inspection of your business once you are ready to open. Once inspected, obtain signature.)
5. Return to the Planning, Building and Zoning Department for their final approval signature. This should be a painless visit **if** you have worked with them all along during the process.
6. Take the Code Clearance Form to the Business License Department and apply for your business license.

CONGRATULATIONS...

**YOU'RE READY FOR YOUR
GRAND OPENING!!**



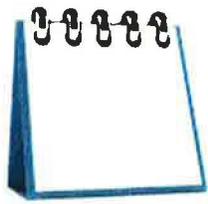
Once the process is over and you have your Business License, we hope you let the Town help in the celebration. We will be pleased to place a picture of your business on the Town of Surfside Beach Facebook page with a description of the products you offer.

We want you to succeed in this great endeavor!!



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Produced by:

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