

**For more information on starting a business in the City of Pacifica, please contact:**

City of Pacifica  
Economic Development Division  
170 Santa Maria Avenue  
Pacifica, CA 94044  
(650) 738-7300

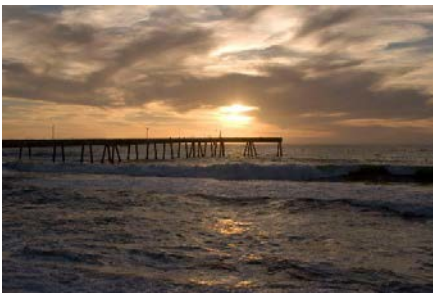
[https://www.cityofpacificacalifornia.org/government/economic\\_development/default.asp](https://www.cityofpacificacalifornia.org/government/economic_development/default.asp)

City of Pacifica  
Planning Department  
1800 Francisco Blvd.  
Pacifica, CA 94044  
(650) 738-7341

[https://www.cityofpacificacalifornia.org/depts/planning/business\\_information\\_page.asp](https://www.cityofpacificacalifornia.org/depts/planning/business_information_page.asp)

**For more information and for additional resources, go to:**

[Additional Resources and Agencies](#)



Thank you!!

September 2021



## **Starting a Business in Pacifica - a How To Guide**

### **9 Steps to Starting a Business**

#### **STEP ONE: Write a Business Plan**

The U.S Small Business Association offers tools and resources for creating a business plan. These are especially useful for understanding market analysis, financing, sales, and marketing.

<https://www.sba.gov/business-guide/plan-your-business/write-your-business-plan>

#### **STEP TWO: Choose a Business Structure**

You can find an overview of information about the types of legal business structures at the California Secretary of State's webpage. You may wish to consult with an attorney or lawyer to determine the legal business entity that is appropriate for your business.

<http://www.sos.ca.gov/business>

#### **STEP THREE: File a Fictitious Business Name/Obtain an Employer Identification Number**

Applicants are advised to file the Fictitious Name Statement, if applicable, with the County of San Mateo's County Clerk's Office located at: 401 Marshall Street, 6th Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063-1636 650-363-4500

<https://www.smcacre.org/fictitious-business-names>

An Employer Identification Number (EIN) is also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number, and is used to identify a business entity. Generally, businesses need an EIN.

<https://www.irs.gov/businesses/small-businesses-self-employed/employer-id-numbers>

#### **STEP FOUR: Determine your target locations/market areas, check for available lease space, and check Zoning and Building Code Regulations prior to signing a lease**

Before signing a lease, check with the Planning Department to determine whether or not your proposed business location complies with zoning and building requirements. The Planning

Department does not have information regarding vacant or available lease space so come prepared with a location(s) that could be a possibility for your business.

Improvements to commercial space requires licensed professionals to prepare permit plans. Make sure the design and construction team you hire is appropriately licensed. Hire your team early so that they can provide advice on improvements that may be needed and associated costs.

#### **STEP FIVE: Check Utility Requirements**

Your business may need upgraded electrical systems, new infrastructure such as grease traps or HVAC systems, upsized water lines for fire suppression system, sewer studies, etc. Your licensed contractor and design team can assist with an assessment.

If you need to upgrade electrical systems, it is recommended you get in touch with PG&E prior to signing any leases or building permits. It can take many months (6 -9 months) for PG&E to begin and complete a project.



### **STEP SIX: Negotiate a Lease**

Understand insurance and bonding requirements your landlord will require from your design and construction team.

Best practice dictates that business owners & landlords make lease arrangements that recognize it takes time to have all permits and licenses in place. Different businesses require different licenses across multiple agencies. You may also consider discussing the expected cost of improvements with the landlord as those will stay with the property.

If your landlord is asking you to sign a lease prior to having all permits in place, be prepared as permits and licenses often experience delays across one or multiple jurisdictions.

### **STEP SEVEN: Obtain Necessary Permits & Inspections**

Apply for all required Planning entitlement and building permits as discussed with the Planning Department under Step 4. It is recommended that applicants also check with other County, State, and Federal Agencies to see if there are any other permits or inspections necessary for a business to open.

### **STEP EIGHT: Apply for a Business License**

Business licenses are issued through the Finance Department at Pacifica City Hall located at 170 Santa Maria Ave. on the first floor.

All businesses licenses expire October 31st, and must be renewed annually. A new license is needed for changes in business location or new tax id number. If there is more than one business location or business operation at a single location, separate applications must be filed.

Each applicant must:

- Complete the Business License application form
- Pay the requisition fee
- Pass mandatory inspections

Business licenses are now submitted to a third party, HDL,

who will accept and process your application via email or you can apply directly online. The document will pass through several internal City departments that will determine necessary permits and inspections that the business must have before it can obtain a business license.

<https://Pacifica.HdLGov.com>

Most business license applications take three weeks to complete. Once the business license application has gone through all the necessary departments, HDL will mail the business license to the applicant directly. Business license applications can be found online on the Finance Department's page.

[https://www.cityofpacifica.org/depts/finance/business\\_license\\_documents.asp](https://www.cityofpacifica.org/depts/finance/business_license_documents.asp)

### **STEP NINE: Business Programs & Resources**

Included in this brochure is a partial list of recommended resources to help you get started!

#### Short Term Vacation Rentals

Short Term Rental (STR) hosts located within Pacifica are required to obtain a STR permit & a City of Pacifica Business License before offering STR accommodations.

Additionally, once STR accommodations are provided, the host/operator is required to collect and remit Transient Occupancy Taxes as required by City of Pacifica Municipal Code.

[https://www.cityofpacifica.org/depts/asd/finance/short\\_term\\_rental\\_program.asp](https://www.cityofpacifica.org/depts/asd/finance/short_term_rental_program.asp)

#### Home Occupation

When your business office is in your home, an application for a home occupation permit plus a business license is required. If you do not own your home, you must obtain written permission from your landlord or owner of the property. Bring your written permission with you, as we must keep a copy of it on file.

<https://www.cityofpacifica.org/civicax/filebank/blobdload.aspx?BlobID=14408>

