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# Introduction

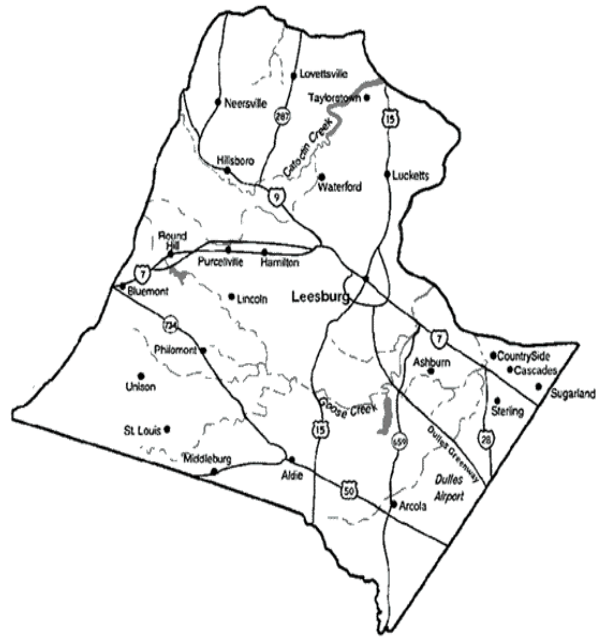
We're glad you're considering Loudoun County as your business location. We developed this publication to make the process of establishing your business presence here easier. We hope you find it helpful and look forward to working with you to ensure a smooth transition and success in your endeavors.

The guide lays out the seven steps to starting a business in Loudoun County. Its intention is to serve as a general outline of requirements; it is not meant as a substitute for regulations and requirements set in federal, state and county codes. Also, you can expect that exceptions exist to the process described here. Please contact the federal and state agencies and county departments and offices that apply to your business for complete and current information for your particular circumstances.

## **Loudoun County at a Glance**

Located 25 miles west of Washington, D.C., in Northern Virginia, Loudoun County is one of the fastest growing jurisdictions in both the region and the country. Those who live and work here enjoy a prosperous economy, a rich heritage and quality-of-life amenities found in few other places.

- The county is comprised of 517 square miles (330,000 acres), with seven incorporated towns, 13 villages and approximately two dozen planned communities.
- Loudoun County is part of the dynamic Washington, D.C. metropolitan region, the fourth largest metro area in the United States.
- The region's five million residents represent a tremendous market and provide a residential and employment base that is among the strongest in the nation in terms of purchasing power and technical skills.
- Loudoun County is located less than an hour from Washington, D.C. and Capitol Hill, giving business leaders quick access to the nation's policy makers and to unique federal government support opportunities.



**Tip:** Loudoun County has seen unprecedented growth in the past 10 years, both in people and in business presence. Between 1990 and 2000, our population grew by 97%, from 86,000 to 169,000. By 2010 the county is projected to grow another 77%, to over 300,000.

- Washington Dulles International Airport's eastern Loudoun location makes it possible for travelers to reach virtually any destination in the world within one day. Loudoun businesses and residents can also take advantage of Leesburg Executive Airport, Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport or Baltimore-Washington International Airport, which are all close by.
- Loudoun is home to a number of tourist- and leisure-related attractions and is close to hundreds more. In addition to Washington, D.C. and the metropolitan area, residents and visitors have quick and easy access to the Blue Ridge Mountains; the Chesapeake Bay; Shenandoah Valley; Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware beaches; ski resorts in Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and Pennsylvania; and such other popular metropolitan areas as Baltimore, Maryland; Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; and New York City.

### **Business Demographics at a Glance**

Loudoun's more than 18,000 businesses represent a broad range of industries, professions and trades, including agriculture, tourism, telecommunications, information technologies, aerospace and biotechnology, and just about everything in between. In addition, the county's businesses range in size from one to several thousand employees. While the county is home to many large corporate campuses, the majority of Loudoun's businesses have fewer than 25 employees.

Businesses choose Loudoun for a number of reasons: unique and plentiful business location options and amenities; business development and growth support; proximity to Washington Dulles International Airport, the D.C. metropolitan region and the world; a

highly educated workforce; and quality-of-life assets that lets employees work where they live.

More than 2,000 businesses establish a presence in Loudoun County each year, and job growth has more than doubled here since 1990. In addition, the Census Bureau reported that there were 144,442 residents age 16 and over in the workforce in 2006, of whom 44.0% worked in Loudoun.

Loudoun remains one of the fastest growing counties in America. From the year 2000 to 2008, the county will have grown from 169,000 people to over 281,000. Below is a chart showing the breakdown by Towns and Planning Subareas from 2000-2006.

**Table A-7**  
**Population of Incorporated Towns and Planning Subareas, 2000 and 2006**  
**Loudoun County, Virginia**

	2000		2006		Change 2000-2006	
	Population	Distribution	Population	Distribution	Number	Percent
<b>Incorporated Towns</b>						
Hamilton	562	1.6%	568	1.2%	6	1.1%
Hillsboro	96	0.3%	96	0.2%	0	0.0%
Leesburg	28,311	82.0%	37,811	79.8%	9,500	33.6%
Lovettsville	853	2.5%	1,134	2.4%	281	32.9%
Middleburg	632	1.8%	678	1.4%	46	7.3%
Purcellville	3,584	10.4%	6,585	13.9%	3,001	83.7%
Round Hill	500	1.4%	524	1.1%	24	4.8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,538</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>47,396</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>12,858</b>	<b>37.2%</b>
<b>Planning Subareas</b>						
Ashburn	33,581	19.8%	70,417	26.8%	36,836	109.7%
Dulles	7,795	4.6%	27,374	10.4%	19,579	251.2%
Leesburg	31,840	18.8%	48,794	18.6%	16,954	53.2%
Northwest	6,499	3.8%	8,966	3.4%	2,467	38.0%
Potomac	39,115	23.1%	43,058	16.4%	3,943	10.1%
Route 15 North	2,506	1.5%	3,790	1.4%	1,284	51.2%
Route 15 South	2,403	1.4%	2,950	1.1%	547	22.8%
Route 7 West	12,354	7.3%	19,710	7.5%	7,356	59.5%
Southwest	6,056	3.6%	7,193	2.7%	1,137	18.8%
Sterling	27,450	16.2%	30,707	11.7%	3,257	11.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>169,599</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>262,959</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>93,360</b>	<b>55.0%</b>

Loudoun County also benefits from a high level of income among its residents. The following table shows income trends for Loudoun County from 1999-2005:

**Table B-1**  
**Per Capita and Median Household Income\* Trends, 1999 and 2005**  
**Loudoun County, Virginia**

	Per Capita		Median Household	
	1999	2005	1999	2005
Loudoun County	\$33,530	\$39,409	\$80,648	\$98,483
Virginia	\$23,975	\$29,148	\$46,677	\$54,240
United States	\$21,587	\$25,035	\$41,994	\$46,242

Loudoun County also evaluates its business taxation policies regularly to ensure that we continue to provide an environment that is advantageous for new business growth as well as expansion and retention. Some of the benefits of Loudoun's taxation policies include: an enviable depreciation schedule on business personal property, based on 50 percent of cost the first year and decreasing 10 percent per year, to 10 percent the 5th year and thereafter. Business, professional, and occupational license taxes for research and development, software development, and business services that are among the lowest in the region:

**Comparative Local Tax Rates**  
**Loudoun County and Northern Virginia Jurisdictions, 2007**  
(Per \$100 of assessed value)

<b>Tax</b>	<b>Loudoun County</b>	<b>Alexandria</b>	<b>Arlington County</b>	<b>Fairfax County</b>	<b>Prince William County</b>
Real Property (1)	\$0.960	\$0.830	\$0.818	\$0.890	\$0.838
Sales or Use (2)	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00	\$5.00
Machinery & Tools (3)	\$2.75	\$4.50	\$4.40	\$4.57	\$3.70
Personal Property (4)	\$4.20	\$4.75	\$4.40	\$4.57	\$3.70
Aircraft	\$0.01	--	--	\$0.01	Exempt
<b>BPOL (Business Professional and Occupational License)</b>					
<b>Gross Receipts (5)</b>					
Wholesale*	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.05	\$0.04	\$0.05
Research & Development †	\$0.17	\$0.35	0.36**	\$0.31	\$0.21
Business Services	\$0.17 <sup>‡</sup>	\$0.35	\$0.35	\$0.19	\$0.21
Software Development † (6)	\$0.17	\$0.35	0.36**	\$0.19	\$0.33
Professional Services	\$0.33	\$0.58	\$0.36	\$0.31	\$0.33
Retail	\$0.17	\$0.20	\$0.20	\$0.17	\$0.17

Source: Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

\*Based on gross purchases rather than gross receipts

† Prime Contractors receiving Federal Appropriations may qualify for \$0.03 rate

‡ Reduced to \$0.15/\$100 for computer information online service providers and \$0.05/\$100 for commercial aircraft leasing

\*\* Businesses meeting the definition of Qualified Technology Business qualify for a rate of \$0.18/\$100

**Notes:**

(1) These rates include specialized levies which are applied countywide. Fairfax & Loudoun have an additional \$0.20/\$100 surcharge in the Route 28 Tax District. Additional real estate levies are assessed in some county districts. Consult each locality for more information.

(2) Manufacturing and research and development firms are exempt from payment of this tax on machinery and tools and on all expendable material purchased for use or consumption directly in manufacturing in experimental or laboratory purposes.

(3) This tax is imposed on equipment of manufacturers used in the manufacturing process and equipment used in an R&D business.

(4) In Loudoun County this tax is imposed on 50% of the property cost the first year, decreasing 10% per year to 10% the fifth year and thereafter. In Fairfax and Arlington Counties and Alexandria City this tax is imposed on 80% of the property cost the first year, decreasing 10% per year to 20% in the seventh year and thereafter for all equipment other than computers. In Prince William County, property other than computers is assessed at 85% of cost the first year, and decreases 10% annually. Manufacturing inventories are exempt from personal property taxation in all jurisdictions. Manufacturing firms are exempt from this tax on non-manufacturing equipment. In Loudoun County, a rate of \$2.75 per \$100 is assessed on the tangible personal property of a research and development firm. In Prince William County, a rate of \$1.00 per \$100 is imposed on the tangible personal property of a research and development firm.

(5) Each county institutes its own gross receipts threshold above which Business Professional and Occupational License taxes are assessed. Virginia localities are prohibited from taxing the gross receipts of manufacturers for sales at wholesale from the place of manufacture. Other business types are shown.

(6) Special exclusions and deductions for software development, manufacturing, and sales vary by locality. Check with your jurisdiction for details.

While information in this report is correct to our knowledge, we recommend verifying your particular tax situation with each jurisdiction as needed.

Historical Real Property Tax Rates for Loudoun County: 1995--\$1.02, 1996--\$0.99, 1997--\$1.03, 1998--\$1.06, 1999--\$1.11, 2000--\$1.08, 2001--\$1.08, 2002--\$1.05, 2003--\$1.11, 2004--\$1.1075, 2005--\$1.04, 2006--\$.089.

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## Step One: Initial Business Considerations

Starting and owning your own business is a challenging endeavor, but growing your business and prospering are the ultimate rewards. Making the decision to start a business requires you to determine whether you have the skills, knowledge and dedicated commitment to operate it successfully. Many books and websites are available to help you examine whether you have what it takes or can develop the skills necessary to own a successful business.

Following are some of the questions you should ask yourself before making the decision to move forward:

### **Why do you want to start a business?**

Your answers to this question might be multi-faceted. You may want to be your own boss; have a flexible work schedule; expand your professional skills and knowledge; or increase your income, among other things. Examine your answers closely and think about what you may have to give up if you start your own business. For example, you likely will forego the security of a paycheck and be challenged by long-term uncertainty as it relates to income generated by your business. Is this a reasonable and feasible concession? For a useful tool in analyzing your aptitude for starting a small business visit: <http://gosmallbiz.com/esurvey/default.aspx>

### **Examine your personal characteristics and preferences.**

#### **Are you a “people person”?**

Owning a successful business depends on your ability to lead and make decisions; plan and budget; sell yourself and your business; and interact well with people. Is this your personality and do you enjoy these types of activities?

#### **Are you willing and able to make personal and financial sacrifices?**

Owning your own business is not always glamorous. In fact, many employees enjoy better working conditions than business owners. As a business owner, are you prepared to work 12- to 16-hour days, seven days a week (including holidays) to do what it takes to grow your business? Are you prepared to lose your personal financial investment if your business fails? Are you prepared to give up secure income and change your lifestyle until your business “turns the corner” financially?

If you are not secure enough financially to quit your present job as you start your new business, you may want to consider starting your new business on-the-side while you continue working for your present employer. Your current job may also provide you with a steady source of income that can help you when attempting to secure start-up capital for your new business.

**Tip:** The Virginia Department of Business Assistance provides valuable information that can be useful when starting a new business. Go to their website at [www.dba.virginia.gov/virginia/center](http://www.dba.virginia.gov/virginia/center). This website provides a variety of resources that can help you in the initial steps of starting your business.

### **Do you have the skills you need?**

What is your background and training? In many cases, operating your own business requires skills that go beyond your immediate expertise. You have to have bookkeeping, financial and accounting skills, marketing and management skills, regardless of whether these are the core skills for your business. In addition, successful businesses offer their customers unique skills, products, and/or services that set them apart from their competition. Do you have what it takes to do that?

### **Decide what you need in a business location.**

You probably know what kind of business you want to start. As your next step in the planning process, you'll need to assess what kind of business location would be most appropriate.

Businesses have a wide range of site locations from which to choose in Loudoun County. From modern suburban facilities in the east to rural acreage in the west and historic town settings in between, businesses have a rare opportunity to match their locations to their business types, which adds to their growth potential.

### **Internet Businesses**

The internet is an increasingly popular method of doing business. It allows the business owner to operate without having a brick-and-mortar location to conduct business. By applying for a home-occupied business permit, you may be able to legally operate your business from your home and conduct transactions via the internet. Contact the Small Business Development Center, the town you reside in, and/or Loudoun County to get counseling and follow the necessary steps to legally conduct business from your home via the internet.

When choosing where to locate your business, consider what kind of internet support you will require. Different internet service providers are available depending on your location in the county.

### **Eastern Loudoun – The County's Primary Business Center**

Businesses located in eastern Loudoun are neighbors to some of the most innovative companies and enterprises in the world. Considered the pulse of corporate and high-tech enterprise and quickly becoming a global biotechnology cluster, eastern Loudoun offers the site choices and amenities that characterize a successful suburban business setting:

- Approximately 9,000 acres zoned for office/industrial development, with small and large parcels available, both in fully infrastructured business parks and as stand-alone properties.
- Many speculative development projects, including office, flex and industrial buildings.
- Competitive land prices for build-to-suit projects, with parcels available in sizes ranging from one to 1,000 acres.

- Highly competitive rental rates for existing office and industrial properties.

### **Loudoun's Incorporated Towns**

Loudoun's seven historic towns offer a broad range of zoning classifications; unique buildings that are perfect for redevelopment and preservation projects; and an established and flourishing tourism audience. These towns encourage business growth that will preserve the historic, architectural and natural qualities that make each unique. From elegant bed-and-breakfasts to equestrian support and retail and a variety of professional services and boutique shops, Loudoun's towns support a variety of businesses in quaint settings.

Loudoun County has seven incorporated towns, which is the highest of any county in the state. They provide great opportunities for start-up and small businesses. With a broad range of zoning classifications the towns have unique buildings perfect for redevelopment or for a historic character. Especially for businesses that rely on the internet for sales or that are not location dependent, they offer price points that may not be found in eastern parts of the county.

**Tip:** If you are considering a business location in one of Loudoun's incorporated towns, different requirements, regulations, and zoning ordinances apply. Your first step in doing business in an incorporated town is to contact the town to find out what specific requirements, regulations, and zoning ordinances apply to you. Contact information is below:

- **Leesburg**, Loudoun's county seat, is the center of government and the county's historic commercial center.  
Telephone: (703) 771-2765  
[www.leesburgva.gov](http://www.leesburgva.gov)

#### **Town of Leesburg Doing Business Guide**

[http://www.leesburgva.com/Business/Climate/Business\\_Guide/](http://www.leesburgva.com/Business/Climate/Business_Guide/)

- **Purcellville**, western Loudoun's center of commerce, offers industrial sites, retail space and new office buildings, making it ideal for businesses of all kinds.  
Telephone: (540) 338-7421  
[www.purcellvilleva.com](http://www.purcellvilleva.com)
- **Middleburg**, a well-known tourist destination, is capital of Virginia's "Hunt Country" and a premier location for unique specialty businesses.  
Telephone: (540) 687-5152  
[www.middleburg.org](http://www.middleburg.org)
- **Round Hill**, Loudoun's "gateway to the Blue Ridge Mountains," is the perfect business location for recreation outfitters and businesses that cater to hiking, fishing, equestrian and other outdoor activities.  
Telephone: (540) 338-7878  
[www.roundhillva.org](http://www.roundhillva.org)

- **Lovettsville**, Loudoun's northernmost town, currently has as much open space as it has developed land and encourages businesses that will help develop the local economy while preserving its natural surroundings.  
Telephone: (540) 822-5788  
<http://www.townoflovettsville.com/>
- **Hamilton**, tucked between Leesburg and Purcellville, caters to the "passive tourist" and offers opportunities for steady and compatible businesses.  
Telephone: (540) 338-2811  
[www.town.hamilton.va.us](http://www.town.hamilton.va.us)
- **Hillsboro**, Loudoun's smallest town, was built along what is now a major thoroughfare, providing opportunities for businesses that cater to commuters.  
Telephone: (540) 668-6766

**Of Interest:** Many entrepreneurs like the unique location options offered by Loudoun's towns, villages and rural areas. The county's historic buildings, for example, complement and encourage creativity, energy and entrepreneurial spirit.

### **Western Loudoun – A Robust Rural Economy**

Loudoun County's history is marked by a thriving agricultural presence. The county's rural economy is built on much more than traditional farming, however. It is characterized by a wide variety of agricultural enterprises and is bolstered by the majority of Loudoun's tourist attractions, wineries, bed-and-breakfasts and country inns, small retail and service establishments, home-based businesses, and light industry.

Most of Loudoun's 200,000 rural acres lie in the western part of the county. Having this much open space situated within a major metropolitan area makes Loudoun unique and provides opportunities for businesses that can contribute to the county's rural economy, including equestrian enterprises; vineyards; Christmas tree farms; fruit and vegetable producers; nurseries; niche farming enterprises; biotechnology activities; and cattle farms, among others.

### **Local Business Resources**

#### **Loudoun County Department of Economic Development (DED)**

Loudoun's Department of Economic Development helps new and existing businesses identify potential business site locations, provides demographic and market information, and guides businesses through the development review and permitting processes.

Telephone: (703) 777-0426

<http://biz.loudoun.gov>

#### **Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**

Loudoun County's Small Business Development Center provides one-on-one counseling, business planning assistance, seminars and a network of professional volunteers who can answer business owners' specific technical questions.

Telephone: (703) 430-7222

[www.loudounsbdc.org](http://www.loudounsbdc.org)

### **Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

The Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue provides most of the information businesses need about licenses and taxes. Local, state and federal tax forms and applications are also available to new and existing Loudoun County businesses through this office.

Telephone: (703) 777-0260

[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)

### **Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce**

With more than 1,200 members, the Loudoun County Chamber serves as a collective “voice of business” on business and public policy issues. The Chamber is committed to ensuring the growth and development of new and existing businesses in and around the county, and offers a variety of programs and services, including regular networking opportunities, education and business guidance, and publication and communication tools.

Telephone: (703) 777-2176

[www.loudounchamber.org](http://www.loudounchamber.org)

### **U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)**

The Small Business Administration’s Washington Metropolitan Area District Office has assigned a team of experts to serve Loudoun County businesses exclusively. This team provides assistance in advocacy, finances, management and business development, and procurement.

Telephone: (202) 606-4000

Toll-Free: 1-800-829-4933

[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

### **Loudoun County Public Libraries**

The Loudoun County Public Libraries system is a valuable source of information on starting and operating a business. Contact:

Telephone: (703) 777-0368

[www.lcpl.lib.va.us](http://www.lcpl.lib.va.us)

#### **Ashburn Library**

43316 Hay Road  
Ashburn, VA 20147  
Phone: (703) 737-8100  
Fax: (703) 737-8101

#### **Cascades Library**

21030 Whitfield Place  
Potomac Falls, VA 20165  
Phone: (703) 444-3228  
Fax: (703) 444-1336

#### **Lovettsville Library**

12 North Light St.  
Lovettsville, VA 20180  
Phone: (540) 822-5824  
Fax: (540) 822-5998

#### **Middleburg Library**

101 Reed Street  
Middleburg, VA 20117  
Phone: (540) 687-5730  
Fax: (540) 687-3630

#### **Purcellville Library**

220 East Main Street  
Purcellville, VA 20132  
Phone: (540) 338-7235  
Fax: (540) 338-2629

#### **Rust Library**

34 D Catocin Cir. S.E.  
Leesburg, VA 20176  
Phone: (703) 777-0323  
Fax: (703) 771-5620

### **Sterling Library**

120 Enterprise Street  
Sterling, VA 20164  
Phone: (703) 430-9500  
Fax: (703) 430-5935

### **State Business Resource**

#### **Virginia Department of Business Assistance**

Virginia Business Information Center  
P.O. Box 446  
Richmond, VA 23218-0446  
Telephone: (804)371-0438  
Toll-free: (866) 248-8814  
E-mail: [vbic@dba.virginia.gov](mailto:vbic@dba.virginia.gov)  
Website: [www.dba.state.va.us](http://www.dba.state.va.us)

**Tip:** Take advantage of the many local and state resources available to help get your business started in Loudoun County. These resources offer a wealth of information and guidance either free of charge or for a nominal fee.

## **Step Two: Develop a Business Plan**

A business plan is a written document that describes the nature of your business, outlines its financial goals, and demonstrates how you intend to achieve those goals. Your business plan will be a key component for securing financial assistance for your business. Therefore, it must be thorough and comprehensive, and fully explain the most integral components of your business. Most lenders will not even talk with you unless you have a detailed business plan. In fact, a business plan will demonstrate to investors that you have explored all pertinent business issues before approaching them for assistance. **The Loudoun County Small Business Development Center can give you guidance as you write your business plan.**

Business plans typically include these key components:

- **Executive Summary** – This is a brief overview of what your plan includes. Ideally, it should highlight the most impressive features of your business and point out the important elements of your plan, including your overall business concept, projected growth and revenue, and target markets, among others. Write your executive summary after you have completed your plan.
- **The Company and Its Management** – This section includes detailed descriptions of your business, including its history, mission statement, and strategy and vision, as well as a summary of the related business industry and a discussion that demonstrates your knowledge of your management team's skills and experience. Be sure to include relevant education summaries and significant accomplishments of all of your key personnel.

- **Product/Service Description** – This section describes your products or services in detail. Include a discussion of the advantages your products or services have over competitive products and services. Explain the need and market niche your products or services fill, as well as how you will produce your product or provide your service.
- **Market Analysis and Marketing Strategy** – This section identifies your target market. Analyze and assess the market environment and customers, both within and outside of your geographic area. Describe how you will reach these customers and market your products or services to them. Include potential advertising ideas and strategies, as well as descriptions of promotion campaigns you plan to implement.
- **Financial Analysis** – This section documents information related to expenses, income and prices, all of which you will have to have in order to develop an income statement, balance sheet and cash flow analysis. If you need outside financing, specify how much you need, how and when it will be used, and when and how you will repay your investor(s). If you are not an experienced financial manager or accountant, consider hiring a certified public accountant (CPA) to help you prepare this section.
- **Supporting Documents** – Include sample marketing materials, product samples, and financial data, such as income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow and pro forma schedules.

Consider your business plan to be a work in progress, just as your business is. Don't think of it as a static document; review and update it regularly. Your plan will grow as your business grows. Be sure it consistently reflects the current business environment and details your needs and goals.

### **A Resource Tailored for Small Businesses**

**It is highly recommended that you meet with the Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC).**

Business owners can get help with business plan development from the Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC), a valuable resource for both new and established businesses. SBDC offers free, personalized business counseling, as well as help with writing business plans and preparing financial projections. The Center also sponsors monthly seminars for business owners and prospective owners, and makes a range of professional volunteers available to answer questions.

For more information, contact:

#### **Loudoun County Small Business Development Center**

21145 Whitfield Place, Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20165

Telephone: (703) 430-7222

Website: <http://www.loudounsbdc.org/>

E-mail: [sbdc@loudounsbdc.org](mailto:sbdc@loudounsbdc.org)

Writing a business plan is a time-intensive but invaluable task. Through the process, you will have to identify every factor and think through every detail of your business. Even part-time businesses need business plans. You'll find a variety of business plan guidebooks at libraries and bookstores in addition; many software programs include business plan templates and samples.

**Tip:** The Loudoun County Small Business Development Center's Entrepreneurial Resource Center makes market data available at no cost to small businesses conducting market analysis research. Call (703) 430-7222 for more information.

## Step Three: Determine Your Financing Source

The Small Business Administration estimates that half of all start-up companies close within the first four years. One of the leading reasons for small business failure is inadequate start-up capital. When you developed your business plan, you should have determined how much capital you would need to start up and fund your business, at least for the short term. Unfortunately, many entrepreneurs try to start and operate their businesses without having sufficient capital to be successful through the critical first few years.

You have several sources of capital from which to choose. These include:

### Personal Savings and/or Family and Friends

Personal savings, family members and friends are good funding sources for start-up businesses, but these choices require careful consideration. If you are considering using personal savings to finance your business, decide how much of your own money you are willing to invest, knowing that you could lose that investment. And if you decide to borrow from family or friends, consider the loan a business transaction and be sure to develop a formal agreement that includes payback and interest terms as applicable.

### Personal Collateral

If you want to use land or property you own as collateral for financing, consider the possibility that you could literally "lose the farm." Banks and other financial institutions will want a list of your assets, which they may want you to offer to secure a loan.

### Banks and Credit Unions

Commercial lenders at Loudoun's banks and credit unions can provide financing assistance. When you approach a commercial lender to discuss financing options, be sure to take a copy of your business plan with you. The lender will review your plan and determine whether or not you qualify.

Typically, lenders analyze the "Eight Cs" of lending:

1. Credit
2. Character
3. Capital
4. Capacity to repay
5. Collateral
6. Cash flow
7. Commitment
8. Conditions of the industry

## **Farm Credit of the Virginias**

Leesburg Branch  
27 Ft. Evans Road, NE  
P.O. Box 1398  
Leesburg, VA 20177  
Telephone: (703) 777-3311  
Toll-free: 800-559-1016, Ext. 4  
Fax: (703) 771-9210

### Private Investors (“Angels”)

Private investors, also known as “angels,” typically are professionals looking for alternative investments that promise high returns. When private investors are considering making an investment in a company, they look at the company’s uniqueness and market potential, as well as its management team’s experience. According to the SCORE Counselors of America’s Small Business (<http://www.score.org>), tips for finding private investors include:

- **Research** – Identify the most likely candidates by asking your accountant, banker and lawyer for referrals.
- **Keep an open mind** – Potential investors may be found anywhere. According to *Success* magazine, one entrepreneur found an angel investor among the motorcyclists with whom he rides on weekends.
- **Surf the web** – Good starting places are <http://www.nvca.org> (National Venture Capital Association) and <http://www.mavf.com> (Mid-Atlantic Venture Funds, a venture-capital firm in Bethlehem, PA).
- **Make presentations** at venture capital forums or fairs.
- **Check your library or the web** for such references as *Pratt’s Guide to Private Equity Sources* by Thomson Financial (<http://www.thomson.com/solutions/financial/>).

### **Venture Capital Firms**

Venture capitalists invest in businesses in exchange for partial equity or ownership. Typically, they are interested in businesses that need \$250,000 to \$1.5 million in funding but have the potential to generate substantial returns. Many resources provide information on venture capital firms and their criteria. A few include:

- **vFinance.com**, the site of vFinance Investments, Inc., a rapidly growing financial services company that provides personalized investment banking and brokerage services to more than 10,000 corporate and private clients worldwide. vFinance Investments, Inc. has offices in more than two dozen U.S. cities, and its website is a leading Internet destination for companies seeking capital as well as for institutional and high net-worth investors seeking dynamic, high-growth companies.
- **BusinessFinance.com**, an online source of venture capital information and references, including a capital provider database.

- *Inside Secrets to Venture Capital*, by Brian E. Hill and Dee Power, a venture capital text, and

- **The Virginia Center for Innovative Technology** ([www.cit.org](http://www.cit.org)), whose experts will consult with emerging technology companies and help them evaluate their prospects for debt and equity funding. With a “funding roadmap” established, CIT can guide qualified, high potential companies to appropriate early-stage investment organizations.

### **Vendor/Supplier Financing**

Often times, equipment and machinery companies offer low-cost financing for their products. These vendors range from tractor dealers to photocopy machine suppliers. Determine your equipment needs and then contact the appropriate local dealers for more information.

### **Government Agencies (Federal, State and Local)**

A variety of government assistance programs help finance businesses. Most of these programs require businesses to meet specific criterion in order to qualify. Summaries of some of the government-sponsored financial programs are included here. Contact each agency for additional information.

### **Federal Programs**

#### **U.S. Small Business Administration**

Washington Metropolitan Area District Office  
740 15<sup>th</sup> St., NW, Suite 300                      Tel: (202) 272-0345  
Washington, DC 20005-3544                      Website: [www.sba.gov/dc](http://www.sba.gov/dc)

#### ***About the Small Business Administration***

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) was created in 1953 as an independent agency of the federal government to aid, counsel, assist and protect the interests of small business concerns, to preserve free competitive enterprise and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of our nation. We recognize that small business is critical to our economic recovery and strength, to building America's future, and to helping the United States compete in today's global marketplace. Although SBA has grown and evolved in the years since it was established in 1953, the bottom line mission remains the same. The SBA helps Americans start, build and grow businesses. Through an extensive network of field offices and partnerships with public and private organizations, SBA delivers its services to people throughout the United States, Puerto Rico, the U. S. Virgin Islands and Guam.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) is a valuable financial resource for small businesses. SBA is organized geographically and has a Loudoun team available to serve the needs of Loudoun-based businesses specifically. This team offers many local seminars and a variety of programs to help businesses determine and meet their financial needs.

The small business team serving Loudoun County is located in Washington, D.C. For more information about seminars, programs or other assistance offered by the SBA, please contact the Metro D.C. area's business development specialist.

Randall Nossaman  
**Business Development Specialist**  
Metro Washington, D.C. Region  
Telephone: (202) 272-0383  
E-mail: [randall.nossaman@sba.gov](mailto:randall.nossaman@sba.gov)

### **SBA 7(a) Loan Guaranty Program**

The SBA 7(a) program provides partial guaranties on loans of up to \$2 million made by commercial lenders to start-up and existing small businesses. The amount of guaranty is based on the particular loan program and the amount of financing obtained. Loan proceeds can be used for business or property acquisition, expansion, machinery and equipment purchase, furniture and fixtures, working capital and debt consolidation. Loan maturity is up to 10 years for working capital and generally up to 25 years for fixed assets. SBA also offers multiple variations of the basic 7(a) loan program to accommodate targeted needs.

Website: [www.sba.gov/financing](http://www.sba.gov/financing)

SBA also offers streamlined applications and approvals for the following programs. Complete information on program requirements and availability is available online.

### **SBA Express**

The SBA encourages lenders to make more small loans to start-up and existing small businesses. Participating banks use their own documentation and procedures to approve service and liquidate loans of up to \$250,000. In return, SBA guaranties up to 50 percent of each loan.

### **SBA Export Express**

This SBA pilot program is similar to SBA Express, except it provides loans to existing small businesses for export endeavors. Guaranty levels are 85 percent for loans to \$150,000 and 75 percent for loans between \$150,000 and \$250,000. SBA Export Express is available throughout the country.

Website:

[www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/SpecialPurposeLoans/exportexpress/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/SpecialPurposeLoans/exportexpress/index.html)

### **SBA Community Express**

Community Express is a pilot SBA loan program that was developed in collaboration with the National Community Reinvestment Coalition (NCRC) and its member organizations. Under the pilot, which is available to selected lenders, an SBA Express like program will be offered to pre-designated geographic areas serving mostly Low and Moderate Income areas and New Markets small businesses. The program will also include technical and management assistance, which is designed to help increase the loan applicant's chances of success.

Website:

[www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/7alenderprograms/comexpress/index.html](http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/7alenderprograms/comexpress/index.html)

### **SBA Microloans**

The Microloan Program provides very small loans to start-up, newly established, or growing small business concerns. Under this program, SBA makes funds available to

nonprofit community based lenders (intermediaries) which, in turn, make loans to eligible borrowers in amounts up to a maximum of \$35,000. The average loan size is about \$13,000. The maximum term for a microloan is six years. Applications are submitted to the local intermediary and all credit decisions are made on the local level.

Website:

<http://www.sba.gov/services/financialassistance/sbaloantopics/microloans/index.html>

### **Small Office/Home Office (SOHO) Loan Program**

SOHO is administered under the SBA's Community Express Program, which combines financial and technical assistance to give small and home-based businesses access to business loans of as little as \$5,000.

### **Other Specialized 7(a) Loan Guaranty Programs**

SBA operates a number of other 7(a) loan guaranty programs tailored to specific groups:

#### **CAPLines Loan**

SBA helps small businesses meet their short-term and cyclical working needs with guaranties of up to \$1,000,000. Five distinct, short-term, working capital CAPLines loans are designed to meet different short-term financing needs: seasonal; contract; builders' line; standard asset-based line; and small asset-based line.

[http://www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/start/financestartup/SERV\\_CAPLINES.html](http://www.sba.gov/smallbusinessplanner/start/financestartup/SERV_CAPLINES.html)

#### **Export Working Capital Loan**

Through this program, SBA can guarantee up to 90 percent of a secured loan or \$1 million, whichever is less, for export-ready small businesses and export management companies. Loans can be for single or multiple export sales and can be used for pre-shipment working capital, post-shipment exposure coverage, or a combination of the two.

<http://www.sba.gov/oit/finance/ewcp.html>

### **SBA 504 Certified Development Company Loans**

[www.sba.gov/financing](http://www.sba.gov/financing)

The SBA 504 program provides long-term, fixed-rate financing to small- and medium-sized businesses for building construction, acquisition and renovation and for major equipment purchases. The program generally assists established, profitable, growing businesses by offering low-down-payment, long-term financing at fixed interest rates. SBA 504 loans cannot be used for working capital or refinancing.

The **Business Finance Group, Inc.** administers the SBA 504 program in Loudoun County. Business Finance Group staff work closely with business owners to determine eligibility and help them complete loan applications.

For more information, contact:

#### **Business Finance Group, Inc.**

Northern Virginia Office

4165 Chain Bridge Road

Fairfax, VA 22030

Tel: (703) 352-0504

Fax: (703) 352-9100

Website: [www.businessfinancegroup.org](http://www.businessfinancegroup.org)

E-mail: [info@businessfinancegroup.org](mailto:info@businessfinancegroup.org)

### **Small Business Investment Companies**

Small Business Investment Companies (SBICs) provide equity capital, long-term loans, debt-equity investments and management assistance to small businesses, particularly during the growing phases. SBICs are privately owned and capitalized companies that are licensed and regulated by SBA. SBICs each have their own investment criteria. Information about the four SBICs currently operating in Virginia is available from the Virginia Department of Business Assistance.

Website: [www.dba.state.va.us/financing/crd](http://www.dba.state.va.us/financing/crd)

### **Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit**

Federal law provides a federal income tax credit equal to 20 percent of the cost to rehabilitate historic buildings for commercial use. To qualify for the credit, a property must be a certified historic structure; that is, it must be listed on the National Register of Historic Places or contribute to a registered historic district. Non-historic buildings built before 1936 qualify for a 10 percent tax credit. Individuals rehabilitating a historic property for their primary residence do not currently qualify for this credit.

Under this program, the project must be considered a “substantial rehabilitation” and the work must meet the U.S. Secretary of Interior’s *Standards for Rehabilitation*, which are described on the National Park Service’s website:

[www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm](http://www.cr.nps.gov/hps/tps/tax/rhb/stand.htm). Currently, the Internal Revenue Service defines “substantial” as exceeding the owner’s adjusted basis in the building or \$5,000, whichever is greater. The adjusted basis is generally defined as the purchase price, minus the value of the land, minus any depreciation already claimed, plus the value of any earlier capital improvements.

Applications for this federal rehabilitation credit are available through State Historic Preservation Offices; the National Park Service reviews and issues decisions on all applications. For more information, contact:

### **Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Northern Regional Office  
P.O. Box 519  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
Telephone: (540) 868-7029  
<http://state.vipnet.org/dhr>

### **Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC)**

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) is a self-sustaining U.S. government agency whose mission is to foster economic development in new and emerging markets, support U.S. foreign policy, and create U.S. jobs. OPIC helps U.S. businesses invest overseas by managing risk with political risk insurance; providing financing with direct loans and loan guarantees; and working with private capital through OPIC-supported funds.

OPIC also works with host country governments to create economic climates that attract U.S. investment, facilitating the entry of hundreds of U.S. businesses into new markets abroad.

Because it charges market-based fees for its services, OPIC operates at no net cost to taxpayers. All of OPIC's guaranty and insurance obligations are backed by the organization's own substantial reserves and by the full faith and credit of the U.S. government.

For general information on OPIC programs, contact:

**Overseas Private Investment Corporation**

1100 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20527  
ATTN: Small Business Center  
Telephone: (202) 336-8700  
Toll-free: (800) 225-5722  
[www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)

**Virginia Programs**

**Virginia Department of Business Assistance**

707 E. Main St., Suite 300                      Tel: (804) 371-8200  
Richmond, VA 23219                              Website: [www.dba.virginia.gov](http://www.dba.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Small Business Financing Authority**

The Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA), staffed by the financial services division of the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA), was created in 1984 with passage of the *Virginia Small Business Financing Act*. In addition to being a statewide issuer of industrial development bonds, VSBFA is the conduit through which DBA provides financial assistance to Virginia's businesses. Summaries of programs offered through DBA follow.

***Eligibility for VSBFA Financing Programs***

- Have fewer than 250 employees; **OR**
- Have less than \$10 million in annual gross revenue for each of the business's last three fiscal years; **OR**
- Have a net worth of \$2 million or less; **OR**
- Be a not-for-profit entity granted tax-exempt status under § 501 c 3 of the Internal Revenue Code and operating in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

**Virginia Capital Access Program**

VSBFA's Virginia Capital Access Program (VCAP) provides access to capital for Virginia businesses by encouraging Virginia banks to make loans they would otherwise not make because of a borrower's riskier profile. VCAP establishes a loan loss reserve at each participating bank; the reserve is funded by enrollment premiums paid by the borrower/bank and VSBFA. Because the participating bank determines what loans to enroll without VSBFA's involvement, the program is a flexible, nonbureaucratic tool to help banks meet businesses' financing needs.

**Loan Guaranty Program**

The VSBFA will guaranty a loan or line of credit extended by a commercial bank to a qualified Virginia business, up to **75 percent of the loan amount or \$500,000, whichever is less**. With a guaranty from VSBFA, the bank reduces its risk associated with lending to the business, and the business gains access to financing not otherwise

available. The program can be used to provide a guaranty for a short-term line of credit or a term loan of up to three years in duration.

### **Child Care Financing Program (CCFP)**

Virginia Small Business Financing Authority's (VSBFA) Child Care Financing Program (CCFP) provides low-interest rate loans to assist childcare providers in Virginia. Providers who are licensed, regulated religious-exempt or in the process of applying to become licensed or registered are eligible to apply for assistance.

Both for-profit and non-profit entities are eligible to apply. Voluntarily Registered Family Day Home is a form of regulation offered to family day homes that are not required to be licensed. These homes have fewer than six children in care, not including the provider's own children and other children who reside in the home. Information on the Voluntarily Registered Program may be found on the Virginia Department of Social Service's website at [www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov) under *Children – Child Care – Unlicensed*.

Loan proceeds can be used to meet or maintain childcare standards, including health, safety, fire codes, or to make quality enhancements to a childcare program. Loans may also be used for certain start-up costs; however, loans for costs associated with building construction, working capital or refinancing, or consolidating existing debt are not eligible under this program.

For additional information and application materials, visit the Department of Business Assistance's website at [www.dba.virginia.gov/financing](http://www.dba.virginia.gov/financing) or they may be reached at 1-866-248-8814.

### **Virginia Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF)**

The Virginia Economic Development Loan Fund (EDLF) is designed to fill the financing gap between private debt financing and private equity. Funds are available to economic development authorities and qualifying new and expanding businesses that are creating new jobs or saving "at risk" jobs in Virginia. Funds are also available to Virginia businesses which derive 15% or more of their revenues from defense-department activities and can demonstrate economic hardship related to defense downsizing.

Funds can be used for the acquisition of land and buildings, construction or improvements to facilities and the purchase of machinery and equipment. Funds can also be used to assist defense-dependent business transition to private sector markets. The maximum loan available from the EDLF for each project is limited to \$1,000,000 or 40 percent of the total project cost, whichever is less.

### **Small Business Environmental Compliance Assistance Fund**

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has a cooperative agreement with the Virginia Department of Business Assistance (DBA) to administer a revolving loan program through which small businesses can get low-interest-rate loans to purchase and install replacement equipment needed to comply with the *Clean Air Act*; implement voluntary pollution prevention measures; or implement selected voluntary agricultural best management practices (BMPs), as listed in the *Virginia Agricultural BMP Manual*.

The maximum loan amount is \$100,000 at a fixed interest rate of 3%, and repayment terms are based on the borrower's ability to repay and the useful life of the equipment, or

on the life of the agricultural BMP. For more information go to:  
[www.deq.state.va.us/osba/finance.html](http://www.deq.state.va.us/osba/finance.html).

### **VALET Program**

The innovative VALET Program, launched in January 2002, helps Virginia companies as they expand their business with international export trade. The first of its kind in the United States, the VALET Program offers a combination of state capital resources and professional services from private-sector partners to enhance the international efforts of up to 15 companies per year. Participants receive such benefits as \$10,000 in funding toward export-related expenses; \$10,000 worth of professional services from VALET Program partners; and strategic planning guidance and resource coordination.

To determine eligibility or for more information, contact:

#### **Virginia Economic Development Partnership**

Division of International Trade

P.O. Box 798

901 E. Byrd Street

Richmond, VA 23218-0798

Telephone: (804) 371-8100

[www.exportvirginia.org](http://www.exportvirginia.org)

### **Virginia Department of Historic Resources**

Winchester Regional Preservation Office

107 N. Kent St., Suite 203

Winchester, VA 22601

Tel: (540) 722-3428

Website: [www.dhr.virginia.gov](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov)

### **Virginia State Rehabilitation Tax Credits**

State Rehabilitation Tax Credit programs provide property owners with significant incentives for private investment in historic building preservation that benefits the public. These credits are available for Certified Historic Structures, which are defined as those that are listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register, certified as eligible for listing, or certified as a contributing structure in a district listed on the Register.

The state tax credits are available for both owner-occupied and income-producing buildings. (Note: If your property is income producing, you may also be able to take advantage of federal tax credits; see page 15 for details.) These credits are dollar-for-dollar reductions in income tax liability for taxpayers who rehabilitate historic buildings. Credit amounts are based on total rehabilitation costs; the state credit is 25 percent of eligible rehabilitation expenses.

To be eligible, the rehabilitation expenses must be at least 25 percent of the assessed value of the buildings for local real estate tax purposes for the year before the rehabilitation work began for owner-occupied structures; and at least 50 percent of the assessed value of the buildings for local real estate tax purposes for the year before the rehabilitation work began for all other eligible structures.

Website: [http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/tax\\_credits/tax\\_credit.htm](http://www.dhr.virginia.gov/tax_credits/tax_credit.htm)

### **Department of Minority Business Enterprise**

200-202 N. 9th Street, 11<sup>TH</sup> Floor

Tel: (804) 786-6585

Richmond, VA 23219

Website:

[www.dmb.state.va.us/aboutus.html](http://www.dmb.state.va.us/aboutus.html)

### **Providing Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs (PACE) Program**

The PACE Program combines the resources of the Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise (VDMBE) through the Disadvantaged Capital Access Fund with the financial leverage of Virginia lending partners to provide loan guarantees for economically disadvantaged entrepreneurs. The PACE Program (Providing Access to Capital for Entrepreneurs) is a loan guaranty program, not a grant or endowment; it is for entrepreneurs who own for-profit businesses and are looking for working capital to expand or enhance those businesses.

For a list of Virginia lenders participating in PACE or for more information contact the PACE Program Manager: (804) 371-8200

**Tip:** The Loudoun County Small Business Center, in addition to providing free business resource information, can work with you to help determine your best financing source. You can reach them at (703) 430-7222

## **Step Four: Choose Your Legal Structure**

**NOTE: This section is designed only to provide you with a basic description of each legal structure. It is NOT designed to give you legal advice. Loudoun County cannot be held responsible for any legal issues you encounter. Therefore, it is STRONGLY recommended that before you begin doing business you consult with an attorney familiar with business law who is licensed to practice in the State of Virginia.**

As you plan your new business, you'll have to decide how you want to structure it legally. This decision is critical, since the legal structure affects your company's taxation and liability as well as its management and decision-making structure.

In general, businesses fit into one of five basic types:

- Sole proprietorships
- General partnerships
- Limited partnerships
- Limited liability companies
- Corporations

### **Sole Proprietorship**

A sole proprietorship is the simplest business structure because you don't have to take any special legal steps to get started. Bookkeeping and tax preparation for sole proprietorships are simple as well. As a sole proprietor, you and your business are the same for income tax reporting purposes. In addition, you do not pay yourself a salary as such, because your profits (if any) are considered to be your "salary."

As a sole proprietor, you are liable financially and legally for everything. Also, as a sole proprietor, you can but don't have to register a trade name for your business (see page 36).

### **General Partnership**

A general partnership is a relationship between two or more persons who team up to operate a business. Partnerships have the advantage of combining the resources or skills of two or more people into one enterprise. One partner, for example, might serve as the source of needed start-up capital, while another brings unique technical expertise to the business.

A written partnership agreement is almost always a practical necessity, as each partner will contribute varying amounts of money, property, labor and skills. The agreement should describe each partner's responsibilities, explain how profits and losses will be divided, and detail what will happen if one partner leaves by choice, death or discord. It may be beneficial to use an attorney to develop your partnership agreement.

Partnerships must file a federal income tax return but do not pay tax; each partner's share of profits or losses is included in his or her personal income tax return. Partners are personally responsible for all of the partnership's legal and financial liabilities.

### **Limited Partnership**

Limited Partnerships are formed to obtain additional funds for a general partnership. In this structure, the general partners retain control over the partnership management and continue to be liable for all debts. The limited partners, on the other hand, invest money or property in the business and are entitled to share in the profits, while their liability is limited to the extent of their investment.

### **Limited Liability Company (LLC)**

A limited liability company, commonly called an "LLC," is a business structure that fits somewhere between a sole proprietorship or partnership and a corporation. Like owners of sole proprietorships or partnerships, LLC owners report business profits or losses on their personal income taxes returns; the LLC itself is not a separate taxable entity.

Like a corporation, however, LLC owners are generally protected from personal liability for business debts and claims – a feature known as "limited liability." This means that if the business owes money or faces a lawsuit for some other reason, only the assets of the business itself are at risk. Creditors normally cannot reach the personal assets of the LLC owners, such as a house or car. (Both LLC owners and corporate shareholders can lose this protection by acting illegally, unethically or irresponsibly.)

For these reasons, many people say the LLC combines the best features of either a sole proprietorship or a partnership and the corporate business structures.

### **Corporation**

The advantages and disadvantages of incorporating are numerous and complex. They take into account issues related to business duration; capital formation; income distribution and retention; liability protection; ownership transfer; taxation; and legal costs. Many businesses incorporate to take advantage of the liability protection it affords. Using an attorney to incorporate is not legally mandatory, but most experts recommend

doing so. Corporations have permanence; unlike partnerships or sole proprietorships, corporations cannot be dissolved easily. There are two types of corporations:

- **S-corporations**, which pass profits or losses through directly to the shareholders, much like partnerships; and
- **C-corporations**, which are legal entities distinct from their owner or owners.
- **Stock corporations** are organized for profit and can issue stock shares to raise capital.
- **Non-stock corporations** are organized for purposes other than to make a profit and cannot issue stock shares.

**Tip:** The Loudoun County Small Business Development Center (SBDC) offers free business resource information and counseling to help you decide which structure will fit your business best. Be sure to consult with an attorney, accountant or business counselor as well.

In addition, corporations are classified as “stock” or “non-stock” and “domestic” or “foreign,” and may be classified as “professional.”

- **Professional corporations** consist of groups of people authorized to perform certain professional services within a corporate structure. Virginia law limits these professional services to such occupations as physicians, accountants and attorneys. A complete list of professional services is available online from the *Virginia Business Registration Guide* at: <http://www.scc.virginia.gov/clk/brq.aspx>
- **Domestic corporations** are both stock and non-stock corporations created under Virginia law.
- **Foreign corporations** are stock and non-stock corporations created under the laws of another state or country.

## Legal Entities – General Advantages & Drawbacks\*

Type of Entity	Main Advantages	Main Drawback
Sole Proprietorship	<p>Simple and inexpensive to create and operate</p> <p>Owner reports profit or loss on his or her personal tax return</p>	Owner personally liable for business debts.
General Partnership	<p>Simple and inexpensive to create and operate.</p> <p>Owners (partners) report their share of profit or loss on their personal tax returns</p>	Owners (partners) personally liable for business debts.
Limited Partnership	<p>Limited partners have limited personal liability for business debts as long as they don't participate in management.</p> <p>General partners can raise cash without involving outside investors in management of business.</p>	<p>General partners personally liable for business debts.</p> <p>More expensive to create than general partnership.</p> <p>Suitable mainly for companies that invest in real estate.</p>
Limited Liability Company (LLC)	<p>Owners have limited personal liability for business debts even if they participate in management.</p> <p>Profit and loss can be allocated differently than ownership interests.</p> <p>IRS rules now allow LLCs to choose between being taxed as a sole proprietorship/partnership or a corporation</p>	<p>More expensive to create than partnership or sole proprietorship.</p> <p>State law for creating LLCs may not reflect latest federal tax changes.</p> <p>LLCs are a relatively new business form and the laws are still evolving.</p>

<b>Type of Entity</b>	<b>Main Advantages</b>	<b>Main Drawbacks</b>
Regular Corporation	<p>Owners have limited personal liability for business debts.</p> <p>Fringe benefits can be deducted as a business expense.</p> <p>Owners can split corporate profit among owners and corporation, paying lower overall tax rate.</p>	<p>More expensive to create than partnership or sole proprietorship.</p> <p>Paperwork can seem burdensome to some owners.</p> <p>Separate taxable entity.</p>
S Corporation	<p>Owners have limited personal liability for business debts.</p> <p>Owners report their share of corporate profit or loss on their personal tax returns.</p> <p>Owners can use corporate loss to offset income from other sources.</p>	<p>More expensive to create than partnership or sole proprietorship.</p> <p>More paperwork than for a limited liability company which offers similar advantages.</p> <p>Income must be allocated to owners according to their ownerships interests.</p> <p>Fringe benefits limited for owners who own more than 2% of shares.</p>
Professional Corporation	<p>Owners have no personal liability for malpractice of others</p>	<p>More expensive to create than partnership or sole proprietorship</p> <p>Paperwork can seem burdensome to some owners</p> <p>All owners must belong to the same profession.</p>

\*Source: FindLaw for Small Business – <http://smallbusiness.findlaw.com>

## Step Five:

### Select a Location and Obtain Appropriate Permits

Regardless of your business type, one of Loudoun County's many business location options will surely fit the bill. From office and industrial parks in the suburban east to open agricultural land in the west – and seven incorporated towns in between – Loudoun County has it all. But whether you plan to operate your business from your home, your farm, or an office or storefront location, you will need to secure the appropriate permits before you can open your doors.

#### Zoning

Choosing the right location is very important when beginning a business. Knowing the right location is important for two reasons: (1) attracting the right customers and (2) certain areas of the county are zoned for certain uses. If you are using your location for uses that are prohibited by county and town zoning ordinances you are breaking the law. Fines and other penalties can be imposed for violating zoning ordinances.

In deciding upon a location for your business, you must find out if your proposed location is in a zoning district that will allow you to conduct your proposed business activity. You can find out if your zoning district allows your proposed use by the doing the following:

#### **If Your Location is in an Incorporated Town:**

If your location is in one of Loudoun's incorporated towns, **contact the town first!** Each town has its own zoning regulations and classifications that you must meet if you want to do business within the town limits. Town contact information is found below.

- **Town of Leesburg** (703) 771-2774
- **Town of Hamilton** (540) 338-2811
- **Town of Round Hill** (540) 338-7878
- **Town of Hillsboro** (540) 668-6257
- **Town of Lovettsville** (540) 822-5788
- **Town of Middleburg** (540) 687-5152
- **Town of Purcellville** (540) 338-7421

Once you have satisfied all the town zoning requirements, you can obtain a business license and occupancy permit from the town. If you need a building permit, you must contact the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development at (703) 777-0220.

#### **If Your Location is Outside of an Incorporated Town:**

The Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance regulates the many land use possibilities, including business permits and uses for locations in the County outside of the towns. Before all else, you need to determine which zoning classification(s) match your business use.

You can do this in one of three ways:

1. View the Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance online at <http://www.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=633>

2. Visit the Loudoun County Department of Building and Development at the County Government Center (second floor).

3. Call the Zoning Hotline at (703) 777-0118

Once you have determined the zoning classification(s) for your business type, you can look for available properties. While the towns have their own zoning ordinances, the county issues all building permits. In most cases, you will need to provide a business address before you can get your licenses and permits. Review Steps Five and Six together, and be sure you understand Step Five especially, before signing any leases or other binding agreements.

If you already have a location in mind, determine whether your planned business use is allowed within the location's zoning classification before you sign a lease agreement. To find out how specific locations are zoned, you can:

- Use your tax map/parcel number to identify the property on the county's zoning map. The map is available at the Office of Mapping and Geographic Information, or you can access an interactive version of the Loudoun County Mapping System (Web LOGIS) at <http://www.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=893> (Click on **"Mapping System (Web LOGIS)."** You can also access the Land Management Information System at the public counters in the Loudoun County Mapping, Planning, and Building and Development offices.
- Search for the property online using the Loudoun County Real Estate Tax, Assessment and Parcel Database. You can search properties in this database by address, tax map number, tax map number range or parcel identification number. The database is available at: <http://www.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=893> (Click on **"Property Database."**)

If the zoning classification corresponds with your business use, you are ready to proceed to the next step. If it does not, you will have to identify other appropriate sites.

### **Special Exception (SPEX) Uses**

Some uses require a Special Exception (SPEX) or Minor SPEX from the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors before the business can operate within a zoning district. A SPEX use is one that is not permitted by right. In other words, the zoning ordinance does not normally allow for the property in a particular zoning district to be used in a way the property desires to use his/her property. If the use is one that is not permitted by right, the property owner must obtain approval (a SPEX or Minor SPEX) from the Board of Supervisors. The Zoning Ordinance lists, by zoning district, those uses that can be allowed by right or by SPEX. Only uses contained in these lists are considered in each zoning district.

Regardless of whether or not a special exception is required, applicants should verify their findings with the Building and Development staff, who can confirm a site's zoning code, a business' correct zoning classification, and all applicable regulations. To determine whether your proposed use requires a SPEX application within a district, contact the zoning division in the Department of Building and Development at 703-777-0397.

The SPEX process begins with a pre-application meeting, which gives applicants an opportunity to meet informally with planning staff to clarify the process and discuss issues of concern. If the applicant pursues the SPEX, the county charges a fee for the process based on the proposed use.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0220

**Tip: You should always** get special exceptions (SPEX) verified in writing. Before leasing a property, get in-writing from the town/county and the property owner that you are in a zoning district that allows your proposed use or that a special exception (SPEX) has been approved for your proposed use. If a SPEX was approved, get the date in writing of when the SPEX was approved.

**Looking for Business Property**

Loudoun's Department of Economic Development can help businesses identify available suburban real estate, while the Virginia Cooperative Extension Office in Leesburg can provide advice about agricultural and rural property land conditions and suitability.

**Zoning Permits and Certificates of Occupancy  
(Non-residential)**

The Department of Building and Development (B&D) issues both zoning permits and certificates of occupancy. Businesses need a zoning permit for the construction, occupancy or use of principal or accessory structures. Some uses require a Special Exception (SPEX) from the Board of Supervisors and site plan approval from B&D before the department will issue a zoning permit.

Businesses must get a Certificate of Occupancy (non-residential) permit for:

- New non-residential buildings;
- Structural changes to an existing building (tenant improvements); and
- Changes in a building's use (e.g., converting a clothing store to a delicatessen).

Before B&D issues an occupancy permit, businesses must secure permits and get appropriate inspections for electrical, plumbing, building, mechanical, gas, fire, and health (as applicable). Generally, the Loudoun County Division of Environmental Health inspects all businesses connecting to private water and sewer systems, while the Loudoun County Sanitation Authority inspects businesses connecting to public water and sewer systems. Restaurants, public pools, tourist facilities and other select businesses must also contact the Division of Environmental Health for an inspection.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0220 (Zoning and Building permits)

Telephone: (703) 777-0397 (Certificate of Occupancy permits)

**Loudoun County Division of Environmental Health**

Telephone: (703) 777-0234

## **Loudoun County Sanitation Authority**

Telephone: (703) 771-1092

New tenants must always obtain zoning permits but don't always need a Certificate of Occupancy permit. Check with the Department of Building and Development at (703) 777-0397 to determine whether you need an occupancy permit.

### **Home Occupation Permits**

The Loudoun County Zoning Ordinance allows certain businesses and occupations to be conducted in a dwelling unit, as long as the businesses comply with certain restrictions. Home occupations are permitted within owner- and tenant-occupied single-family, detached duplex and townhouse residential dwellings. If your home-based business is located in an incorporated town, refer to the contact information on page 8. These restrictions apply in Loudoun County:

- Members of the family who reside in the home may engage in the occupation.
- One employee, other than family members living in the home, is permitted, as long as one additional off-street parking space is provided. This parking space cannot be located in the front yard unless it is located on an existing driveway.
- The use of the dwelling for the home occupation shall be clearly incidental and subordinate to the use of the dwelling for residential purposes. Not more than 25 percent of the gross floor area of the home – nor 25 percent of the gross floor area of an accessory structure, if that's where the business is conducted – can be used to conduct the home occupation.
- Changes cannot be made to the outside appearance of the building or lot, nor can there be other visible evidence of the home occupation other than one non-illuminated sign, which may not exceed two square feet in area.
- There cannot be retail sales other than of handcrafted items at the home.
- The home business cannot generate traffic volumes higher than would normally be expected in the residential neighborhood. Any need for parking generated by conducting the home occupation shall be met by off-street parking in an area other than the front yard.
- No equipment or process used in the home business can create noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors or electrical interference detectable to the normal senses of the lot. In the case of electrical interference, no equipment or process that creates visual or audible interference in any off-premises radio or television receivers or that causes fluctuations in off-premises line voltage can be used; and
- Childcare facilities in particular are subject to additional county standards. Childcare homes and centers are permitted, provided they comply with regulations on the number and age of children cared for; the amount of outdoor

space available for each child; the size, location, and design of play areas; and parking and designated pickup and delivery areas.

Additionally, if you propose to conduct your home-based business from a home in an approved, recorded subdivision, **you must comply** with the subdivision's restrictive covenants, if any, and, if required, get approval from the developers and/or homeowners association.

The Department of Building and Development issues Home Occupation Permits for county businesses not located in the county's incorporated towns; town offices issue permits for businesses in their jurisdictions. Home Occupancy Permits cost \$50. Businesses can mail applications or visit the Department of Building and Development.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0397

[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)

**Rural Businesses**

The Revised General Plan sets forth policies to encourage the rural economy as the principal use in western Loudoun. The Revised Zoning Ordinance implements the policy by regulating uses in Loudoun's rural districts.

Landowners can contact the Department of Economic Development (DED) to discuss agriculture and rural economy use ideas. In addition, you can make an appointment with Loudoun's Zoning Administrator for information and to ask questions about a particular use.

Some rural economy uses may require a Rural Economy Site Plan. Landowners should check with the Department of Building and Development to determine whether their project requires such a plan. If your project does, you will have to hire a licensed surveyor or engineer to prepare it.

Agricultural, horticultural and animal husbandry uses are permitted on lots three acres or larger. Other uses are defined as either directly or not directly related to ongoing agricultural, horticultural or animal husbandry. These uses have performance standards that will determine the proper size of the operation based on the parcel size. Some uses require a Special Exemption (SPEX) or Minor Special Exemption (Minor SPEX) from the Board of Supervisors, who evaluate the impact of the use on the community. For more information about the SPEX process, contact:

**Loudoun County Planning Department**

Telephone: (703) 777-0246

**Temporary Use Permits**

Loudoun has become popular venue for a variety of special events. Functions with fewer than 100 people are not considered to be events. However, businesses hosting functions with an expected attendance of more than 100 people must receive a temporary use permit from the Department of Building and Development. Temporary use permits alert public safety providers to the scheduled event, which enables them to plan for traffic and visitor issues in advance.

Businesses may apply for up to 10 temporary use permits per year at a cost of \$50 per permit, and events must be spaced at least 30 days apart. Businesses hosting more than 10 events or more frequent events must apply for a SPEX.

For more information, contact:

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0397

*bad@loudoun.gov*

**Loudoun Department of Economic Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0426

## Step Six:

### Apply for Federal, State and Local Business Licenses

Depending on your business type, you will have to obtain various registrations and licenses. We suggest that new business owners visit the Loudoun County Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue to discuss the business with a tax representative who can review all the necessary paperwork. In addition, check with the appropriate government agencies to determine which registrations and licenses you need. Some businesses, including wineries and others selling alcohol, require both federal and state licenses. Others, including financial institutions, utility companies and communications providers, must contact the Virginia State Corporation Commission to comply with additional laws. For more complete information, **refer to the *Virginia Business Registration Guide* at [www.state.va.us/scc/division/clk/forms/brg.pdf](http://www.state.va.us/scc/division/clk/forms/brg.pdf).**

Following is an overview of the steps you need to take to apply for licenses and registrations.

#### **Register Your Business Structure**

A new business incorporating in Virginia must file its articles of incorporation with the Virginia State Corporation Commission (SCC) and pay a filing fee. All corporations, limited liability companies and limited partnerships must register with the SCC. Exceptions are general partnerships, which register with the Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court, and sole proprietorships, which do not register unless they are using an assumed or fictitious name. (Note: A fictitious name is any name for which you do business other than your own. For example, a tire shop name “Robyn’s Tire Shop” rather than Robyn’s given name is a fictitious name and it must be registered with the Clerk of the Circuit Court.)

In addition, stock corporations must pay a charter fee based on the number of authorized shares. Finally, if your business is incorporated outside Virginia but you want to do business in the Commonwealth, you must obtain a “Certificate of Authority to Transact Business in Virginia” from the SCC Clerk’s Office.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia State Corporation Commission**

P.O. Box 1197

Richmond, VA 23218-1197

Telephone: (804) 371-9967

Toll-free (Virginia) (800) 552-7945  
<http://www.scc.virginia.gov/>

The first step to registering your business should be to speak with the Loudoun County Office of the Commissioner of the Revenue to determine which licenses and registrations you need. Call (703) 777-0260 or visit [www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)

### **Register Your Trade Name**

This procedure registers the business name and the owner's name and address for public record, as required by the Code of Virginia (Section 59.1-69). Virginia Consumer Protection law requires that all fictitious business names for sole proprietors, partnerships and corporations be registered with the appropriate Clerk of the Circuit Court.

For Loudoun County businesses, contact:

#### **Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court**

18 E. Market Street  
Leesburg, VA 20176  
Telephone: (703) 777-0270  
[www.loudoun.gov/clerk/](http://www.loudoun.gov/clerk/)

### **Obtain a Loudoun County Business and Professional Occupational License (BPOL)**

#### **Fill Out the Business Tax Declaration Form**

Loudoun County and its towns assess Business and Professional Occupation License (BPOL) taxes on gross receipts generated from business activity. BPOL tax rates vary according to business classification. If your business is located within one of the county's seven incorporated towns, you will need to obtain a business license from that town. If your business is not located within one of the towns, you will get your business license from the county. Your business classification determines situs (for tax purposes) and rates. As a general rule, gross receipts are attributed to exercise of a licensable privilege at a definite place of business. There may be exceptions in some cases, for example contractors or itinerant vendors. It is possible that you will need to obtain business licenses from each jurisdiction in which you do business. Please talk to your CPA or contact the Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue to determine requirements.

Each year, you will receive a renewal form from each jurisdiction that requests information about your business' gross receipts from the preceding year. It is your responsibility to complete and return these renewal forms by the required filing dates.

To obtain a Loudoun County business license, contact:

#### **Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

1 Harrison Street, SE  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
Telephone: (703) 777-0260 (V/TTY)  
[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)

To obtain a business license within one of Loudoun's incorporated towns, contact:

**Town of Hamilton**

**Town of Middleburg**

(540) 338-2811

(540) 687-5152

**Town of Hillsboro**

(540) 668-6766

**Town of Purcellville**

(540) 338-7421

**Town of Leesburg**

(703) 771-2765

**Town of Round Hill**

(540) 338-7878

**Town of Lovettsville**

(540) 822-5788

**Business Tangible Property Tax**

All businesses located in Loudoun County or in one of the county's seven incorporated towns must register with the Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue and pay taxes on tangible personal property, whether they need a county business license or not. Every January, Loudoun businesses receive renewal forms requesting information about the tangible personal property of the organization. If the business is located in one of Loudoun's incorporated towns, the county and town personal property tax assessments will both be based on this information. It is your responsibility to complete and return all forms by the required filing dates.

For information, contact:

**Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

1 Harrison Street, SE

Leesburg, VA 20175

Telephone: (703) 777-0260 (V/TTY)

[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)

**Obtain a Federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Tax ID Number**

All employers, corporations and partnerships must obtain a federal employer identification number (EIN), which identifies the business' tax accounts on all federal and state tax forms. Sole proprietors without employees do not necessarily need to obtain an EIN. They may use their Social Security number. It should be noted, however, that Social Security numbers are often used in cases of identity theft. Even though a sole proprietor may not need an EIN, he/she may still want to obtain an EIN to further protect one's identity.

For more information, contact:

**Internal Revenue Service**

Telephone: (703) 756-6663

Toll-free: (800) 829-4933

[www.irs.gov/businesses/small](http://www.irs.gov/businesses/small)

**Obtain a Virginia State Tax Account Number**

Companies doing business in Virginia must register with the Virginia Department of Taxation. This department issues business tax identification numbers, also known as Virginia Tax Account Numbers, which businesses use to file all applicable taxes. The department will help you determine the taxes for which you are liable. These may include:

- **Retail Sales Tax**, if your business is involved in wholesale or retail sales.

- **Use Tax/Consumer Use Tax**, if tangible personal property is used, consumed or stored in Virginia but purchased outside the Commonwealth.
- **Employer Tax Withholding**, if wages are paid to one or more employees.
- **Corporate Income Tax**, if your corporation conducts business in Virginia or receives income from Virginia sources.

To obtain your Virginia tax account number and determine the taxes for which you will be liable, contact:

**Virginia Department of Taxation**

Office of Customer Services  
P.O. Box 1115  
Richmond, VA 23218-1115  
Telephone: (804) 367-8037  
[www.tax.virginia.gov](http://www.tax.virginia.gov)

**Contact Other Government Agencies to Register for Other Applicable Licenses and Permits**

Some business activities have additional county and state regulations for reasons of public health, safety and welfare. Depending on your business, a number of other Virginia agencies may require you to obtain a license or permit. Three examples are described below:

**1. The Virginia Department of Professional and Occupation Regulation** licenses more than 300,000 individuals and businesses in more than 30 occupations. Contact the department for a complete list.

Telephone: (804) 367-8500  
[www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov)

**2. The Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board** requires businesses involved in the production, distribution, storage, transportation and/or sale of alcoholic beverages to be licensed.

Telephone: (804) 213-4400  
[www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov)

**3. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services** issues licenses and enforces Virginia food laws that relate to most commercial food processing, storage and retail operations. Telephone: (804) 786-2373

[www.vdacs.virginia.gov](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov)

Check with the following agencies to determine whether registrations apply to your business:

**Loudoun County Animal Control**

Telephone: (703) 777-0406  
[www.loudoun.gov/animals](http://www.loudoun.gov/animals)

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

Telephone: (703) 777-0397

[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)

**Loudoun County Department of Environmental Health**

Telephone: (703) 777-0234

<http://www.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=645>

**Loudoun County Department of Family Services**

Telephone: (703) 777-0353

[www.loudoun.gov/dss](http://www.loudoun.gov/dss)

**Loudoun County Department of Fire and Rescue Services**

Telephone: (703) 777-0333

[www.loudoun.gov/fire](http://www.loudoun.gov/fire)

**Loudoun County Sheriff's Office**

Telephone: (703) 777-0407

[www.loudoun.gov/sheriff](http://www.loudoun.gov/sheriff)

**Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services**

Telephone: (804) 371-8200

<http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov/>

**Virginia Department of Education**

Proprietary Schools

Telephone: (804) 225-2848

[www.pen.k12.va.us](http://www.pen.k12.va.us)

**Virginia Department of Environmental Quality**

Telephone: (804) 698-4000

[www.deq.virginia.gov](http://www.deq.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Health Professions**

Telephone: (804) 662-9900

[www.dhp.virginia.gov](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Telephone: (804) 371-2327

[www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation**

Telephone: (804) 367-8500

Board of Contractors, Tradesman Program

Telephone: (804) 367-8511

[www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov)

One of the questions asked most frequently by entrepreneurs wanting to open a retail business is, "How do I get a reseller's license?" In fact, there is no such thing as a reseller's license in Virginia. Retailers must obtain a business license in the town, city or county where the business will operate. The "reseller's license" is actually the Virginia Department of Taxation's Form ST-10, "Sales and Use Tax Certificate of Exemption," which exempts retailers from paying sales tax on products to be "resold" to the public.

For more information, contact:  
Virginia Business Information Center  
Toll-free (866) 248-8814  
[www.dba.virginia.gov/virginia](http://www.dba.virginia.gov/virginia)

**The following are subject to additional regulations: Business Occupations, Professions, and Trades:**

Accountants, Architects, Asbestos/Lead Workers, Auctioneers, Barbers, Boxers/Wrestlers, Branch Pilots, Career Training Schools, Cemetery Companies and Sales, Personnel, Contactors/Tradesman, Cosmetologists, Electricians, Geologists, Health Professions, Hearing Aid Specialists, Heating/Ventilation/Air Conditioning and Gas Fitting Workers, Home Inspectors, Interior Designers, Land Surveyors, Landscape Architects, Nail Technicians, Opticians, Peddlers and Solicitors, Plumbers, Polygraph Examiners, Professional Engineers, Real Estate Appraisers, Real Estate Brokers and Salespeople, Soil Scientists, Tourist Establishments, Water and Sewer Systems, Waste Management Facility Operators, Waste and Wastewater Works Operators, Wax Technicians

**Obtain a Small Business Tax Kit**

The Small Business Administration makes a small business tax kit available online. In addition, the IRS website includes a variety of forms and publications for small businesses.

For more information, contact:

**U.S. Small Business Administration**

Telephone: (800) 827-5722  
[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)

**Internal Revenue Service**

Telephone: (703) 756-6663  
[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

**Obtain Business Insurance**

Without business insurance, you could lose your entire business in a matter of minutes. Of course, deciding what kind(s) of insurance you need is both important and complex. In making decisions about business insurance, consider the various types of protection available; services and coverage offered by competing insurance providers; and cost, among other factors.

Some forms of insurance are required by law. Workers' compensation (for companies with three or more employees) and vehicle insurance, for example, are mandatory. Other types of insurance are optional. These include:

- **Liability Insurance**, which protects your business from negligence suits.
- **Casualty Insurance**, which protects your business from casualty resulting from fire, theft, robbery, and storm, wind and flood damage. Casualty insurance can cover your business inventory, equipment, structure and contents.

- **Business Interruption Insurance**, which protects against loss of income while the business is temporarily closed because of fire, power loss and other causes.

- **Life and Disability Insurance**, which insures an owner or partner against death or long-term disability. Life and disability insurance may help the business survive if a key person becomes unable to perform his or her duties. Insurance proceeds can enable the remaining partner(s) to buy the disabled or deceased partner's share of the business; and

**Group Health Plans**, which are generally more affordable than individual insurance and therefore make an attractive fringe benefit when recruiting employees. The federal government may legislate significant changes in the way health insurance is paid for and administered. Consult an insurance professional for the most current rules and for guidance on the best approach for your business.

**Tip:** Agricultural businesses should deal with insurance firms that understand liability for on-farm visitors that are open to the public. This is especially true for farms included frequently on tours and for horse farms.

**Goods and Services Producers:** Animal remedies, Beverages and alcohol, Commercial animal feed, Cotton, Childcare homes and facilities, Dairy products, Fertilizers, Food products, Food service and restaurants, Hazardous materials, Ice cream and similar frozen products, Liming materials, Meat products for interstate sale, Milk and milk products, Nursery stock, Pesticides, Poultry products for interstate sale, Storage of apples in controlled atmospheres, Water (bottled)

(Every effort was made to include all occupations, goods & services in these lists; however, you must check with the proper government agencies for specific regulations.)

## Step Seven: Hiring Employees

Making the decision to hire employees will be one of the most crucial decisions you will make as your business grows.

On the positive side, employees free up some of your time, since you will be able to delegate tasks; expand your business hours; and offer more skills and expertise to your customers. On the other hand, employees will raise your overhead costs and add to your administrative paperwork and record-keeping tasks, not to mention require you to train and supervise them.

### **Employer Identification Number**

If you haven't already done so, you need to obtain a federal employer identification number (EIN). The EIN identifies your business's tax accounts on all federal and state tax forms (see page 34).

For more information, contact:

#### **Internal Revenue Service**

Telephone: (800) 829-1040, Ext. 26

[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

### **Employees and Independent Contractors**

Businesses sometimes prefer to hire people as independent contractors because the nature or duration of the work does not justify hiring them as employees. If a business hires and pays an independent contractor \$600 or more during the year it must report this information to the IRS using IRS Form 1099. Businesses are not required to withhold or pay employer taxes for monies they pay to independent contractors.

The distinction between an employee and an independent contractor depends on the working relationship between the employer and the person performing services. Generally, independent contractors are persons who offer their services to the general public. The general rule is that a person is an independent contractor if the employer has the right to control or direct the result of the work but not the methods or means of accomplishing the work. Independent contractors generally supply their own tools, work at times and place of their choosing, and cannot be discharged by the employer. A written contract for work generally helps define these arrangements. In contrast, in an employer-employee relationship, the employer supplies tools and a place to work, has the right to fire the employee, and generally controls the means of work.

Check with your accountant or tax professional, if you are unsure whether you should consider a person you are hiring to be an independent contractor or an employee. If the IRS concludes that an employer has no reasonable basis for treating a worker as an independent contractor, the employer may be liable for back payroll taxes for that worker.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Department of Taxation**

Telephone: (804) 367-8037

[www.tax.virginia.gov](http://www.tax.virginia.gov)

### **Employer Tax Withholding**

As an employer, the law requires you to withhold federal and state income taxes, as well as Medicare and Social Security (FICA) taxes from each of your employees' earnings. In addition, businesses must make payments to Social Security from their own funds for all employees.

The amount of income and Social Security taxes to be withheld and paid for each employee will vary depending on the rate of pay, marital status, and number of exemptions claimed by the employee on IRS Form W-4. If you are preparing employer tax returns, be sure you have the most recent withholding tax tables, since these tables change as the tax laws change.

Businesses file federal withholding, Medicare and Social Security taxes four times a year, using IRS Form 941. Small businesses make tax payments monthly, while large businesses make payments semi-weekly. All businesses can make these payments either electronically using the Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS), or by depositing them into an authorized financial institution using Federal Tax Deposit Coupon 8109. For tax payment purposes, a business is considered to be a small business if it reported \$50,000 or less in payroll taxes the prior year.

Businesses must also report income tax withholding to Virginia. The Virginia Department of Taxation assigns a filing status based on registration information or a business' actual payment record, and then issues forms accordingly. Quarterly, monthly and seasonal filers use form VA-5; semi-weekly filers use Forms VA-15 and VA-16. For more information, visit the Virginia Department of Taxation website at [www.tax.virginia.gov](http://www.tax.virginia.gov).

Your employees all must complete and return a federal Form W-4 when they begin employment, as well as when they want to change the number of exemptions (i.e., withholding allowances) they want to claim. Because the W-4 indicates the number of exemptions an employee is claiming, you will be able to determine the proper tax withholding amount during the year.

### **Sole Proprietors and Partners**

If you are a sole proprietor or a partner in a partnership, you are not considered an employee and are not subject to withholding. In lieu of withholding, you may be required to make quarterly estimated tax payments if your withholding from such other income sources as salary from another job is not enough. To figure and pay estimated taxes to the IRS, use Form 1040-ES. For Virginia, use Form 760-ES. You are responsible for making these payments on time and ensuring that the payments reflect the taxes you expect to owe accurately. For example, if you expect to owe \$500 after subtracting withholding and other tax credits, you may have to make estimated tax payments if your withholding tax payments for the year either equal last year's tax liability or equal 90 percent of your current tax liability. The tax laws on this are complex and change frequently, so check with an accountant or tax expert for the most current information.

### **Corporation Owners**

If your business is incorporated, you as the owner are automatically an employee and are therefore subject to withholding on any salary the corporation pays you. Therefore, you do not have to file estimated tax returns as an individual. However, your corporation may have to make estimated tax payments on corporate income. To do this, use Form 1120-W.

### **Unemployment Tax**

Virginia and the federal government both require employers to pay an unemployment tax based on an employee's salary. Businesses with at least one employee must pay unemployment tax.

The Federal Unemployment Tax (FUTA) is filed annually on federal Form 940. The FUTA tax must be paid at least annually by January 31 of the following year, or quarterly using Coupon 8109, if a higher payroll requires it.

Virginia unemployment taxes are levied on wages of employees who work in Virginia. These taxes go into a state fund, from which benefits are paid to claimants. Unemployment insurance offers workers protection from loss of earnings when they are partially or completely laid off from their jobs through no fault of their own. Businesses file and pay this tax quarterly using Virginia Form VECFC-20 or by registering online. Both Form VEC-FC-20 and online registration are available from the Employer Resources tab on Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) website, [www.vec.virginia.gov/vecportal](http://www.vec.virginia.gov/vecportal)

Virginia's unemployment tax rate varies depending on the business' experience rating – that is, the number of unemployment claims made against the business. As a new business, you can obtain your tax forms and tax rate by filing form VEC-FC-27, which is also available on the VEC website.

For information and forms, contact:

**Virginia Employment Commission**

Main Office  
703 E. Main Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
Telephone: (804) 786-1485

Fairfax Regional Office  
13135 Lee Jackson Mem. Highway  
Fairfax, VA 22033  
Telephone: (703) 803-0000

[www.vec.virginia.gov/vecportal](http://www.vec.virginia.gov/vecportal)

**Worker's Compensation Insurance**

Any employer who has three or more regular employees must furnish worker's compensation insurance at no cost to the employee. Employers may purchase this insurance through a private insurance company or can apply to the Virginia State Corporation Commission to obtain a certificate of self-insurance. Related costs vary by industry and occupation.

Worker's compensation insurance provides compensation on medical benefits to a worker or his or her dependents when the worker becomes disabled or dies from accidental injury or occupational disease due to his or her employment.

For more information, contact:

**Virginia Workers' Compensation Commission**

Main Office  
1000 DMV Drive  
Richmond, VA 23220  
Telephone: 1-877-664-2566

Fairfax Regional Office  
Prosperity Plaza  
3020 Hamaker Court, Suite 100  
Fairfax, VA 22031  
Telephone: (703) 207-7152

Website: [www.vwc.state.va.us](http://www.vwc.state.va.us)

**Immigration and Naturalization**

Under the *Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986*, all new employees must verify their eligibility to work. New employees must be American citizens or aliens who are authorized to work in this country.

As an employer, you must verify the employment eligibility of anyone you hired after November 6, 1986 and complete and retain either a one-page "Employment Eligibility Verification" (Form I-9) or, for foreign workers, an Alien Labor Certification from the Virginia Employment Commission.

The Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration Services publishes a "Handbook for Employers, Form M-274," which explains the law and instructs employers on how to comply. This handbook

is available online at <http://www.uscis.gov/portal/site/uscis>

For more information, contact:

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)**

Office of Business Liaison: (800) 357-2099  
National Customer Service Center: (800) 375-5283

Fax: (202) 305-2523

**Office of Business Liaison**  
6th Floor  
111 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20539

**USCIS Washington District Office**  
2675 Prosperity Way  
Fairfax, VA 22031

### **Americans with Disabilities Act**

*The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)* prohibits discrimination in employment against individuals with disabilities and mandates their full participation in both publicly and privately provided services and activities.

The ADA requires that “public accommodations” such as restaurants, retail stores, hotels, theaters, doctors’ offices, pharmacies, private schools and daycare centers may not discriminate against persons with disabilities. Reasonable efforts must be made to remove existing barriers, and new construction must be made accessible. The law is complex and wide-ranging.

For more information, contact:

### **Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC)**

Telephone: (800) 669-3362

[www.eeoc.gov](http://www.eeoc.gov)

### **Virginia Right-to-Work Law**

Virginia has a “Right-to-Work” law that prohibits a “union shop” or “closed shop.” In other words, Virginia employers cannot deny a person the right to work based on membership or non-membership in a labor union or organization; cannot require employees to become or remain union members; and cannot require employees to pay dues to a union as a condition of employment. The law also regulates other aspects of employee-management relations.

For more information, contact:

### **Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Division of State Labor Law

Telephone: (703) 392-0900

[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

### **Minimum Wage**

Federal and Virginia laws require employers to pay employees at least a minimum hourly wage. Failure to comply with federal and state minimum wage laws can result in severe penalties. Various exceptions to the federal and/or state minimum wage may apply under specific circumstances to workers with disabilities, full-time students, youth under age 20 in their first 90 consecutive calendar days of employment, tipped employees and student-learners. To identify the federal and state minimum wage laws contact the U.S. Department of Labor and the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry.

### **Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Division of State Labor Law

Telephone: (703) 392-0900

[www.dli.state.va.us/](http://www.dli.state.va.us/)

## **U.S. Department of Labor**

Frances Perkins Building  
200 Constitution Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20210  
Telephone: 1-866-4-USA-DOL  
Home Page: [www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)  
Minimum Wage: [www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/minimumwage.htm](http://www.dol.gov/dol/topic/wages/minimumwage.htm)

## **Other State Labor Regulations**

In addition to enforcing the Virginia Right-to-Work law and minimum wage issues, the Virginia Department of Labor and Industry also enforces regulations related to:

- Equal pay
- Child labor
- Apprenticeship training
- Employee notification of employment laws and regulations with federal and state posters

([www.dol.gov/osbp/sbrefa/poster/main.htm](http://www.dol.gov/osbp/sbrefa/poster/main.htm))

## **Quick Reference**

### **Loudoun County Contacts**

#### **Business Assistance:**

#### **Loudoun County Department of Economic Development**

1 Harrison Street, SE msc #63  
Leesburg, VA 20177-7000  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0426**  
<http://biz.loudoun.gov>

#### **Loudoun County Industrial Development Authority**

P.O. Box Seven  
Leesburg, VA 20178  
**Telephone: (703) 443-1001**  
<http://www.loudounida.org/>

#### **Loudoun County Small Business Development Center**

21145 Whitfield Place, Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20165  
**Telephone: (703) 430-7222**  
[www.loudounsfdc.org](http://www.loudounsfdc.org)

#### **Loudoun County Entrepreneurial Resource Center\***

21145 Whitfield Place, Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20165  
**Telephone: (703) 430-7222**  
[www.loudounsfdc.org/available\\_resources.cfm](http://www.loudounsfdc.org/available_resources.cfm)

\***Note:** Loudoun County Entrepreneurial Resource Center is located inside the Small Business Development Center

**Loudoun Workforce Resource Center**

102 Heritage Way, NE  
Suite 103

Leesburg, VA 20175

**Telephone: (703) 777-0353**

<http://inter4.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=2091>

**Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce**

101 Blueseal Drive, Suite 100

P.O. Box 1298

Leesburg, VA 20177-1298

**Telephone: (703) 777-2176**

**Toll-free: 1-800-578-LCCC (5222)**

[www.loudounchamber.org](http://www.loudounchamber.org)

**Loudoun Convention & Visitors Association**

222 Catocin Circle, Suite 100

Leesburg, VA 20175

**Telephone: (703) 771-2170**

[www.visitloudoun.org](http://www.visitloudoun.org)

**Business Requirements**

**Contacts for:**

- Agriculture Exemption
- Business, Professional and Occupational License
- Business Taxes
- Business Tangible Personal Property Tax
- Consumer Utility Tax
- Mixed Beverage License
- Retail Sales Tax
- Short-Term Rental Tax
- Transient Occupancy Tax

**Loudoun County Commissioner of the Revenue**

Business License Tax Division

1 Harrison Street, SE

First Floor

P.O. Box 7000

Leesburg, VA 20177

**Telephone: (703) 777-0260**

[www.loudoun.gov/cor](http://www.loudoun.gov/cor)

**Satellite Location**

21641 Ridgetop Circle, Suite 100

Sterling, VA 20166

**Contacts for:**

- Trade Name Registration

- Bondsman

**Loudoun County Clerk of the Circuit Court**

18 E. Market Street

MSC #33

Leesburg, VA 20176

[www.loudoun.gov/clerk](http://www.loudoun.gov/clerk)

**Permits for:**

- Food Service
- Tourist Establishment
- Water and Sewer Systems

**Loudoun County Environmental Health**

1 Harrison Street, SE

Second Floor

P.O. Box 7000

MSC #68

Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

**Telephone: (703) 777-0234**

<http://www.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=645>

**Loudoun County Sanitation Authority**

880 Harrison Street, SE

P.O. Box 4000

Leesburg, VA 20177-1403

**Telephone: (571) 291-7880**

[www.lcsa.org](http://www.lcsa.org)

**Permits for:**

- Building
- Home Occupation
- Land Disturbance
- Non-residential Occupancy
- Temporary Use Permits
- Zoning

**Loudoun County Department of Building and Development**

1 Harrison Street, SE

MSC #60

Leesburg, VA 20175-7000

**Telephone: (703) 777-0397**

**Zoning Hotline: (703) 777-0118**

[www.loudoun.gov/b&d](http://www.loudoun.gov/b&d)

**Permits for:**

- Special Exception (SPEX) Uses

**Loudoun County Department of Planning**

1 Harrison St., SE

Third Floor  
MSC #62  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0246**  
<http://www.loudoun.gov/Default.aspx?tabid=815>

**Permits for:**

- Kennels

**Loudoun County Animal Care and Control**  
39820 Charles Town Pike  
MSC #66  
Waterford, VA 20197  
**Telephone: Eastern Loudoun (703) 777-0406**  
**Western Loudoun (540) 882-3211**  
[www.loudoun.gov/animals](http://www.loudoun.gov/animals)

**Other Services:**

- Business Information Form
- Peddler and Solicitor Permit

**Loudoun County Sheriff's Office**  
39 Catocin Circle  
MSC #35  
Leesburg, VA 20175  
**Telephone: (703) 777-0407**  
**Non-Emergency: (703)777-1021**  
[www.loudoun.gov/sheriff](http://www.loudoun.gov/sheriff)

**Property Services:**

- Real Property Assessments
- Land Use Taxation Program

**Office of the County Assessor, Loudoun County**  
2 Locations:

**Leesburg Office**  
1 Harrison Street, S.E.,  
5th Floor  
P. O. Box 7000  
Mailstop #07  
Leesburg, VA 20177

**Ashburn Satellite Office**  
45201 Research Place, Suite 130,  
Ashburn, VA 20147

**Telephone: (703) 777-0267**  
[www.loudoun.gov/assessor](http://www.loudoun.gov/assessor)

**Vehicle Decals:**

**Loudoun County Treasurer's Office  
Treasurer's Office-Leesburg**  
1 Harrison Street, S.E.,  
1st Floor  
Leesburg, VA 20175

**Treasurer's Office-Sterling**  
21641 Ridgetop Circle,  
Suite 104  
Sterling, VA 20166

**Loudoun County Public Libraries:**

Administration	(703) 777-0368
Ashburn	(703) 737-8100
Cascades	(703) 444-3228
Lovettsville	(540) 822-5824
Middleburg	(540) 687-5730
Purcellville	(540) 338-7235
Rust	(703) 777-0323
Sterling	(703) 430-9500

[www.lcpl.lib.va.us](http://www.lcpl.lib.va.us)

**Town Government Contacts**

**Town of Hamilton**

53 E. Colonial Highway  
P.O. Box 130  
Hamilton, VA 20158

**Telephone: (540) 338-2811**

[www.town.hamilton.va.us](http://www.town.hamilton.va.us)

**Town of Hillsboro**

36966 Charles Town Pike  
Hillsboro, VA 20132-2782

**Telephone: (540) 668-6966**

**Town of Leesburg**

25 W. Market Street  
P.O. Box 88  
Leesburg, VA 20178

**Telephone: (703) 777-2420**

[www.leesburgva.gov](http://www.leesburgva.gov)

**Town of Lovettsville**

6 E. Pennsylvania Ave.  
P.O. Box 209  
Lovettsville, VA 20180

**Telephone: (540) 822-5788**

<http://www.townoflovettville.com/>

**Town of Middleburg**  
10 W. Marshall Street  
P.O. Box 187  
Middleburg, VA 20118  
**Telephone: (540) 687-3804**  
<http://www.middleburg.org/>

**Town of Purcellville**  
130 E. Main Street  
Purcellville, VA 20132  
**Telephone: (540) 338-7421**  
[www.purcellvilleva.com](http://www.purcellvilleva.com)

**Town of Round Hill**  
23 Main Street (Route 179)  
P.O. Box 36  
Round Hill, VA 20142-0036  
**Telephone: (540) 338-7878**  
[www.roundhillva.org](http://www.roundhillva.org)

**Commonwealth of Virginia Contacts Business Assistance:**

**Business Finance Group, Inc.**  
3930 Pender Dr  
Suite 300  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
**Telephone: (703) 352-0504**  
[www.businessfinancegroup.org](http://www.businessfinancegroup.org)

**Virginia Business Information Center**  
P.O. Box 446  
Richmond, VA 23218-0446  
**Telephone: Virginia Business Information Center: (804) 371-0438**  
**Toll-Free: 1-866-248-8814**  
[www.dba.state.va.us/virginia](http://www.dba.state.va.us/virginia)

**Virginia Center for Innovative Technology**  
2214 Rock Hill Road, Suite 600  
Herndon, VA 20170-4228  
**Telephone: (703) 689-3000**  
[www.cit.org](http://www.cit.org)

**Virginia Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services**  
102 Governor Street  
Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-2373**  
**Hearing Impaired: 800-828-1120**  
[www.vdacs.virginia.gov](http://www.vdacs.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Business Assistance**  
P.O. Box 446

Richmond, VA 23218-0446  
**Telephone: (804) 371-8200**  
[www.dba.virginia.gov](http://www.dba.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Historic Resources**  
Northern Regional Office  
P.O. Box 519  
Stephens City, VA 22655  
**Telephone: (540) 868-7029**  
<http://state.vipnet.org/dhr>

**Virginia Department of Minority Business Enterprise**  
1111 E. Main Street, Suite 300  
Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-5560**  
**Toll-free: 1-800-223-0671**  
[www.dmb.e.virginia.gov](http://www.dmb.e.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Economic Development Partnership**  
901 E. Byrd Street  
P.O. Box 798  
Richmond, VA 23218-0798  
**Telephone: (804) 545-5600**  
[www.yesvirginia.org](http://www.yesvirginia.org)

**Virginia Small Business Development Center Network**  
4031 University Drive, Suite 200  
Fairfax, VA 22030  
**Telephone: (703) 277-7700**  
[www.virginiastbdc.org](http://www.virginiastbdc.org)

**Business Requirements:**

**Contacts for:**

- Corporate Income Tax
- Income Tax Withholding
- Individual Income Tax
- Retail Sales Tax
- State Taxpayer Account Number
- Virginia Tax Facts

**Virginia Department of Taxation**  
Office of Customer Services  
P.O. Box 1115  
Richmond, VA 23218-1115  
**Telephone: (804) 367-8037**  
[www.tax.virginia.gov](http://www.tax.virginia.gov)

**Contacts for:**

- Corporate Registration

- Limited Liability Corporation Registration
- Partnership Registration

**Virginia State Corporation Commission**

Office of the Clerk  
 P.O. Box 1197  
 Richmond, VA 23218  
**Telephone: (804) 371-9967**  
**Toll-free: 1-800-552-7945**  
[www.state.va.us/scc](http://www.state.va.us/scc)

**Employment and Payroll:**

**Equal Employment Opportunity**

**Virginia Employment Commission**

Main Office  
 703 E. Main Street  
 Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-1485**  
[www.vec.virginia.gov](http://www.vec.virginia.gov)

Fairfax Regional Office  
 13135 Lee Jackson Mem. Highway  
 Fairfax, VA 22033  
**Telephone: (703) 803-0000**

**Minimum Wage and Payroll Requirements**

**Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Division of State Labor Law  
 Power-Taylor Building  
 13 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Richmond, VA 23219-4101  
**Telephone: (804) 371-2327**  
[www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov)

**State Posters**

**Virginia Department of Labor and Industry**

Office of VOSH Research & Analysis  
 13 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-1995**  
[www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov)

**Worker's Compensation and Unemployment Compensation:**

**Virginia Worker's Compensation Commission**

1000 DMV Drive  
 Richmond, VA 23220  
**Telephone: 1 (877) 664-2566**  
[www.vwc.state.va.us](http://www.vwc.state.va.us)

**Virginia Employment Commission**

Main Office  
 703 E. Main Street  
 Richmond, VA 23219  
**Telephone: (804) 786-1485**  
[www.vec.virginia.gov](http://www.vec.virginia.gov)

Fairfax Regional Office  
 13135 Lee Jackson Mem. Highway  
 Fairfax, VA 22033  
**Telephone: (703) 803-0000**

**Other Licenses, Registrations and Regulations:**

**Alcohol, Production, Distribution, Storage, and Sales:**

**Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Board**

2901 Hermitage Road

Richmond, VA 23220

**Telephone: (804) 213-4400**

**(800) 552-3200**

[www.abc.virginia.gov](http://www.abc.virginia.gov)

**Childcare:**

**Virginia Department of Social Services**

7 N. Eighth Street

Richmond, VA 23219

**Telephone: (804) 726-7000**

[www.dss.virginia.gov](http://www.dss.virginia.gov)

**Environmental Regulations:**

**Virginia Department of Environmental Quality**

Division of Technical Evaluation

629 East Main Street

P.O. Box 10009

Richmond, VA 23240

**Telephone: (804) 698-4000**

[www.deq.virginia.gov](http://www.deq.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Waste Management**

629 East Main Street

P.O. Box 10009

Richmond, VA 23240

**Telephone: (804) 698-4000**

**Toll Free: (800) 592-5482**

[www.deq.virginia.gov](http://www.deq.virginia.gov)

**Virginia State Water Control Board**

Division of Water Resources Management

P.O. Box 10009

Richmond, VA 23240

**Telephone: (804) 698-4043**

<http://www.deq.virginia.gov/waterresources/>

**Franchise Registration:**

**Virginia State Corporation Commission**

Division of Securities & Retail Franchising

P.O. Box 1157

Richmond, VA 23218

**Telephone: (804) 371-9187**

[www.state.va.us/scc](http://www.state.va.us/scc)

**Occupational Licenses:**

**Virginia Department of Education**

P.O. Box 2120  
Richmond, VA 23218  
**Toll-free: 1-800-292-3820**  
[www.pen.k12.va.us](http://www.pen.k12.va.us)

**Virginia Department of Health Professionals**

Perimeter Center  
9960 Maryland Drive, Suite 300  
Richmond, VA 23233  
**Telephone: (804) 367-4400**  
[www.dhp.virginia.gov](http://www.dhp.virginia.gov)

**Virginia Department of Professional & Occupational Regulation**

**Board for Contractors**  
9960 Maryland Dr. Suite 400  
Richmond, VA 23233  
**Telephone: (804) 367-8511**  
[www.state.va.us/dpor](http://www.state.va.us/dpor)

**Occupational Safety and Health (OSHA) Regulations**

**Virginia Department of Labor and Industry  
Division of Occupational Safety and Health**

Powers-Taylor Building  
13 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street  
Richmond, VA 23219-4101  
**Telephone: (804) 371-2327**  
[www.doli.virginia.gov](http://www.doli.virginia.gov)

Northern Virginia Regional Office  
10515 Battleview Parkway  
Manassas, VA 20109  
**Telephone: (703) 392-0900**

**Trademark Registration**

**Virginia State Corporation Commission**  
Division of Securities & Retail Franchising  
P.O. Box 1157  
Richmond, VA 23218  
**Telephone: (804) 371-9187**  
[www.state.va.us/scc](http://www.state.va.us/scc)

**U.S. Patent and Trademark Office**

Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450  
**Telephone: (571) 272-1000**  
**Toll-free: 1-800-786-9199**  
[www.uspto.gov](http://www.uspto.gov)

**Vehicle Licenses and Inspections:**

**Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles  
Leesburg**  
945 Edwards Ferry Road  
Leesburg, VA 20176-3301  
**Telephone: 1-800-435-5137**

**Sterling**  
100 Free Court  
Sterling, VA 20164-3201

**Toll Free: 1-866-DMVLIN**  
[www.dmv.virginia.gov](http://www.dmv.virginia.gov)

## **Federal Contacts**

### **Business Assistance:**

**U.S. Small Business Administration**  
Washington District Office  
740 15<sup>th</sup> Street, NW, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20005-3544  
**Telephone: (202) 272-0345**  
**Toll-free: 1-800-U-ASK-SBA (827-5722)**  
**Email: [answerdesk@sba.gov](mailto:answerdesk@sba.gov)**  
[www.sba.gov/dc](http://www.sba.gov/dc)

**Overseas Private Investment Corporation**  
Small Business Information  
Information Officer, Office of External Affairs  
1100 New York Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20527  
**Telephone: (202) 336-8651**  
**Toll-free: (800) 225-5722**  
[www.opic.gov](http://www.opic.gov)

### **Business Requirements:**

#### **Contacts for:**

- Employee Tax Withholding
- Employer ID Number
- Federal Unemployment
- Individual, Partnership and Corporate Taxes

**Internal Revenue Service**  
5205 Leesburg Pike Suite 200  
Bailey's Crossroads, VA 22041  
**Telephone: (703) 756-6663**  
**Toll-free: 1-800-829-4933**  
[www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

### **Citizenship and Immigration**

**U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)**  
Office of Business Liaison: (800) 357-2099  
National Customer Service Center: (800) 375-5283  
Fax: (202) 305-2523

**Office of Business Liaison**  
6th Floor  
111 Massachusetts Ave., NW  
Washington, DC 20539

**USCIS Washington District Office**  
2675 Prosperity Way  
Fairfax, VA 22031

**Other Permits:**

**Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms Production and Sales**  
**Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives**  
99 New York Ave. NE  
Mail Stop 5S144  
Washington, DC 20226  
**Telephone: (202) 648-8010**  
<http://www.atf.treas.gov/>

**Broadcasting**  
**Federal Communications Commission**  
445 12<sup>th</sup> Street, SW  
Washington DC 20554  
**Telephone: 1-888-CALL FCC (225-5322)**  
[www.fcc.gov](http://www.fcc.gov)

**Food, Drugs and Cosmetics Production**  
**Food and Drug Administration**  
Small Business Division  
5600 Fishers Lane  
Rockville, MD 20857  
**Telephone: 1-888-INFO FDA (463-6332)**  
[www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)

**Securities Sales**  
**Securities and Exchange Commission**  
100 F St. NE  
Washington, DC 20549  
**Telephone: (202) 942-8088**  
[www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov)

**Other Resources:**

**Federal Posters**  
**United States Department of Labor**  
**Employment Standards Administration (ESA)**  
Wage and Hour Division  
**Richmond District Office**  
400 N. 8<sup>th</sup> St., Room 416  
Richmond, VA 23219-4815  
**Telephone: 1-804-771-2995**  
**Toll-free: 1-866-487-9243**  
[www.dol.gov](http://www.dol.gov)

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