



Guide to Doing Business



A 10-Step Guide to Starting and Growing Your Business in South Pasadena



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Introduction



Thank you for choosing the City of South Pasadena to open or to continue growing your business.

The City of South Pasadena is a charming community, situated only six miles from downtown Los Angeles. Called the City of Trees, the area is known for its stunning homes, unique small businesses, and top quality schools. South Pasadena's diverse population of about 25,000 occupies a mere 3.44 square miles of flatlands and hillsides on the west side of the San Gabriel Valley. This small town atmosphere makes South Pasadena one of California's most desirable locations for both residents and businesses.

This Guide provides steps for doing business in the City, and additional resources to help your business thrive in South Pasadena.

Stay Informed on Economic Development!

Connect with your Economic Development Team! Sign up for our newsletter, receive information and resources, visit our website, follow our social media accounts, and download the City's new mobile app: SouthPas Mobile to access information, service requests, and updates at your fingertips!



www.southpasadenaca.gov/businesses/economic-development



Step 1: Create a Business Plan

Starting a new business is exciting, but to succeed, you need a plan! With the help of our partners at the Small Business Development Center (SBDC), you can create a comprehensive business plan with no-cost counseling and guidance from experts in the field. A business plan is the foundation for your business that will guide you through every stage of starting and managing a business.

Make an appointment with the SBDC [here](#):



Elements of a Business Plan:

- Opportunity to define your business's goals and mission
- Identifying required permits based on the business
- Expansion planning
- Financial planning

Step 2: Name Your Business

Your unique business needs a unique name! Choose a business name that reflects your goals, and make sure you protect that name by registering your business. The first step is identifying your "Doing Business As" (DBA). Your DBA must be registered with the Los Angeles County Registrar-Recorder/County Clerk. Other things to consider when registering your business name include: Entity name, trademark, and domain name.

Register your business [here](#):



Tips For Naming Your Business:

- Look at other business names in your industry
- Think about the story you want to tell
- Simplicity can be key when choosing a name that customers could easily find



Step 3: Choose Your Business Structure

Various business types have differing filing and paperwork requirements by State and Federal law. Some of the most common business structures are listed below. Visit the California Secretary of State's Business Entities Office to learn more.

Learn about choosing your business structure [here](#):



California Business Structures Include:

- Corporation
- Limited Liability Company
- Limited Partnership
- General Partnership
- Sole Proprietorship

Step 4: Find Your Business Location

Let's find the ideal location for your business. Meet with our Community Development Team first to verify zoning, parking, and other requirements before signing the lease. Our team will assist you in identifying a potential business location, and guide you through the process, as well as inform you about any possible discretionary permit processes you may anticipate. Email or call our team to set up an appointment!

Make an appointment with our Planning Division:

Email: AskPlanning@SouthPasadenaCA.gov

Phone: (626) 403-7220



Step 5: Register Your Business & Learn About Your Taxes

For most businesses, registering your business is as simple as registering your business name. State and Federal Tax ID numbers - also known as Employer Identification Number (EIN) - act as a social security number for your business. Use the Internal Revenue Service's EIN Assistant to begin this process. The State of California requires that businesses pay several types of taxes and obtain workers' compensation insurance.

Begin your EIN Application [here](#):



Learn more about California Tax [here](#):



Step 6: Permits and Compliance

Certain business models and plans may require additional permits to conduct business in South Pasadena. This can include include Temporary Use Permits (TUP), Conditional Use Permits (CUP), Los Angeles County Health Permits, and Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC). Alcohol and other business elements may trigger the need for discretionary hearings before a City Commission. Our Planning Division and Economic Development Team is here to guide businesses in defining and navigating the process.

Learn about State and Federal licenses and permits [here](#):



DID YOU KNOW?

TUP: An administrative permit that facilitates activity or use that is temporary in nature, such as a retail store wanting to conduct a movie night.

CUP: A discretionary permit and process before the Planning Commission based on land uses.

Step 7: Tenant Improvements

If you would like to make improvements to the exterior and interior of your business property, you will need to be in contact with the Planning and Building Divisions to determine the level of review. The Planning Division will walk business owners through the design guidelines, and what permits may be needed for projects. It is important to consider that some of these improvements may be subject to Commission review and approval. Historic buildings have a separate set of standards, and we encourage businesses to visit the Planning Division to verify.

Learn about commercial design guidelines in South Pasadena [here](#):



Other Tenant Improvements subject to Planning and Building Review:

- Signage
- Building Inspections
- Disabled Access Compliance

Step 8: Obtain Your Business License

Apply for your business license after you have met with the Planning Division! You could apply for a business license by telephone, online, or by mail. No payment will be required until your application has been reviewed and accepted. You will receive an email or telephone call verifying the application has been reviewed.



Call the City of South Pasadena Business Support Center at **(626) 403-7258** and a representative will help you with the application process.



Call the Business Support Center number above, and request an application to be sent by mail. Mail your completed forms to:
**8839 N. Cedar Ave #212
Fresno, CA, 93720-1832**

Apply online [here](#):



Apply for a business license online from the comfort of your home or office at a time that is most convenient for you.





Step 9: Manage Your Finances

Manage your finances by opening a business account when you are ready to start accepting or spending money. Taking this step to separate your personal and business finances will assist you in ensuring compliance with legalities. Some benefits of business bank accounts include protections, professionalism, preparedness, and purchasing power!

Learn about 7 helpful tips when choosing your business bank account [here](#):



Step 10: Stay in Touch with our Economic Development Team at the City

Now that you have compiled the foundational information to start your business in South Pasadena, we want to be there to support you every step of the way. Contact our team at any time to learn more about our Business Concierge Program, and to be connected to various resources to ensure your business continues to thrive in South Pasadena.

City's Economic Development Team



Business@SouthPasadenaCA.gov



(626) 403-7210



www.southpasadenaca.gov/businesses/economic-development



Business Concierge & Visitation Services



Business@SouthPasadenaCA.gov



(626) 403-7210



Zoning and Land Use



AskPlanning@SouthPasadenaCA.gov



(626) 403-7220



Business Licensing

HdL Processing Center



SouthPasadena@HDL.gov



(626) 403-7258

City of South Pasadena Customer Service



Business@SouthPasadenaCA.gov



(626) 403-7210



Business Safety Support: South Pasadena Police Department

Detective Richard Lee, Business Liaison



RLee@SouthPasadenaCA.gov



(626) 403-7297

Check Out Our Partner Agencies!



Local Resources

South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce

The South Pasadena Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to growing a healthy business community. They work to create events and activities to encourage residents to Eat-Shop-Enjoy South Pasadena.

www.southpasadena.net

Pasadena City College Small Business Development Center

The Pasadena SBDC is dedicated to promoting economic growth in the community. They provide confidential, no cost one-on-one business consulting to assist business startups, expansion, loans, marketing, government contracting, technology and more.

www.pccsbdc.org

Foothill Workforce Development Board

The Foothill Workforce Development Board (FWDB) serves employers and job seekers in the San Gabriel Valley, by making investments in workplace skills development and job-specific training to help workers gain skills or obtain education and credentials that employers value.

www.fwibworks.org

Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation

The Los Angeles County Economic Development Corporation (LAEDC) is a non-profit organization that works to attract, retain and grow business in Los Angeles County. They also conduct economic analysis and provide resources for industry specific businesses.

www.laedc.org

State & Federal Resources

Small Business Administration

The Small business Administration provides opportunities for loans, loan guarantees, contracts, counseling sessions, and other forms of assistance to small businesses.

www.sba.gov

Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development

The Governor's Office of Business and Economic Development (GO-Biz) offers no cost consultation services to business owners Including: attraction, retention, and expansion services, site selection, permit assistance, regulatory guidance, small business assistance, International trade development, and assistance navigating state government.

www.business.ca.gov

Internal Revenue Service

The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) helps people and businesses understand and meet their tax responsibilities. The IRS Small Business and Self-Employed Tax Center offers information regarding preparing taxes, filing and paying taxes, stages of owning a business, and an online learning portal for small businesses.

www.irs.gov

Consumer Affairs

The Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) administers millions of licenses in more than 280 license types including certificates, registrations, and permits, from architects to accountants, dentists to veterinarians.

www.dca.ca.gov

Mayor

Michael Cacciotti
District 4

Mayor Pro Tem

Jon Primuth
District 3

Councilmember

Evelyn Zneimer
District 1



Councilmember

Jack Donovan
District 2

Councilmember

Diana Mahmud
District 5

City Manager

Arminé Chaparyan

Connect With Us!

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