



ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY GEORGIA GENERAL INFORMATION FOR NEW BUSINESSES

Athens-Clarke County Government welcomes your business to our Community. The following is designed to provide general information and assistance to new businesses when they establish a location in Athens-Clarke County.

General Occupation Tax Certificate Requirements: Prior to opening a business in Athens, a new business or profession must make application, pay a business tax and receive an Occupation Tax Certificate. Occupation Tax Certificates are valid for the calendar year in which they are obtained. If a business has multiple locations in Athens a separate Business Occupation Tax Certificate is required for each location to comply with state law.

Obtaining an Occupation Tax Certificate for the First Time:

1. The first step in obtaining the occupation tax certificate is to verify that the type of business meets all zoning requirements for the business location. Even if another business has been located in this area previously, verification for zoning compliance is required. *Contact: Planning Department, 120 W. Dougherty St. (706) 613-3515.*
2. If you plan to operate a business from your home, the Planning Department must approve and issue a Home Occupation Approval. Submit the "Home Occupation Approval" form to the Finance Department when making application for the Occupation Tax Certificate. *Contact: Planning Department, 120 W. Dougherty St. (706) 613-3515.*
3. If your business serves food and/or drinks, you will need a food permit before Business Occupation Tax Certificate can be issued. *Contact: Environmental Health Services, 189 Paradise Blvd (706) 583-2658 or 2663.*
4. If your business is a grocery store or convenience store you will need a permit from the Department of Agriculture before Business Occupation Tax Certificate can be issued. *Contact: Department of Agriculture at 404-656-3621 or 706-546-3576.*
5. If your profession (ex: Doctor, Lawyer, Contractor, Plumber, Electrician; Barber; Beautician; Nail Technician) requires a State License, a copy of your State License has to be provided before Business Occupation Tax Certificate can be issued.
6. The final step is to complete a Business Occupation Tax Application provided by the Finance Department. Instructions for completing this form are shown on the back of the application. The completed application, all supporting documentation, a notarized residency affidavit and payment must be submitted. The Occupation Tax Certificate will be issued after the application is received and processed. The Certificate should be posted in a prominent location in your business. *Contact: Finance Department, 375 Satula Ave, (706) 613-3050. The mailing address is 375 Satula Ave, Athens, GA 30601.*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR BUSINESS OWNERS

Alcoholic Beverage License, Massage Parlors, and Adult Entertainment: If a business plans to sell alcoholic beverages, operate a Massage Parlor, or operate an Adult Entertainment type business, then a license and/or permit is required. These requirements are in addition to the requirements for an Occupation Tax Certificate. Information and application for each of these areas may be obtained from the Finance Department. *Contact: Finance Department, 375 Satula Avenue, (706) 613-3050. The mailing address is 375 Satula Ave, Athens, GA 30601.*

Itinerant Merchant Permit on Private Property: Vendors who solicit on private property are required to obtain an Itinerant Merchant Permit. Written permission from the property owner and approval from Planning must be obtained. *Contact: Finance Department, 375 Satula Ave. (706) 613-3050. The mailing address is 375 Satula Ave, Athens, GA 30601; Planning, 120 W. Dougherty St, (706) 613-3515.*

Itinerant Merchant Permit for an Assigned Designated Location in the Downtown District: Vendors who solicit on public right of way with an assigned designated location are required to obtain an Itinerant Merchant Assigned Location Permit. Designated locations are areas of Athens-Downtown Tax District, Baldwin Street, Jackson Street or Baxter Street. *Contact: Central Services Department, 150 E Hancock St (706) 613-3530.*

Building Inspection and Sign Permits: The Building Inspection department should be contacted if your business plans to do any construction, add or change exterior signs. *Contact: Building Inspection Department, 120 W. Dougherty St. (706) 613-3520.*

Fire Marshall Inspection or Hazardous Materials: Information pertaining to fire inspections or businesses handling hazardous materials should contact the Fire Marshall prior to the opening of the business. *Contact: Fire Marshall, 700 College Ave., (706) 613-3360.*

Water and Sewer Services: The Water Business Office will assist you in establishing water utility services to your business. *Contact: Water Business Office, 596 Prince Ave., (706) 613-3500.*

Garbage Pick-Up and Recycling: The Solid Waste Department will assist you in establishing service for garbage pickup, recycling and other solid waste services. *Contact: Solid Waste Department, 725 Industrial Pkwy, (706) 613-3501.*

Personal Property Tax Return: New businesses should file a personal property tax return with the Tax Assessors Office. Returns should be filed January or February of the year following the date the business opens. *Contact: Tax Assessor Office, 325 E. Washington St, (706) 613-3140.*

Property Tax Return: A new business that owns real property should file a property tax return with the Tax Commissioner's Office in January or February of the year following the date the business opens. *Contact: Tax Commissioner Office, 325 E Washington St., (706) 613-3140.*

E-911 Information: E-911 emergency information for your business should be established with the Police Department. *Contact: Police Department, 3035 Lexington Rd, (706) 613-3330*

Pawnbrokers: Pawnbrokers are required to pay a regulatory fee to the Finance Department and meet regulations required by the Police Department. *Contact: Police Department, 3035 Lexington Rd, (706) 613-3330 and Finance Department, 375 Satula Ave., (706) 613-3050.*

Dealers in Precious Metals or Gems: Dealers in Precious Metals or Gems are required to pay a regulatory fee to the Police Department in addition to their Business Occupation Tax Certificate. *Contact: Police Department, 3035 Lexington Rd, (706) 613-3330 and Finance Department, 375 Satula Ave., (706) 613-3050.*

Georgia Sales Tax Number and Reporting: Businesses may be required to collect sales tax under certain conditions. If your business collects sales tax you must obtain a sales tax number and file reports with the State of Georgia as required. *Contact: State of Georgia Department of Revenue, Centralized Taxpayer, Registration Unit, P O Box 74001, Atlanta, GA 30334-0001, (404) 651-8651 or Athens Office, 1047 Summit Grove Dr., Building 100, Suite 101, Watkinsville, GA 30677.*

Federal Tax I.D. Number (EIN): Businesses desiring to obtain a federal Employer Identification Number (EIN) for reporting purposes such as submitting payroll taxes. *Contact: Internal Revenue Service, 800-829-1040.*

Trade Name Registration and Doing Business As Name: If your business will use a name other than the owner's personal name, you must register that name with the Clerk of Superior Courts. *Contact: Clerk of Superior Courts, 325 E. Washington St (706) 613-3190.*

Incorporating a Business: To establish a corporation in the State of Georgia, you should contact the Secretary of State's Office. *Contact: Secretary of State, 315 W. Tower 2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Dr., Atlanta., GA (404) 656-2881.*

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: CONTACT THE FINANCE DEPARTMENT, 375 SATULA AVENUE, (706) 613-3050. OUR MAILING ADDRESS IS 375 SATULA AVENUE, ATHENS, GA. 30601

THANK YOU FOR DOING BUSINESS IN ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY!!