

TOWN OF BELMONT

**OPENING A NEW BUSINESS –
PROCEDURES & PERMITS**

The following information package was designed to make the process of opening a new business as efficient and timely as possible. This document includes all of the tasks that must be completed in order to open your business. Please note that each department has their own permit/license procedures. As a result, the entire process can take up to six (6) months. A checklist for all permits is attached for your convenience. Additional information can be obtained on the town's website at www.belmont-ma.gov or in person at the Town Offices Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

PLEASE read this entire document carefully to obtain a complete understanding of the process. Do not hesitate to ask questions of each department as they arise. Proceeding forward with unanswered questions or failing to complete a required task will result in unnecessary aggravation, a failure to meet timing deadlines and possible financial consequences.

STEP 1 – DETERMINE APPLICABLE PERMITTING PROCESS

- 1A.** Contact the Building Division (617-993-2664) in the Office of Community Development (OCD) to determine if your proposed business is allowed “by-right” or requires action by either the Zoning Board of Appeals and/or the Planning Board.

If your business involves the sale of food proceed to **STEP 2**.

If your business requires action from the Zoning Board of Appeals and/or Planning Board and does not involve proceed to **STEP 3**

If your business is allowed “by right” but does not involve the sale of food proceed to **STEP 4**.

_____ Obtain Zoning Status for Your Business

- 1B.** If your proposal requires action by the Zoning Board of Appeals and/or the Planning Board, please contact the Office of Community Development (617-993-2666) to make an appointment with Jeffrey Wheeler, Planning Coordinator, to discuss the intended use of the space that you would like to build, purchase or rent.

Approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals/Planning Board requires the submission of an application and public hearing. The Planning Coordinator will provide you with an information package explaining the process. All information should be read carefully - you should determine at this point if you will need legal/architectural and/or engineering assistance to proceed with the project.

_____ Date of Appointment with Planning Coordinator

_____ Next Available Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Date

_____ Next Available Planning Board Public Hearing Date

STEP 2 – RESTAURANT REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING

If your business involves the sale of food, you must meet with the Restaurant Review Committee. The Restaurant Review Committee is an ad hoc committee comprised of representatives from various Town departments that are involved with permitting restaurants. A separate document lists the information required for this meeting, including a description of your business (hours of operation, numbers of employees, deliveries, dumpster pick up, etc.), an interior layout of the establishment (all fixed equipment and movable furniture) and a menu. Call OCD staff (617-993-2666) during regular business hours to arrange this meeting.

Subsequent follow-up meetings may be necessary depending on the complexity of the issues that come up during this meeting. The Zoning Board of Appeals **WILL NOT take action** on any application until the Restaurant Review Committee is satisfied with your plan.

_____ Date of Restaurant Review Committee Meeting

Businesses that require ZBA/Planning Board approval proceed to **STEP 3**.

Businesses that do **NOT** require action from either the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) or the Planning Board please proceed to **STEP 4**.

STEP 3 – ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS/PLANNING BOARD APPROVAL

If Zoning Board of Appeals and/or Planning Board action is required, the applicable application(s) should be completed and returned to the Office of Community Development. **This should be done as soon as possible.**

The ZBA meets the first Monday of every month and the Planning Board meets the second and fourth Tuesday of every month. If you require action from both Boards, a joint public hearing will be held, usually occurring at the regularly scheduled Zoning Board of Appeals meeting.

Please note - meeting agendas can fill quickly so an application may not be considered for a few months. Therefore, check with OCD to confirm the deadline for application submittals and possible meeting dates.

Your attendance is required at the public hearing.

_____ Date Packet Due to the Office of Community Development
_____ Date of Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing (if applicable)
_____ Date of Planning Board Public Hearing (if applicable)
_____ Due date for Planning Board Decision (if applicable)
_____ Due date for Zoning Board of Appeals Decision (if applicable)

STEP 4 – OTHER APPLICABLE PERMITS/LICENES

Additional permits/licenses may be required to open your business. Please contact each department directly to determine what permits are required. Each department has a separate process and application documents for each permit that is required.

- 4A. Community Development:** Building Permit, Sign Permit,
617-993-2664 Plumbing/Gas Permit
- 4B. Health Department:** Plan Review Checklist. Additional permits/licenses for
617-993-2720 specific types of businesses may be required
- 4C. Light Department:** Electrical Permit
617-993-2800
- 4D. Fire Department:** Fire Detection/Protection Permit
617-993-2210

_____ Identified Other Applicable Permit(s)
_____ Submitted Applicable Permit Application(s)
_____ Received Applicable Permit(s)

- 4E. Inspections:** During construction, there are multiple inspections required. Most of these are detailed on your Building Permit and the applicable Inspector must initial this Permit.

It is your responsibility to call for all appropriate inspections.

STEP 5 BUSINESS CERTIFICATE

If this is a **new business** in Town, you may be required to apply for a Business Certificate (pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 110, Section 5) in person, at the Town

Clerk’s Office. The Town Clerk is located within the Town Hall and can be reached at 617-993-2600 during regular business hours. The Business Certificate application can be filed after a Building Permit has been issued and is usually issued immediately upon filing of the application.

_____Applied for Business Certificate at the Town Clerk’s Office

_____Received Business Certificate from Town Clerk

If no food is to be served or if a license to sell alcohol is **NOT** being sought, please proceed directly to **STEP 7**

STEP 6 BOARD OF SELECTMEN LICENSES

6A. Licenses

Certain businesses require a license from the Board of Selectmen. Such license must be filed with the Town Clerk’s office approximately two (2) to four (4) weeks prior to the planned opening of the establishment. If you were required to go to the ZBA or Planning Board, you should apply for this License while waiting for the decision to be filed. The Town Clerk will forward the application to the Selectmen’s office. The Board of Selectmen usually act on the applications during a regularly scheduled meeting (Monday evenings) two (2) to three (3) weeks after receipt of such. You are required to attend this meeting. The Board of Selectmen will approve the license provided that the Town departments do not have any issues with your business. Contact the Office of the Board of Selectmen at 617-993-2610 to obtain the exact date and time the application will be discussed.

_____Date Received Packet for License

_____Date filed Application for License

_____Date of Board of Selectmen meeting to discuss the Application

_____Date of License Approval

6B. Alcohol Licenses

If you are opening a restaurant or retail establishment and would like to serve or sell alcohol, a license from the Board of Selectmen is required. This application should be filed a minimum of four (4) months prior to the planned opening of the establishment. Please contact the Office of the Board of Selectmen at 617-993-2610 prior to completing the application to determine whether the desired license is available and to obtain assistance with the application process. If you were required to go to the ZBA or

Planning Board, you should apply for this license while waiting for the decision to be filed. The Town is authorized to issue up to sixteen licenses to serve beer and wine to establishments with 39 or more seats, ten all alcohol licenses to establishments with 60 or more seats, two licenses to a retail establishment to sell all alcohol, and four licenses to retail establishments to sell beer and wine. You must have a Common Victualer’s license if you wish to obtain an alcohol license to serve alcohol at a restaurant. An alcohol license application must be filled out at the Massachusetts Alcohol Beverages Control Commission website www.mass.gov/abcc - print it out and submit it to the Office of the Board of Selectmen with a \$500 application fee.

_____ Date Application filed with Selectmen’s Office

_____ Dates within which certified notice of hearing is transmitted to abutters

_____ Date of Board of Selectmen public hearing to discuss the Application

_____ Date application approved by Board of Selectmen

Once approved by the Selectmen, the application will be submitted to the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Beverages Control Commission for its final approval.

STEP 7 CERTIFICATE OF OCCUPANCY

Once construction is complete and the local Building Inspectors have made the appropriate final inspections, an application for a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) can be filed with OCD. The Certificate of Occupancy is required even if no building permits were needed.

In general, a CO will be issued when all of the departments listed on the CO determine that your business meets the standards and/or regulations established by that department. If the business involves food, a final inspection by the Health Department is required and is usually completed 12-24 hours prior to the opening of the establishment.

_____ Date Received Certificate of Occupancy

STEP 8 – PERMIT AND LICENSE RENEWALS

PERMIT AND LICENSE RENEWALS

Many of the permits and licenses that you obtained during the process of opening your business contain expiration dates. These dates are usually written on the front face of the document for your convenience. Reminders will usually be sent from the appropriate department, but please remember that you are responsible for having up-to-date permits to run your business at all times. Please call the department responsible for the permit if you have questions about the renewal process and when it will be conducted.

Permit/License	Department	Date of Renewal
Special Permit	Zoning Board of Appeals	May be stated in ZBA decision
Certificate of Occupancy	Office of Community Development	No Renewal Required.
Certificate of Inspection	Office of Community Development	Originally issued as a C.O. – Contact OCD for applicability
Free-Standing Sign	Office of Community Development	Every 5 years
License	Board of Selectmen	Annual – (?)
Common Victualer’s	Board of Selectmen	Annual - January 1
Alcohol	Board of Selectmen	Annual – (?)
Food Service	Health Department	Annual - May 31
Milk & Cream	Health Department	Annual - May 31
Frozen Dessert	Health Department	Annual - May 31
Tobacco	Health Department	Annual - July 31
Dumpster	Health Department	Annual - December 31
Tanning	Health Department	Annual – September 30
Muscular Therapy	Health Department	Annual – May 01

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

OFFICE OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Building and Engineering Divisions
Glenn R. Clancy, P.E., Director

617-993-2650
gclancy@belmont-ma.gov

Planning Division
Jeffrey Wheeler, Planning Coordinator

617-993-2666
jwheeler@belmont-ma.gov

Plumbing and Gas
John “Dan” MacDonald – Inspector

617-993-2662
dmacdonald@belmont-ma.gov

Electrical
David Farrar – Inspector

617-993-2661
dfarrar@belmont-ma.gov

FIRE PREVENTION

Captain Ken Gardiner

617-993-2210
kgardiner@belmont-ma.gov

HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Wesley Chin, Director

617-993-2720
wchin@belmont-ma.gov

SELECTMEN’S OFFICE

617-993-2610
selectmen@belmont-ma.gov

TOWN CLERK

Ellen O-Brien Cushman, Town Clerk
Meg Piccione, Assistant Town Clerk

617-993-2600
ecushamn@belmont-ma.gov
mpiccione@belmont-ma.gov

Opening A New Business – Checklist

The following items need to be completed prior to opening a new business. They must be completed in the order they appear unless otherwise specified in the “*Opening a new Business – Procedures & Permits*” document.

Please note, this is a compilation of the **steps** as they appear in the “*Opening a new Business – Procedures & Permits*” document. Please obtain this document and carefully read it.

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- STEP 1.** _____ Obtain **Zoning Status** for Your Business
- _____ Date of **Appointment with Planning Coordinator**
- _____ Next Available Zoning Board of Appeals Public Hearing Date
- _____ Next Available Planning Board Public Hearing Date
- STEP 2.** _____ Date of **Restaurant Review Committee Meeting**
- STEP 3.** _____ Date Packet Due to **Office of Community Development**
- _____ Date of **Zoning Board of Appeals** Public Hearing (if applicable)
- _____ Date of **Planning Board** Public Hearing (if applicable)
- _____ Due date for Planning Board Decision (if applicable)
- _____ Due date for Zoning Board of Appeals Decision (if applicable)
- STEP 4.** _____ Identified **Other Applicable Permit(s)**
- _____ Submitted Applicable Permit(s)
- _____ Received Applicable Permit(s)
- STEP 5.** _____ Applied for **Business Certificate** at the Town Clerk’s Office
- _____ Received Business Certificate from Town Clerk

STEP 6. _____ Date Received Packet for **License**

_____ Date filed Application for License

_____ Date of Board of Selectmen public hearing to discuss the Application

_____ Date of License Approval

STEP 6B. _____ Date Application filed with Selectmen’s Office

_____ Dates within which certified notice of hearing is transmitted to abutters

_____ Date of Board of Selectmen public hearing to discuss the Application

_____ Date application approved by Board of Selectmen

STEP 7. _____ Date Received Certificate of Occupancy